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VHS IB Programs Special Needs and Inclusion Policy

Philosophy and Goals

Every IB program and course student should be able to achieve at his/her full potential. We wish to support all students, so they can maximize their potential and access all elements of the IB curriculum regardless of age, sex, gender, race, or disability.

With this in mind, we will abide by all laws for special needs students at the national, state, and local levels. We will endeavor to identify the special needs of IB students early, so they are properly provided for and assessed. We will also encourage students of varying backgrounds to participate in the programs and courses.

International Baccalaureate Principles

The following principles are taken from the *Access and Inclusion Policy* published by IB in 2019:

Maintaining standards

- 1.1 The IB must ensure that a grade awarded to a candidate in any subject is not a misleading description of that candidate's level of attainment, so the same standards of assessment are applied to all candidates.
- 1.2 The arrangements requested for a candidate must not give that candidate an advantage in any assessment.
- 1.3 The inclusive access arrangements described in this document are intended for candidates with the aptitude to meet all assessment requirements leading to the completion of the programme.
- 1.4 In the case of internal assessments, marks must always be awarded based on the candidate's work in accordance with the assessment criteria. Under no circumstances must teachers consider other factors such as the candidate's challenges or difficulties.
- 1.5 A subject result means the candidate has met the objectives of that subject, ie they have been able to demonstrate what was being assessed. This means there is no need to grant an exception for the assessment because the student was capable of completing it. Therefore, a request for exemption, which would still yield a subject result, must only be submitted after careful consideration and only where inclusive access arrangements and reasonable adjustments cannot be applied. The IB will use its discretion and only grant exemptions as a very last resort and in exceptional cases. No exemption can be granted for language subjects; all students, including those with specific learning challenges, are required to study two languages without any exception.

Reflecting usual ways of working

- 1.6 Inclusive access arrangements are pre-examination measures to allow a candidate to access the assessment that reflects their experience during learning. As such they cannot be requested retroactively.
- 1.7 Inclusive access arrangements for a candidate must be well planned and put in place throughout the course of learning and teaching including classroom work and formative assessments.
- 1.8 Schools must plan inclusive access arrangements for their candidates based on the IB criteria as stated in this policy and teachers' observations of the candidate in the classroom during classwork and tests. If the school intends to plan inclusive access arrangements for a candidate that are not in line with the eligibility criteria stated in this policy, they must first consult the IB.
- 1.9 The inclusive access arrangements requested for a candidate must be his or her usual way of working during his or her course of study. In almost all instances, if the inclusive access arrangements planned by the school do not follow the eligibility criteria stated in this policy, and have not been previously discussed with the IB (see Section 1.8), they cannot be authorized by the IB even if they have been the candidate's usual way of working. Only in very exceptional and unusual cases will the IB authorize a request for inclusive access arrangements



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that are not the usual way of working and that have been put in place to support the candidate only in the last six months of study or thereafter, just prior to the examinations.

1.10 The IB aims to authorize inclusive access arrangements that are compatible with those normally available to the candidate concerned. However, authorization will only be given for arrangements that are consistent with the policy and practice of the IB. It should not be assumed that the IB will necessarily agree to the arrangements requested by a school.

Consistency for all candidates

1.11 The IB is committed to an educational philosophy based on international-mindedness. Therefore, the inclusive access arrangements policy of the IB may not reflect the standard practice of any one country. To achieve equity among candidates with access requirements, the policy represents the result of a consideration of accepted practices in different countries.

1.12 The IB will ensure that, wherever possible, arrangements for candidates with a similar type of access requirement are the same. Due to the cultural differences that occur in the recognition of learning support requirements and the nature of access arrangements granted in schools, there may be some compromise that may be necessary to help ensure comparability between candidates in different countries.

1.13 Each request for inclusive access arrangements will be judged on its own merit. Previous authorization of arrangements, either by the IB or another awarding body, will not influence the decision on whether to authorize the arrangements that have been requested by the coordinator.

Confidentiality

1.14 The IB treats all information about a candidate as confidential. If required, information will only be shared with appropriate IB personnel and members of the final award committee (who will be instructed to treat such information as confidential).

Maintaining integrity of the assessment

1.15 If a school does not meet the conditions specified by the IB when administering inclusive access arrangements, the candidate will not be awarded a grade in the subject and level concerned.

1.16 A school must not communicate with an examiner about a candidate's learning support requirements.

1.17 All examinations must be invigilated according to the regulations governing the conduct of examinations for the relevant programme.

1.18 The person invigilating the candidate's examination must not be a relative of the candidate, or any other person with whom there may be an apparent or perceived conflict of interest.

Exceptional issues

1.19 Any issues that arise from the nature of the inclusive access arrangements, or any unforeseen difficulties encountered by the candidate during the examinations, should be reported to IB Answers as soon as possible.

Accommodations and Inclusive Arrangements

An individual education plan (IEP) is developed for each student eligible for services. A section 504 plan is developed for students who do not require special services but need the assurance that they will receive accessibility. Accommodations and accessibility arrangements for students in the Venice High School IB program may include but are not limited to:

- Additional time
- Individual testing environment
- Word processing
- Magnifying device
- Sound amplification



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- Colored overlay
- Appropriate seating
- Rest periods
- Breaking large tasks/deadlines into smaller tasks/deadlines

Some inclusive arrangements can be provided at the discretion of the IB coordinator; however, others must have prior approval from the IB. The Venice High IB coordinators are responsible for communicating the IB-approved accommodations or arrangements to the students, parents, and staff, so they are aware of the adjustments. Any requests for inclusive arrangements made through the IB must include supporting documentation and educational evidence. IB staff members will work together to provide evidence that a students' requested arrangements are those that are indicative of the IB students' usual and reasonable accommodations under their valid IEP's or section 504 plans.

The accommodations or inclusion plans do not include students facing adverse circumstances. IB students who face such circumstances should contact the IB Coordinator to seek information about their specific situations.

Intervention

Students identified as underachieving (via progress reports or quarterly grades) will be recognized for program interventions by the program leadership team. These may include:

- Small group work
- Study support
- Targeted curriculum support
- External agency support or community programs
- Involvement in enrichment activities
- Enhanced home communications

Welfare

In the interest of each student's welfare, the Venice High School IB Programs will make every effort to ensure the expectations placed on motivated students are fair and realistic. We are also aware that some students may be subject to peer pressure and/or have difficulty interacting with fellow students which could cause them additional stress or strain. VHS will do its best to identify these situations and facilitate conversations to assist students who may face these or other welfare-related issues.

Inclusion Policy Review

This inclusion policy will be reviewed annually by IB faculty, counselors, coordinators, and the pedagogical leadership team. We will also share the document with the Venice High School Special Education department at the beginning of each year.