



Academy for Discovery at Lakewood IB Middle Years Programme Special Educational Needs (SEN) Policy

School Mission: In partnership with students, families, and community, the Academy for Discovery at Lakewood will inspire in its students a lifelong passion for learning in a global society. With a commitment to academic excellence and personal integrity, students will demonstrate independent and reflective thinking, creativity, as well as a sense of social responsibility and intercultural understanding.

Purpose: The school mission guides all aspects of education at Lakewood, including the education of students with special education needs. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students identified with learning needs are supported and encouraged in a manner that allows them to actualize the Lakewood and the IB mission statements. The staff and students at Lakewood are committed to establishing an inclusive environment where everyone has the opportunity to reach their maximum potential.

Special Educational Needs Classifications

Our Special Educational Needs (SEN) population includes students who need differentiation, accommodations, or modifications to curriculum in order to meet their learning needs and facilitate continued academic growth. These students may include, but are not limited to:

- Special Education students who have an active Individualized Education Program (IEP) in place. Examples of these special needs include:
 - Specific learning disabilities
 - Language and communication disorders
 - Emotional and behavioral difficulties
 - Physical difficulties affecting mobility
 - Autism
 - Other Health Impairment (such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- English Learners who have a barrier in the language of instruction
- Students who are in need of counseling support
- Students with medical or health issues which require a 504
- Students identified as Gifted

Students with special educational needs are identified and accommodated to provide equal access to the curriculum. The school has a Student Assistance Team (SAT) and Special Education Committee (SEC) that works with teachers and parents to evaluate students who may have special education needs. The members of this team include the School Social Worker, the School Psychologist, a school district representative, and various school personnel with particular expertise about a given student. Through evaluation and testing, students are determined eligible to receive special education services or 504 plans following district, state, and national guidelines.

Incoming students identified as gifted by the district are provided with support from the school's Gifted Resource Teacher (GRT). The GRT works with classroom teachers to ensure that differentiated instruction is provided in the general education setting to challenge students to meet their highest academic potential. Teachers and parents can recommend students for evaluation by the GRT if they feel a student demonstrates exceptional abilities. The school follows the procedures outlined by the district for evaluating and identifying students as gifted.

Incoming students that are learning English as a Second Language (ESL) are provided with support from the school's ESL Teacher. The ESL teacher works with classroom teachers to develop strategies to increase student understanding of English. The WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test is used as an English language proficiency "screening" test for incoming students who may be designated as English language learners. It assists educators with programmatic placement decisions such as identification and placement of ELLs. The W-APT is one component of WIDA's comprehensive assessment system.

Special Educational Needs Services

Once a student has been identified with a special educational need, the team develops an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan for the student following district, state, and national guidelines. IEPs guide the student's placement in the academic environment, with emphasis on the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The majority of students are taught in the general education classroom, where they receive instruction from the general education teacher. The majority of the English and Math classes with students with special education needs are taught following a collaborative model, with a special education teacher and a general education teacher working together to best meet the academic needs of all of the students in the class. The special education teacher works with the general education teacher to differentiate lessons so that each student is given the opportunity to excel. All students at Lakewood are the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Each teacher at Lakewood takes ownership of the learning of students in his or her classroom and follows best practices, along with IEP accommodations, to meet student needs. Additional support is provided by a reading specialist, math specialist, instructional coach, department chairs, and paraprofessionals. Teachers also follow the accommodations written in IEP and 504 plans. These accommodations remain in place in all settings and during all instructional tasks, including the community project.

Because Lakewood views each child as an individual with specific needs, students follow a schedule that best suits their present level of performance. Some students receive additional instruction in reading or math based on their IEP or their current educational functioning. Due to these special scheduling demands, approximately 8% of Lakewood's middle school student population will require additional support in reading or math during the 2016-17 school year. Many of these students will experience eight subject groups, while others will receive seven subject groups. The goal is to provide the academic support and opportunity for every student to experience and be successful in all eight subject groups. In the future, all of these students may be able to have semester long classes in design and foreign language so that they can be exposed to all eight subject groups while also receiving extra academic support. Based on evaluations and assessments, all students will be provided the schedule that best supports their learning needs.

Students with special educational needs will also be supported by the school assessment policy. Under this policy, students are assessed based on growth in the four criterion of each subject group. Progress is the driving factor, with each student pushed to reach their maximum potential and assessed based on the subject area rubrics. This policy allows for great differentiation for all classifications of students with special educational needs because it focuses on the growth each student makes during the school year.

Lakewood currently is home to a district-wide middle school program for Students with Autism. These students have been placed in a more restrictive environment by their IEP team. They receive the majority of their educational program in a self-contained setting. Based on individual needs, many of the students go into general education classrooms for specific subjects. All decisions on the academic needs of the students in this program are based on individual needs as determined from IEP meetings. Students are supported by special education teachers and paraprofessionals assigned to this program. Though the needs of some students in the autism program do not allow for full enrollment in the MYP, they are provided access to the MYP rigorous curriculum framework, are familiar with the Learner Profile attributes, and are part of the IB community.

Admissions

As a district-wide program, students are accepted into the Lakewood community at two entry points. Students may apply to enter in third grade or in sixth grade. Third grade admissions are entirely based on a lottery system. Students with special educational needs who apply to the third grade class have an equal probability as any other student to gain admission. Students who enter in the sixth grade have three components to their application: teacher recommendation, interview, and an essay. There is no grade point average or state standardized test score requirement for admission. Students who reach a cumulative minimum threshold on their application scores are then entered into a lottery for admission. One reason that these elements were included is the understanding that all students excel in different areas. Some students with special educational needs who may not excel in written expression may demonstrate their abilities during the interview portion. Other students may show the opposite. Teacher recommendations provide insight on all students. The admissions policy helps to level the playing field by focusing on the whole student rather than just academic performance in elementary school.

The SEN Committee will continue to review, refine, and build this SEN policy on an annual basis to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all of our students. We will continue to seek input from committee members, staff, parents, and students as we work to enhance the educational experience of all students at Lakewood. This policy and any updates will be shared with all stakeholders yearly in school meetings and through publication on the school's website.

Norfolk Public Schools District Policies

IGBAZ. - PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- The Norfolk School Board provides a free, appropriate public education for all children and youth with disabilities, ages 2 through 21, inclusive, who are residents of Norfolk or who are not residents of Norfolk but are residents of Virginia and who are enrolled in a full-time virtual school program provided by the Board. To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled.

It is the policy of School Board to adhere to federal and state regulations as they have been promulgated by the United States Department of Education and the Virginia Board of Education to implement special education programs for children with disabilities, consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Specifically, these mandates are detailed in the Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia (Virginia Regulations) and any additional documents that the Virginia Department of Education publishes to address federal and state statutes and regulations for delivering special education and related services to children. Additionally, pursuant to the dictates of the Virginia Regulations, Norfolk Public Schools has developed mandatory local procedures that are set forth in the document entitled, "Standard Procedures for Implementation of Special Education Regulations in Norfolk Public Schools".

In the context of this policy and its accompanying regulations, "students with disabilities" means any person aged two to twenty-one years, inclusive, who has met the criteria for eligibility under IDEA and the corresponding federal and state regulations. In addition, "students" and "children" are used interchangeably.

Norfolk Public Schools recognizes the classification of Developmental Delay for the identification of students with disabilities under IDEA eligibility. This means a disability affecting a child ages two by September 30 through six years of age inclusive.

An individualized education program (IEP) shall be designed and maintained for each child eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The IEP will be developed by a properly composed IEP team in accordance with state and federal law. The IEP shall be inclusive of areas specified by state and federal statutes and regulations and shall be reviewed at least annually.

Norfolk Public Schools prohibits the harassment of students with disabilities in academic and nonacademic settings during the school day and for school-sponsored extracurricular activities.

Explanation of Procedural Safeguards

A copy of the procedural safeguards available to the parent(s) of a child with a disability is given to the parent(s). The procedural safeguards notice includes a full explanation of all the procedural safeguards available.

The Norfolk School Board maintains an active and continuing child find program designed to identify, locate and evaluate those children from residing in the division who are birth to 21 inclusive who are in need of special education and related services.

The School Board provides all applicable procedural safeguards including written notice to the parents of the scheduled screening and, if the child fails the screening, the results of the screening, confidentiality and maintenance of the student's scholastic record.

- **IGBB. - PROGRAMS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS**

The Norfolk School Board shall approve a comprehensive plan for the education of gifted students that includes the components identified in Board of Education regulations. The plan for the education of gifted students shall be accessible through the division's website and the division will ensure that printed copies of the plan are available to citizens who do not have online access.

The school division has uniform procedures for screening, referring, identifying, and serving students in kindergarten through twelfth grade who are gifted in general intellectual or specific academic aptitude.

The school division will provide written notification to and seek written consent from parents and legal guardians to conduct any required assessment to determine a referred student's eligibility for the division's gifted education program, and provide services for an identified gifted student in the division's gifted education program.

The School Board may establish a local advisory committee composed of parents, school personnel, and other community members appointed by the School Board. The committee will reflect the ethnic and geographical composition of the school division. If established, the committee will annually review the division's plan for the education of gifted students, including revisions, and determine the extent to which the plan for the previous year was implemented. The findings of the annual program effectiveness and the recommendations of the committee will be submitted annually in writing to the division superintendent and the School Board.

Resources

International Baccalaureate Organization (2014). *MYP: From principles into practice*