



## IB-MYP Learning Diversity Policy

### Philosophy

We, the collective students, staff, parents, and administrators of Cache La Poudre Middle School, as IB learners, believe that all of our students are unique with needs and strengths that require attention to foster the attributes of the IB learner profiles. To allow for inclusion of all learners in the IBMYP program at Cache La Poudre Middle School (CLPMS), our program provides multiple opportunities to meet the individual needs and varied learning styles of our students. We strive to serve the unique needs of all students, including those identified with special needs (Special Education, Section 504, MTSS, READ Plans and Gifted and Talented), so that each learner will meet or exceed their academic and non-academic potential. By striving to recognize and celebrate the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of internationally minded people.

### Purpose

This policy provides for our students and guides our practices:

- To meet the National/State/District Requirements
- To maintain open access to our programme for all students
- To meet the diverse educational needs of all students
- To provide a safe and inclusive environment

### Practices

#### ***National/State/District Requirements***

All schools in Poudre School District (PSD), including Cache La Poudre Middle School, are required to abide by federal and state laws pertaining to special education, Section 504, and gifted and talented.

#### ***Inclusion***

Inclusion is more than just placement in classes at school. It is being included in life, using one's unique abilities in day to day activities as a member of the community. Inclusion is being welcomed and embraced as a member who belongs.

Teachers at CLPMS support student needs by accommodating individual needs and including students of all levels in our classes. Teachers work with all stakeholders to ensure that the needs of all students are met. Teachers design learning experiences that allow all students to meet the rigorous standards of the IB-MYP.



## ***Differentiation***

Differentiated instruction is utilized as an approach at CLPMS. Our school recognizes that there is a diversity of learners in every classroom and our learners are more successful when they are able to construct meaning based on their own readiness levels, interests and learning profiles while ensuring that all students come to a similar grasp of a skill or idea. Teachers differentiate instruction with an individual student, within a small group or with a whole class.

Teachers use four planning steps to differentiate instruction which include:

- Identifying and understanding concepts, academic content and skills for students to learn
- Determining what students already know and what they do not know
- Deciding which instructional methods and materials will most successfully address those needs
- Designing ways to adequately assess student learning

Tomlinson, C. A. (2000, August). Differentiation of instruction in the elementary grades.

## ***Extended Learning***

### **Gifted and Talented**

All gifted Poudre School District youth are identified by their area(s) of strength according to Colorado guidelines. PSD educational programming is designed and implemented to match their identified needs. Teachers of gifted students participate in professional development to increase knowledge, skills and understanding of gifted students and required instruction.

Gifted children are defined in Poudre School District as those persons between the ages of five and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so outstanding that they require special provisions to meet their educational needs. Gifted students include students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations.

### **1. Advanced Learning Plans**

Advanced Learning Plans (ALP) in Poudre School District are written for every student who meets the district criteria for gifted identification. An Advanced Learning Plan is a written record of gifted and talented programming utilized with each gifted child and considered in educational planning and decision making. ECEA statute 22-20-103 Rule Section 12.01 (2).



## The ALP is...

- A strength-based planning guide for curriculum, instruction, and assessment and social-emotional development.
- A record of results and programming options implemented for goal and school success.
- An accountability record showing short-term and long-term collaborative efforts.
- A dynamic, working document developed and reviewed through collaborative efforts of the teacher(s), parent(s) and student.

## 2. Overview of Advanced Learning Plans in Poudre School District

Advanced Learning Plans focus on the four priorities for gifted programs in Poudre School District:

- Advanced Academic Performance and Achievement
- Independent Learning and Research
- Post-Secondary Readiness and Career Exploration
- Social and Emotional Needs/Affective Guidance

All goals for ALPs will address at least one of the above goal areas and social and emotional needs/affective guidance. Schools will support goal achievement by offering programming options and services targeted at gifted learner needs.

## 3. Educator, Parent, and Student Collaboration for ALPs:

PSD educators writing Advanced Learning Plans include the student in the goal-writing process. Parents can either be part of the goal-writing process or have an opportunity to provide feedback after the goal is written.

## 4. Monitoring

The areas selected as priorities for goals are monitored through ongoing assessment and parent-teacher conferences.

## 5. ALP Elements

- **Student Information** – strengths, interests, achievement data, affective needs
- **Collaborative Goal Setting** – parents, student, teacher, GT site coordinator or teacher
- **Services and Interventions** – differentiated instruction, affective guidance, content extensions, and structure for implementation



## 6. Program Options possible at Cache La Poudre Middle School

- Advanced Coursework
- Accelerated Math placement
- Extended Learning Opportunities
- In-class Differentiation
- After school enrichment opportunities

All programs focus on one or more of the following program priorities:

- Advanced Academic Performance and Achievement
- Independent Learning and Research
- Post-Secondary Readiness and Career Exploration
- Social Emotional Support/Affective Needs

## **Reasonable support within the framework of identified needs**

IDEA 2004 includes broad mandates for the provision of services to all children with disabilities. Although provisions have been added or amended to expand or improve the quality of services, the four purposes of IDEA have remained essentially the same:

- To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their particular needs
- To ensure that the rights of children with disabilities and their parents are protected
- To assist states and localities to provide for the education of all children with disabilities
- To assess and ensure the effectiveness of efforts to educate children with disabilities

## **1. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Specific Learning Disability (SLD) Identification**

A special education referral is initiated only after implementation of an action plan and appropriate MTSS interventions have failed to show adequate progress.

There are eight areas of focus that the special education team will look at when determining the specific needs of students under the category of SLD. Those 8 areas are: Written Expression, Listening Comprehension, Math Calculation, Oral Expression, Math Problem Solving, Reading Comprehension, Reading Fluency and Basic Reading. If a student is not making adequate achievement or progress in any one of these areas, despite instructional intervention, a team will meet to determine the possibility of a SLD.



## 2. The Special Education Process

**a. Referral:** When a parent or teacher is concerned about a student's progress a referral may be made to the school's Student Success Team (SST). This is not a special education process. The purpose of the SST is to provide a system of ongoing support to those who have concerns about a student. The SST will gather available information, review records and try strategies which may be immediately beneficial to the student. This process is called Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS). A special education referral is initiated only after implementation of an MTSS Plan and appropriate interventions have failed to show adequate progress over an extended period.

A parent may make a direct referral for special education assessment at any time. When this occurs, the special education multidisciplinary team at the student's school of attendance must formally consider the referral. The team will consider the educational relevance and determine if there is sufficient supporting data to move forward with a formal special education evaluation. Assessment must cover all areas of concern. The team then considers the educational impact. The question to be answered is: "Is there a disability that is preventing the student from accessing the general education curriculum?"

**b. Evaluation or Assessment:** Individual evaluations are given after receiving written permission from the parent. The assessments are conducted by special education personnel and parents in the areas of health, communication, academic functioning, psychological, social, motor and life- skills using both formal and informal tests. The results of these assessments, Gap Analysis and Functional Behavior Assessments will help in determining eligibility for special education services and assist in educational planning.

**c. Initial Meeting:** An initial meeting is held to determine if a student is eligible for special education services. Parents, special education personnel, teachers, administrators, student (when appropriate) and others involved persons participate in a conference reviewing the assessment results and sharing pertinent information. If the student is found to be in need of special services a program is developed. A parent's written permission is required to initiate special education services.

**d. Individual Education Program (IEP):** Every student with a disability receiving Special Education or related services must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP). This is an educational plan tailor-made to suit the student's individual needs to be successful in school. If the staffing team decides that a student is not eligible for services through special education, recommendations will be made to parents and teachers regarding various ways to help the student.

**e. Provision of Services:** The special education team will recommend the types of special education services that might be most appropriate to meet the educational needs of the student. Students are served in their home schools and participate in regular education classes whenever possible. This is



also known as “Least Restrictive Environment” (LRE). Other options are considered if a student needs a more specialized placement.

**f. Review:** The IEP is reviewed once a year or more often if necessary. At least once every three years, a triennial IEP meeting is held to determine continued eligibility for special education. Assessments are part of the redetermination process.

### **3. Disability Categories**

In the state of Colorado, a child qualifies for special education services by meeting the criteria in one or more of the disability categories listed below. The disability must prevent the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from general education alone.

- **Speech/Language Disability**
- **Specific Learning Disability (SLD)**
- **Intellectual Disability**
- **Serious Emotional Disability**
- **Hearing Impairment, including deafness**
- **Visual Impairment, including blindness**
- **Orthopedic Impairment**
- **Other Health Impairment**
- **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**
- **Autism Spectrum Disorders**
- **Deaf/Blindness**
- **Multiple Disabilities**
- **Developmental Delay (Ages 3-8)**

### **4. Continuum of Services**

Students in Poudre School District who are determined to have a disability under current federal and state guidelines will receive a free and appropriate education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This will include a continuum of services designed to meet each student’s individual needs as defined in their IEP.

The Integrated Services Department will work to ensure that students with disabilities are educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Decisions about individualized programming will be driven by each student’s unique needs. In many cases, the home school has or can arrange programming for



students who have mild to moderate needs. Students with extensive needs may attend programs housed outside their home school.

## **5. Poudre School District has established the following supports and services based on the needs of individual students:**

- Mild to Moderate Needs/Multi-Categorical
- Extensive Needs

## **6. Accommodations and Modifications**

There are two primary purposes of Special Education:

- **CURRICULUM MODIFICATION** = A change in what is taught (content)
- **INSTRUCTIONAL ACCOMMODATIONS** = A change in how content and/or assessments are delivered.

Special educators and related service providers consider unique instructional accommodations/strategies a child may require, such as small group instruction, frequent practice and repetition, use of different materials, reduction of sensory information, etc. They also consider accommodations needed to measure a student's progress. These may include accommodations in timing/scheduling, setting, format/equipment, presentation of directions, or recording/response accommodations. For example, a student with difficulty reading may need to take a test orally; another student may need additional time or may be exempted from large-class testing. The decision to use a particular accommodation with a student is made on an individual basis through the IEP process.

*This policy is based on Poudre School District IB Middle Years Special Educational Needs Policy.*