



Homestead Middle School

International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Inclusion Policy



Vision for Inclusion

At Homestead Middle School, we believe that all students, regardless of ability, background, or circumstance, can engage meaningfully with the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme. Inclusion at HMS is not simply placement, it is a commitment to creating a school culture where every learner is supported to achieve their full potential as inquirers, thinkers, communicators, and caring members of the community. This vision reflects the IB philosophy and the attributes of the Learner Profile, emphasizing equity, respect, and access for all.

Legal Requirements

HMS complies with all federal, state, and district regulations regarding students with exceptionalities:

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** ensures all students with disabilities receive free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment.
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** provide protections and accommodations for students with disabilities.
- **Florida Department of Education and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS)** guidelines: direct local procedures and accountability for special education and inclusion services.
- **Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA)** - It requires school districts to address language barriers for English Language Learners (ELL) students, and it prohibits deliberate segregation.

Structure and Process for Compliance

To meet these legal requirements, HMS follows a structured process:

- **Program Specialist and IB Coordinator** collaborate to identify needs, monitor progress, and ensure equitable access to IB MYP courses. Coordinator reviews Individualized Educational Plans.
- **Response to Intervention (RtI)** is used to provide tiered supports at increasing levels of intensity, based on individual student needs.
- **Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Educational Plans (EPs)** are developed, implemented, and reviewed in compliance with IDEA and state law.
- Students are placed in the **least restrictive environment (LRE)** appropriate to their needs, with access to general education classes whenever possible.

- Services may include separate or resource classes, paraprofessional support, and therapies (speech, art therapy for EBD, hearing and vision services, counseling, and nursing support).
- Accommodations are embedded into teaching and assessment practices, ensuring students can demonstrate learning in multiple ways. This includes appropriate accommodation for the completion of IB summative assessments.

Rights and Responsibilities

Inclusion is the shared responsibility of the entire school community:

- **Students** have the right to equal access to learning opportunities and the responsibility to engage actively in their education and advocate for their needs.
- **Teachers** have the responsibility to design differentiated lessons, apply accommodations, and create opportunities for students to show learning through various means.
- **Parents/Guardians** have the right to be informed and involved in their child's learning plan and the responsibility to communicate openly with the school and support learning at home.
- **Administrators** ensure compliance with laws and IB expectations, allocate resources, and provide professional development to support inclusive practices.
- **Support Staff** (program specialists, counselors, therapists, paraprofessionals) work in collaboration with teachers to deliver interventions and services tailored to students' needs.

Access to the IB MYP

HMS ensures that students with disabilities and diverse learning needs have full access to the IB MYP curriculum and assessments. Teachers use differentiation, scaffolding, and accommodations so students can engage with key concepts, contexts, and skills. Inclusion also extends to extracurricular programs, after-school supports, and enrichment opportunities.

The Inclusion Policy is reviewed every year. Revisions ensure alignment with IB standards, district policies, and the evolving needs of our community. (Revised August 2025)