



# MYP INCLUSION POLICY

## **AIS VISION**

A community fostering respect, leadership, and empathy through interculturalism and the joy of learning.

## **AIS MISSION**

Through a rigorous, trilingual program, we fuel inquiry and inspire each other to develop critical thinking skills in a community where curiosity is valued, adventurousness is encouraged, and diversity is honored.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Austin International School is an authorized IB World School for the Middle Years Programme. These are schools that share a common philosophy—a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education that Austin International School believes is important for our students.

At Austin International School, we are dedicated to providing a nurturing and inclusive educational environment that aligns with the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP). Rooted in the principles of the IB philosophy, our school fosters an atmosphere where diversity is honored, and every student is valued for their unique strengths and contributions. This Inclusion Policy serves as a commitment to ensuring equitable access to the program for all students, including those with diverse linguistic, cultural, and learning backgrounds.

## **PRINCIPLES:**

- Equity and Accessibility:** Austin International School recognizes that each student possesses distinct learning needs, abilities, and experiences. We are committed to promoting equity and ensuring that all students have access to the MYP curriculum and educational opportunities, irrespective of their differences. Student Accommodation Plans (SAP) are designed to ensure that all students, regardless of their learning needs, have support to access and engage with the curriculum. Assistive technology also plays an integral role in supporting students with language-based learning differences such as dyslexia and those with ADHD.
- Respect for Diversity:** Our school values and celebrates the rich diversity within our student body, which encompasses various linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds. We cultivate an environment of respect, empathy, and understanding where students feel valued, included, and empowered to embrace their identities.
- Collaboration and Partnership:** Inclusion is a collaborative endeavor that involves active participation from students, parents/guardians, educators, support staff, and the broader community. Austin International School fosters partnerships and collaboration with local school districts and providers to develop inclusive practices that meet the diverse needs of all learners.

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- 4. Individualized Support:** Recognizing the uniqueness of each student, our school is committed to providing individualized support tailored to their specific learning requirements. We prioritize personalized approaches that accommodate diverse learning styles, preferences, and abilities.
- 5. Continuous Improvement:** Austin International School is dedicated to ongoing reflection and improvement of our inclusive practices. We regularly assess the effectiveness of our inclusion policy, gather feedback from stakeholders, and utilize research-based strategies to enhance the inclusivity of our learning environment.

## GUIDELINES

- 1. Identification and Assessment:** Austin International School will identify students with diverse learning needs, including linguistic, cognitive, and socio-emotional considerations through teacher and specialist observations. If necessary, AIS will require the families of these students to provide a more comprehensive psychoeducational evaluation conducted by an appropriately credentialed diagnostician, school or clinical psychologist, or neurologist. Parents are presented with both public and private options for such evaluations. Assessment procedures are culturally responsive, multi-faceted, and conducted in multiple languages to ensure validity and inclusivity.
- 2. Student Accommodation Plans:** Students identified with diverse learning needs receive personalized Student Accommodation Plans (SAPs) that delineate targeted accommodations and modifications. Such plans are designed in collaboration with teachers, parents, and as age-appropriate, students. All plans are based on appropriate medical or educational evaluation and best practices in the education of students with learning differences. When interventions are determined to be necessary, as determined by teacher recommendation and supported by evaluation data, recommendations are made to the parents so that they may seek appropriate intervention services.
- 3. Language Support:** As a multilingual institution, Austin International School provides language support services to facilitate students' proficiency in multiple languages. These services may encompass language acquisition programs, English as an Additional Language (EAL) support, and language enrichment activities to foster linguistic competence and cultural appreciation.
- 4. Curricular Access:** All AIS elementary students, including those with diverse learning needs, are entitled to access the MYP curriculum. Educators at Austin International School employ differentiated instruction, scaffolding techniques, and diverse instructional modalities to ensure equitable access to curriculum content, learning experiences, and assessment opportunities.
- 5. Inclusive Learning Environments:** Our school cultivates inclusive classrooms characterized by mutual respect, collaboration, and shared learning experiences. Teachers design flexible learning environments that accommodate diverse learning preferences and abilities, promote positive peer interactions, and foster a sense of belonging among all students.
- 6. Professional Development:** Austin International School invests in ongoing professional development to empower educators with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to implement inclusive practices effectively. Teachers receive training in identification, differentiation, inclusive pedagogy, cultural competence, and evidence-based interventions to support diverse learners effectively.

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**7. Parent and Community Engagement:** Our school values the active involvement of parents/guardians and the wider community in promoting inclusivity and student success. AIS fosters transparent communication, collaborative partnerships, and parent education initiatives to empower families to advocate for their children and actively participate in the school community.

If, after admission, it is determined that AIS is no longer possible to accommodate the applicant's special educational needs, the school will recommend an alternative educational environment to the family and will provide transfer application documentation as needed.

Austin International School is committed to championing inclusivity, diversity, and equity within the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP). By upholding the principles of equity, respect, collaboration, individualization, and continuous improvement outlined in this policy, we aspire to cultivate an educational environment where all students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Through collective efforts and unwavering dedication, we aim to empower every student to realize their full potential, embrace global citizenship, and contribute positively to an interconnected world.

## **POLICY DOCUMENTATION**

**Review process.** The AIS MYP Inclusions Policy is a living document and will be reviewed periodically to reflect current inclusion practices in the school, and required by the government or accrediting agencies, as well as international practices. The policy was first drafted on February 15, 2024. Last update was in December 2024. Contributions to this policy include:

- Head of School (Ariane Baer-Harper)
- Principals (Cedric Herve and Lara Schupack)
- MYP Coordinator (Claudine Escobar-Durand)
- Director of Student Support Services (Greg Donnellan)