



Daystar Academy

An IB World School

PYP Inclusion Policy

Rationale & Philosophy

The mission of Daystar Academy is to empower students to positively impact the world through a faith-based, culturally-engaged, globally-minded education. We desire to transform Chicago and the world by educating and empowering our students to live out the values of the Kingdom of God.

This policy communicates our commitment to ensure that all Daystar students are provided equal access to the IB curriculum, are given opportunities for academic rigor and challenging learning opportunities, as well as opportunities to develop themselves according to the learner profile traits. This policy also displays our commitment to foster a curriculum that is creative and differentiated to support all Daystar students in reaching their unique, God-given potential. Finally, through this policy we desire to communicate the responsibilities of all stakeholders in the success of Daystar students who are identified as having special needs.

Daystar Academy seeks to be a community in the Biblical sense, a diverse community that intentionally crosses ethnic, socio-economic, and academic boundaries. As such, we do not conduct high-stakes entrance exams, aiming instead to be a learning community that tries to serve all who come, including, to the extent possible, those with exceptional learning needs. The goal is to provide everyone with what they need, which will not necessarily look the same for all students.

Daystar's inclusion policy is aligned with the school's admission policy. As an independent school, there are limits to the scope of services Daystar can provide, reserving the right to limit enrollment or re-enrollment of students whose needs will not be met based on Daystar's capacity. Daystar's goal is to continue to extend our reach in order to serve students with increasing levels of need as we grow and add specialized staff.

Definitions

- Special Education Needs (SEN) refers to any student who shows a need for extra support or for challenges beyond the general curriculum. We recognize the wide spectrum of needs and abilities along a continuum, including students with learning disabilities as well as the gifted and talented
- Inclusion refers to providing access to all IB programs for all students. (PYP, MYP and DP)
- Differentiation refers to any modification to instruction or assessment in order to meet individual student needs
- "Stakeholders" refers to anyone with a vested interest in the success of that student such as a parent, guardian, teacher, counselor, administrator, IB coordinator, and of course the student themselves.

Support

- The first tool for meeting the needs of all students is the innovative structures and curriculum offered by Daystar. The hands-on, differentiated, inquiry-driven approach to learning is intentionally designed to engage a wide variety of students and to address the challenges for students who learn differently or at a different pace.
- Students facing greater challenges may be assessed and provided with a Student Support Plan designed by teachers, administrators, and parents. Daystar offers Title I tutoring in math and reading as well as IDEA tutoring for students who qualify for this program.

- Classroom support for students with special education needs and abilities may include curriculum modifications, enrichment activities, classroom accommodations, small group instruction, or one-on-one support, depending on what all stakeholders agree upon and upon the capacity of the school.
- When it is determined that a student would benefit from additional support outside of the classroom, pull-out services may be provided to meet academic, social or behavioral needs. Federal IDEA funds may be allocated for students that Chicago Public Schools deems deserving of these services.
- Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of collaborative teaching, training opportunities and professional development.
- Counseling support may be available for students whose academic success is impacted by social-emotional challenges. The Student Support Services team work to proactively support students through guidance lessons focused on the IB profile learner traits.

Documentation

- Progress of students receiving accommodations and/or support will be monitored; documentation of all services provided on Student Support Plans which will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- Student Support Plans are confidential with the exception of teachers and staff who work directly with that student and/or their plan.
- Student Support Plans are considered part of a student's cumulative file and will be transferred with cumulative records in the case of school transfer or graduation.

Staff Development and Collaboration

- All teachers receive IB training to promote understanding of the IB philosophy, the school's IB policies, and components of the IB programs.
- Bi-weekly staff meeting time includes horizontal and vertical collaboration/conversation about curriculum, assessment, student learning and plans for differentiation.
- Daystar staff use their team planning time and other agreed upon meeting times to collaborate regarding individual student progress and strategies for differentiation.

Document Review

- The Inclusion Policy will be reviewed at least tri-annually by the Daystar Education Committee.
- This policy will be communicated to stakeholders via Daystar policy manuals available in the school office, online, and as requested.

References

- Candidates with special assessment needs (occ.ibo.org)
- Special Education and Learning Needs Guide (occ.ibo.org)

PYP Inclusion Policy Committee Members

Tami Doig, Head of School

Paris Williams, PYP Coordinator

Alison Good, MYP Coordinator

Cassi Moore, Director of Student Support Services

Kat Worgen, Title 1 Coordinator

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