

# **West High School IB Special Education Assessment Needs**

## **Philosophy:**

The faculty and staff of the West High School International Baccalaureate Program strive to build a community that is supportive of all students and will make every effort to ensure that all students are provided the necessary support to allow them to achieve academic success as they progress through the IB Program.

## **Mission:**

Salt Lake City School District Special Education department assists schools in ensuring that identified students with disabilities receive special education and related services in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Education Act (IDEIA) and the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). A full-range of Special Education programs and related services are available from preschool to post-high school transition.

## **Policy:**

In order to provide appropriate services and interventions for student success, Salt Lake City School District and West High School's IB community acknowledges the following United States' requirements.

Three existing federal statutes address the rights of children with disabilities to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE): Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). FAPE is a civil right rooted in the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States constitution which includes Equal Protection and Due Process clauses.

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the United States Department of Education (ED). Section 504 provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance... West High School and the IB Program fall under this category of agency.

State and Federal laws must be followed and the appropriate accommodations must be made. The U.S. government guarantees each preschool and school age child an education in the least restrictive environment (aligned with IB Philosophies). Schools must provide this education to all handicapped students between the ages of 3 and 21 years. This was written into federal law as PL 94-142, passed in 1975. Since then the law has been modified and refined by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA 2004).

The IDEA act requires that public schools create an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for each student who is found to be eligible under both the federal and state eligibility/disability standards. The IEP is the cornerstone of a student's educational program. It specifies the services to be provided and how often; describes the student's present levels of performance and how the student's disabilities affect academic performance, and specifies accommodations and modifications to be provided for the student. (Public Law 108-466 – 108<sup>th</sup> Congress)

West High School's IB Programs, both the Diploma Program and the IB Career Certificate Program, embraces the philosophy and ideals of IB. West High School acknowledges that the student is at the center of the program as expressed through the IB Learner Profile. All IB teachers are expected to teach their students who are identified as having Special Education Needs.

Students are advised upon program entry of the rigorous program requirements to ensure appropriate placement and academic success in coursework. In addition to employing teaching strategies that include differential for students with special needs, students are also supported through special arrangements if necessary. The IB publication, *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs*, will be referenced to provide support for program completion. The Diploma Program and IBCC Program Coordinator will submit to the IB the appropriate D1 or D2 accommodations form, along with necessary documentation, requesting Assessment modifications when needed for individual students.

“The IB believes that all candidates must be allowed to take their examinations under conditions that are as fair as possible. Where normal examination conditions and assessment procedures would put candidates at a disadvantage and prevent them from being able to demonstrate their skills and knowledge adequately, reasonable forms of accommodation may be authorized” (Handbook of Procedures for the Diploma Programme 2013, 77). These individual needs may include, but are not limited to learning disabilities; autism spectrum disorders; and/or physical, sensory, medical or mental health issues. We believe in supporting all of our students, including those with special needs, so that conditions for the program are as fair and equitable as possible.

West High School recognizes that the IB program assesses students on both content and process. For some students with special needs this creates increased challenges. A 504 or Special Education team, comprised of the student, the parent, teachers, counselors, the IB Coordinator, and administrators at the school and district level will meet together to discuss particular special education challenges as related to the IB program. Students and parents should be apprised of specific IB course requirements prior to and throughout the process of earning the IB Diploma or the IBCC so as to increase success in both the courses and exams. We recognize the need for all stakeholders, including the student, to work together to make fair and appropriate accommodations for his/her success. Requested accommodations may include, but are not limited to additional time, computer use, appropriate adaptive tools, testing in a less distracting environment.

Salt Lake City School District is currently undergoing a study of high ability students with special education needs, utilizing personal interviews as a research method. Based on the findings of the study, we anticipate increased communication, improved understanding, and better individual services for our IB students throughout their participation in the program.

**Acknowledgements:**

- IB Publication: *Special Education Needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes*. (August 2010)
- IB Publication: *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs* (March 2007)
- Building the Legacy of IDEA 2004 [www.idea.ed.gov](http://www.idea.ed.gov)
- US Dept. of Education. Protecting Students with Disabilities. [www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq](http://www2.ed.gov/print/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq)
- Salt Lake City School District Board Policy S-12: Equal Educational Opportunities for Students with Disabilities <http://slcschools.org/policies/Student-Policies.php>