

HT IB Inclusive Education Policy

Purpose

We, as an IB World school, recognize that students come from a variety of backgrounds. We believe that each student has different learning strengths, challenges, styles, and life experiences. It is the responsibility of each staff member to support students in their individual learning journeys. Multiple teaching strategies are executed to differentiate instruction and make learning accessible to all.

This policy contains information which guides our practice with respect to students with diverse learning needs.

We are committed to:

- providing a faith based education to all students in our school that is designed for student success
- developing common understandings that take into account human rights, diversity, equity and quality
- using all methods of assessment (diagnostic, formative, summative, and evaluative) to reduce or remove barriers and to increase a students' access to curriculum in the learning and teaching cycle
- creating and implementing individualized program plans or accommodations for any student who requires support.
- implementing a whole-school approach to creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that supports the mental health of students
- educating staff on mental health issues
- informing teachers of best practices in working with students who require specialized supports

Inclusion

Definitions

Edmonton Catholic Schools: Administrative Procedure 213

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of and belonging for all children and students. Educational practices that are flexible and responsive to the strengths and needs of individual students can create inclusive learning experiences that ensure all students are successful. For our students, flexible learning environments include instruction and support in a grade level classroom with same-aged peers; individualized instruction in smaller group settings; a specialized classroom or setting; one-on-one instruction; a program of choice; or a combination of these learning environments. Parents and – where appropriate – students, are to have meaningful participation in the education decisions regarding placement and program.



Alberta Education: Inclusive Education

Alberta's education system is built on a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students. Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all children and students.

To support children and students in attaining the goals as stated in the Ministerial Order on Student Learning, school authorities must ensure that all children and students (Kindergarten to Grade 12), regardless of race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, or any other factor(s), have access to meaningful and relevant learning experiences that include appropriate instructional supports.

International Baccalaureate: Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion is an organizational paradigm that involves change. It is a continual process of increasing learning and participation for all students. It addresses learning support requirements and questions the broader objectives of education, the nature of pedagogy, curriculum and assessment. It is an educational approach to which all schools should aspire. Inclusion is facilitated in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem-solving involving the whole school community.

Differentiation

As reflected in our yearly school goals, our staff is committed to refining their understanding and implementation of inclusive strategies to support all learners. The implementation of these strategies are seen within every classroom through various tools, strategies and accommodations.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

In a universally designed learning environment, teachers provide multiple opportunities for students to understand content, express their knowledge and engage in learning. The 'multiple means' approach allows all children to engage in a variety of activities which should capture their agency, learning needs, learning styles and personal preferences.

- multiple Means of Representation (present information and content in different ways).
- multiple Means of Action and Expression (differentiate the ways that students can express what they know).
- multiple Means of Engagement (stimulate interest and motivation for learning).

UDL makes use of educational technologies to focus on learning rather than on content, and works in a flexible and fluid manner to eliminate the barriers to learning.



Flexible and responsive supports include:

- universal supports – incorporated into the environment for all learners, such as flexible learning resources and technologies, differentiated instruction and positive behaviour supports
- targeted strategies or interventions – for learners who need more specialized learning opportunities or access to more specialized expertise
- specialized/Individualized supports – that directly relate to individual learning needs such as the use of sign language interpreters, alternative and augmentative communication systems (ACC), or mental health support

Student Supports offered in our School

Students can access support from Student Services at any time during the school day.

Student Services staff include:

- Instructional Coach
- School Counselor
- Graduation Coach
- Counselling Therapist
- EAL Designate (English as an additional language)
- FSLW (Family School Liaison Worker)
- School Resource Officer (Edmonton Police Services)
- Educational Assistants
- Braided Journeys Graduation Coach

Role of the Instructional Coach

The Instructional Coach assists teachers when providing the most appropriate learning strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of all students. The Instructional Coach also helps students who are struggling academically, to advocate for themselves leading to high school completion. The Instructional Coach will liaise with teachers to provide and ensure appropriate accommodations for learning.

Role of the School Counselor

The role of the School Counsellor includes supporting students with the social/emotional, academic and post-secondary-vocational needs.

Duties include but are not limited to:

- Academic Assessments (KBit/WFAS)
- Crisis intervention (suicide risk assessments, coordinating Risk Team)
- Coordinating the Student Services Team (referrals and wrap around supports)
- Communication with staff when appropriate to support struggling students, both academic and with mental health
- Providing professional development to the staff about current mental health issues



Role of the Graduation Coach

The High School Graduation Coach works with students to ensure they are on track to graduate and are set up for life beyond high school.

Role of the Counseling Therapist

Counselling Therapists provide counselling services for students within a school environment. The job's focus is to address mental health related issues impacting students. Counselling Therapists collaborates with the Student Services team to enable present and future success.

Role of the English as an Additional Language Designate

EAL designates are responsible for determining student EAL proficiency benchmarks each year to determine their level of English. These assessments are then used to provide support and inclusive programming for EAL students.

Role of the Family School Liaison Social Worker

Family School Liaison Social Workers assist students and their families, by offering a range of services that support the academic, behavioural, social and emotional growth of students and families.

Some of these services include but are not limited to:

- Supportive and informal counselling
- Providing crisis intervention and prevention
- Connecting students and families with community resources, services and information
- Liaising between schools and families to facilitate increased positive contact through communication and understanding of individual student needs and circumstances
- Consult on such issues as attendance, ethnicity and diversity, mental health, behaviour management, discipline, crisis intervention and child abuse/neglect

Role of the School Resource Officer

The School Resource Officer program is a partnership between the Edmonton Catholic School Division and the Edmonton Police Service.

The School Resource Officer works closely with Student Services and aims to provide the students, staff and parents of Holy Trinity with someone they can speak to regarding problems, concerns or general questions they may have from a community-policing standpoint.

- Provides resources to staff and students by way of class presentations, counseling and everyday casual engagements with students
- Ensures that every student attending Holy Trinity feels safe, respected and listened to
- Supports parent questions or concerns
- Works closely with school administration and provides support with different issues that arise.



Role of the Educational Assistant

Under the direction of a teacher, support staff may work directly with students individually or in small groups to deliver activities that reinforce and advance the educational program. They also provide teachers with advice and suggestions. For example, they may assess how well students are functioning, administer standardized tests (but not make judgments on test results), observe and document behaviours as students participate in learning activities and, where appropriate, help plan the educational program. Together with teachers, educational assistants enrich the educational program by helping students gain the knowledge and skills they need to function in the classroom, the school and the larger community.

Duties include:

- One-on-one and group therapy and psycho-ed
- Collaborating with other staff members
- Writing treatment plans and reviewing student progress
- Supporting students to set and achieve meaningful mental health goals

Role of the Braided Journey's Graduation Coach

Braided Journeys Student Support Centres are committed to assisting student success by cultivating a caring, welcoming, and positive place where Indigenous students see themselves, their contributions, and their culture represented, respected, and celebrated. Each centre offers support, encouragement, and guidance throughout a student's educational journey.

Additional ECSD services available to our school/students:

- Inclusive Education Consultant
- Managers of Indigenous Services
- Our Lady of Grace Program for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

Role of the Division Inclusive Education Consultant

The Inclusive Education Consultants work with a cohort of schools toward the support of students and teachers in the inclusive classroom setting. The support provided can include any or all of the following: student observations, file review, programming recommendations, program planning, participant at parent meetings, individualized program plan development or instruction, assist with reporting to parents, sharing resources, professional development to build capacity within the classroom (student, teacher or school based).



Indigenous Learning Services

Support for Indigenous Students through programs such as Braided Journeys and a division-wide focus on staff and student learning about Indigenous histories and cultures. We will continue to learn the truth together, in hopes of one day building a relationship built on reconciliation and mutual respect between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.

Our Lady of Grace Program for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

Our Lady of Grace is an Edmonton Catholic School District Program that supports pregnant and parenting teens (female and male) while they are completing school.

Assessment

Inclusive assessment is about the on-going activities that allow educators and students to understand student progress and growth. Staff members utilize the four dimensions of assessment to continuously adjust instruction to address individual learning needs. Fundamental to inclusive assessment is the role of approaches to learning skills. These skills help students become self-regulated learners who set learning goals, ask good questions, generate motivation and perseverance, and reflect and make changes to their learning processes where necessary. The competencies inherent in the IB Learner Profile entice students to think about who they are as a learner and exercise their agency in the assessment process.

Further details about students who are receiving accommodations, or on an adapted or modified program can be found in our Assessment Policy.

Role of the Environment

Our school serves a diverse population of students and their families. We create a culture of respect for differences within a Catholic context. Learning environments are equipped with the necessary resources including, staff, access to technology, and print materials to support all learners. Various learning environments and alternative learning spaces are available to support diverse learning needs; the Learning Commons, a sensory room, exercise bikes, and stand up desks to name a few. Assistive technologies are provided for all students to provide equitable learning opportunities.

Learning Commons at Holy Trinity (Student Resource Centre)

The learning commons is a whole school approach to building a participatory learning community. It is the physical and virtual collaborative learning hub of the school. The intent of the Learning commons is one that encourages both “taking” (traditional library usage with checkouts and research) and “making” (innovative usage where students create, explore and design new information and learn new skills).



Safe Spaces

Safe Spaces is a joint initiative of the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and the Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities (SACSC). The Safe Spaces Initiative comprises a poster, brochure and sticker designed to identify your classroom and/or school as a safe and inclusive space where lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified and queer (LGBTQ) students, teachers, friends, families and allies are welcome and supported.

Principles of Inclusive Education

Affirming identity, value and support diversity

All DP staff encourage the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB learner profile promoting diversity and international mindedness. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner helps promote self-esteem.

Valuing prior knowledge

DP teachers will explicitly activate learners' prior understanding, use prior understandings to differentiate tasks and activities, record information in student learning profiles that will support planning for future differentiation, consider the time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge.

Removing barriers within learning environments

In keeping with best practice, DP teachers provide scaffolding to learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be much more difficult to accomplish. Scaffolding will foster learners' increasing independence in taking responsibility for developing strategies of their own. Some of the strategies in place include; visual aids, demonstrations, dramatizations, technological supports, collaborative groups, mother-tongue resources, and sensory tools.

High Expectations

Teachers help learners extend their learning by combining high expectations with numerous opportunities for learner centered practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences.

Mental Health Supports

As outlined in the Alberta Education and Edmonton Catholic Schools Strategic Plan for Mental Health, a well developed mental health strategic plan targets health promotion and prevention, early identification, early intervention, treatment and follow up. These plans support proactive strategies as part of a whole school approach in creating a welcoming, caring, respectful, safe learning environment. Students at Holy Trinity have access to social workers, counselors and mental health therapists. Our



schools emphasize the importance of human connection and sense of place in supporting the mental health of our students.

Data-driven Decision-Making

Data is collected and analyzed by teachers and administrators to make school or program improvements. Our schools gather data through the use of registration forms, accountability, IB surveys, and the school profile. The surveys inform decisions and directly link to the goals set forth in the school growth plan and IB strategic plan. Data also informs instructional decisions around literacy, numeracy and social emotional supports. The school profile is a tool that informs educators, the identified needs of students, areas of support needed, educational planning details and outside agency involvement.

Individual Program Plans (IPPs)

IPPs are required for all students identified with Alberta Education Exceptional Student Codes (40s, 50s, and 80). Specific information and criteria for each code is available through Alberta Education's Special Education Coding Criteria.

For students to receive accommodations on the Provincial Diplomas: "The student has been identified with an Exceptional Student Code and regularly uses the accommodation(s) for learning and testing purposes, based on an Individual Program Plan (IPP) which specifies their use or the student regularly uses the accommodation(s) for learning and testing purposes, based on an assessment that clearly identifies a diagnosis or a special academic need and that specifies that these accommodations are required as a result. This psychological, medical, academic and/or intellectual assessment must be no more than five years old and must have been completed by a qualified professional." Alberta Education, Test Accommodations for Students.

Edmonton Catholic School Division also offers Programs of Choice which allows for flexible and alternative pathways for learning.

Documentation and Reporting

Funding is allocated based on a school profile and impact learning statements. These students are in inclusive classrooms grades Pre-K-12, and qualify for coding.



References

Alberta Education. (2020). Guide to Education.

Edmonton Catholic School Division. (2021). Administrative Procedure 213.

Edmonton Catholic School Division. (2020). Mental Health Strategic Plan.

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International Baccalaureate. (2016). Learning diversity and inclusion in IB programmes.

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