



P.L. Dunbar Elementary School
School Code: 060328
Inclusion Policy

Introduction

At Dunbar Elementary School, grades PreK-5, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where every student is valued, respected, and provided with the opportunity to thrive. Our policy aligns with the mission and vision of Atlanta Public Schools (APS) and the International Baccalaureate (IB), emphasizing equity, diversity, and inclusion. We strive to ensure that each child, regardless of ability, background, or circumstance, can engage meaningfully in their educational journey.

Rationale

Inclusion is a core value of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and is vital for ensuring that all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, and learning needs, have access to high-quality education. This policy aligns with the IB's commitment to creating inclusive learning environments that foster respect, equity, and diversity. As a PYP World School, we are dedicated to recognizing and addressing the needs of students with disabilities, those who have 504 Plans, English language learners, students identified as EIP/REP, and gifted students. This policy ensures compliance with local, national, and international legal obligations while fostering an inclusive learning environment where all students can thrive.

Dunbar aims to:

- Promote equity and eliminate barriers to learning for all students.
- Provide an environment where diversity is respected and celebrated.
- Ensure that all students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), English Language Learners (ELL), and those from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, have the resources and support needed to succeed.
- Encourage an inclusive culture that fosters collaboration, empathy, and global mindedness.

Principles of Inclusion

- **Equity and Fairness:** All students will have equitable access to learning opportunities. Differentiation and scaffolding will be implemented to meet individual needs.
- **Student Agency:** Students will be empowered to take ownership of their learning and be active participants in shaping their educational experience.
- **Collaboration:** Teachers, parents, and community members will work together to support each student's success, promoting inclusion across all areas of the curriculum.
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching:** The curriculum will reflect and celebrate the diversity of our school community, promoting understanding, respect, and inclusion

Legal Obligations

- **Local Requirements (Atlanta Public Schools & Georgia State Law)**
 - Compliance with Georgia's state education regulations, including the Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Act, Georgia Department of Education's Rule 160-4-7-.02 (Eligibility Determinations), and requirements under the Georgia Board of Education for English language learners and students with 504 Plans.
- **National Requirements (United States Law)**
 - *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*: Ensuring students with disabilities have access to Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).
 - *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*: Prohibiting discrimination based on disability and ensuring accommodations for students with 504 Plans.
 - *Title III of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*: Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs) through equitable access to education and language support services.
 - *Gifted and Talented Students Education Act*: Ensuring gifted students receive appropriate enrichment and acceleration opportunities.
- **International Requirements (IB & Human Rights Law)**
 - *IB Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB Programmes*: Advocating for access and participation in learning for all students regardless of personal, social, or academic background.
 - *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)*: Promoting full and equal participation of people with disabilities in society, including their right to education without discrimination.
<https://social.desa.un.org/>
 - *United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*: Promoting inclusive education as a fundamental human right for every student globally.
<https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/08/unesco-united-nations-educational-scientific-and-cultural-organization/>

Inclusion in the Curriculum

The IB PYP curriculum is designed to be inclusive of all students. Through transdisciplinary themes and inquiry-based learning, we create opportunities for all students to engage in meaningful and authentic learning experiences. We aim to provide access to the curriculum for students with diverse abilities through differentiation, student agency, and inquiry-based approaches.

Links to Other School Policies

- **Assessment Policy:** Inclusive assessment practices are key, providing accommodations and ensuring that assessments reflect each student's true understanding and abilities.
- **Language Policy:** The language needs of English learners will be met through inclusive practices, supporting language development and fostering multilingualism.

Support for Students with Special Needs

We recognize that some students may require additional support to succeed in their learning. The school will provide appropriate interventions and accommodations for students with special educational needs, including but not limited to:

- **Students with Disabilities** will have IEPs and receive individualized support, accommodations, and access to appropriate assistive technologies.
- **Students with 504 Plans** will receive accommodations ensuring equal access to the learning environment, such as extended time on tests or modified assignments.
 - **Please refer to the link below:**
<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/194>
- **English Language Learners (ELLs)** will receive tailored language support services, scaffolding, and differentiated instruction to promote language acquisition and content comprehension.
 - **Please refer to the link below:**
<https://www.gadoe.org/School-Improvement/Federal-Programs/Documents/English%20Learner%20Programs/EL%20Language%20Programs%20-%20State%20Guidance%20Updated%2028%20July%202022.pdf>
- **EIP/REP Students:** Early Intervention Program (EIP) and Remedial Education Program (REP) students will benefit from targeted instruction, focused interventions, and additional learning opportunities.
- **Gifted Students:** Differentiation and extension opportunities will be provided to gifted students to challenge their abilities and foster intellectual growth by our **full-time gifted teacher**.
 - **Refer to the Atlanta Public Schools GATE link below:**
<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/20890>

MTSS/SST/RTI

Dunbar Elementary School utilizes a MTSS when determining the needs of students which includes Response to Intervention (RTI) and the Student Support Team (SST).

Tier 1-General grade level education/curriculum provided to all students including the PYP Units of Inquiry.

Tier 2-Intervention is provided to students who still show a need for support after receiving Tier 1 instruction.

Tier 3-Students who have not shown enough progress with the interventions provided at Tier 2 are identified for the SST process. They receive intensive intervention and support in their area of need.

Tier 4-Students who have been assessed and have qualified for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). These students include students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and Gifted and Talented students.

Please refer to the link for further information

<https://www.gadoe.org/wholechild/Pages/MultiTieredSystemofSupports.aspx>

Early Intervention Program (EIP)

Students identified to need additional support at the Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 levels can be provided services via the Early Intervention Program (EIP). These students have scored in the bottom 25 percentile on our district reading and math universal screener (NWEA MAP Assessment) and/or Level 1 on the state of Georgia's End of Grade assessment, the Georgia Milestones (GMAS). They receive support in reading and/or math from either their homeroom teacher during differentiated, small group instruction or intervention pull-out/push-in teachers. The Georgia Department of Education has approved the following delivery models for EIP services:

- Self-contained
- Pull-out
- Class Augmentation
- Reading Recovery
- Innovative

Dunbar incorporates a blend of models. We have self-contained EIP classrooms where students receive evidence-based interventions within a reduced class size to allow for focused, targeted instruction in reading and math for a small group of EIP students. We also utilize the class augmentation model where evidence-based interventions are incorporated into the general classroom setting using co-teaching instructional practices by providing an additional teacher. This also reduces the teacher/pupil ratio while providing EIP services.

Special Education/IEPs

Each student who has a qualifying disability is provided with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that has been developed by a collaborative process involving the school, parents, and other relevant personnel. Effective IEPs are individualized, child-centered, inclusive, and accessible.

The IEP outlines teaching strategies, resources, and supports necessary for the student to achieve their goals. A few of the services that are provided based on the IEP:

- Co-teaching within the general education classroom
- Supportive instruction within the general education classroom
- Consult services
- Small group instruction
- Self-contained classes
 - **Refer to the Atlanta Public Schools link below:**
<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/69497>

The inclusion policy applies to a range of stakeholders

- **School Administration/MTSS:** The school administration and MTSS are responsible for implementing and monitoring inclusion practices and ensuring compliance with legal requirements. This includes providing professional development for staff on inclusive education, allocating resources to support students with diverse needs, and promoting a school-wide culture of respect and inclusion.
- **Teachers:** Teachers are responsible for providing differentiated instruction that meets the needs of all learners, including EIP and gifted. This includes identifying and addressing barriers to learning, collaborating with support staff, and ensuring that students with specific learning needs have appropriate accommodations and modifications.
- **Students:** Students are encouraged to be respectful of diversity, demonstrate empathy toward their peers, and participate in inclusive practices. They will be supported to embrace challenges and grow both academically and personally.
- **Parents/Legal Representatives of Students:**
Parents are key partners in supporting the inclusion of their children. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in their child's learning, communicate with teachers about their child's needs, and support the inclusion practices at the school.
- **Support Staff:** Support staff are responsible for contributing to an inclusive and welcoming environment, offering assistance when/where needed.
- **Visitors:** Visitors to the school, including external service providers and community members, are expected to respect the inclusive values and policies of the school.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by Dunbar's Pedagogical Leadership Team (**PLT**). As local, state, and federal laws and policies change, the policy will be updated also.

Communication

The Dunbar Elementary School Inclusion Policy will be shared with teachers, students, and parents annually. The policy will be made available on the Dunbar Elementary School website and hardcopies will be available in the main office. The policy will also be shared during school Governance Team (GoTeam) meetings and during PTA meetings.

Sources:

IBO Access and Inclusion Policy Manual:

<https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/programmes/dp/pdfs/access-and-inclusion-policy-en.pdf>

Burgess Peterson Academy (BPA) Inclusion Policy:

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=119260&dataid=124000&FileName=BPA%20Inclusion%20Policy%20September%202023.pdf>

Atlanta Public Schools Department of Special Education

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/69497>

Atlanta Public Schools Gifted and Talented Education

<https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/20890>

GADOE Multi-Tiered System of Supports

<https://www.gadoe.org/wholechild/Pages/MultiTieredSystemofSupports.aspx>

Special Education Law: Parent to Parent of Georgia

[https://www.p2pga.org/roadmap/education/special-education-law/#:~:text=The%20Individuals%20with%20Disabilities%20Education,least%20restrictive%20environment%20\(LRE\)](https://www.p2pga.org/roadmap/education/special-education-law/#:~:text=The%20Individuals%20with%20Disabilities%20Education,least%20restrictive%20environment%20(LRE))

Rules and Laws for IB World Schools

https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/become-an-ib-school/pdfs/rules_for_ibws_e.pdf