



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

Philosophy

We believe that all learners have unique needs to consider when helping them to meet/exceed their academic and non-academic potential. To provide access to the IB PYP at Bolton Academy, we apply approaches and support systems that address the individual needs and varied learning styles of students, including those identified with special learning emotional needs. By recognizing the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of internationally minded people.

Practice

At Bolton Academy students with varying learning needs are educated in general education environments with appropriate support and services. Identified students receive support from teachers with specialized degrees and/or certifications in these areas through a co-teaching model. We build positive learning communities in which a culture of collaboration encourages and supports problem solving for all students. The district provides a continuum of placement where appropriate instruction is available to students with disabilities requiring special education in accordance with federal and state laws.

Differentiation

At Bolton Academy, all students receive instruction that enables them to succeed within the range of their approaches to learning, abilities and interests. Dynamic groupings within classrooms, tiered lessons, use of pre-assessments, diagnostic and formative assessments are used to discover students' strengths and areas to focus targeted instruction, open ended learning engagements, and provision of materials (such as leveled reading materials, enrichment activities, and choice menus) designed to address students' level of readiness.

Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying, with each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed goals.

Stakeholders at Bolton Academy

Bolton Academy's inclusion practices have several stakeholders for our inclusion policy to be successful among students with a variety of needs. The following personnel are vital to the implementation of this policy:





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

- Students
- Parents and Guardians
- Special Education Teachers
- Early Intervention Teachers
- School Psychologists
- Guidance Counselor
- Student Support Team Coordinator
- General Education Teachers
- Specials Teachers (Art, Music, P.E., Media, and Technology) and Spanish Teachers
- Board of Education Members
- Administrative Team

For the stakeholders that are employed with Bolton Academy, they will become aware of this policy through ongoing, job-embedded professional development. All others stakeholders will be made aware through the publication of this policy on public documents and media such as handbooks, and school website.

Definition of Inclusion at Bolton Academy

Inclusion at Bolton Academy consists of educating all students in their least restrictive environment where peers are together as much as possible. For most students, the least restrictive environment begins in the general classroom setting for academic subjects where two or more teachers work in a co-teaching environment to instruct students. However, students may receive instruction in a small group environment based off their Individualized Education Plans. The Gifted and Talented students receive services through the cluster and/or collaborative model. All students participate in specials and Spanish classes together in the whole class setting. Overall, students are in various tiers based on their needs, and regardless of their levels of instruction all students participate in the International Baccalaureate programme at Bolton Academy.

PYP Inclusive Education at Bolton Academy

The Bolton Academy PYP Programme consists of Pre-Kindergarten through 5th grades. Students remain in the whole class setting as much as possible, but based on students' needs there may be circumstances where students are taken out of the homeroom teacher's classroom based on IEP services. Even though students may need to be pulled out of the class based on their IEP services, Support Teachers continue to support the implementation of the unit of





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

inquiry. Bolton Academy supports students with special needs and the homeroom teachers that teach them through our special education team as well as through our gifted/talented team, student support team, guidance counseling services, medical services, and psychological services. (Standard B2: 8).

Due to the large amount of staff that have to collaboratively work together for students to be successful, Bolton Academy provides two planning periods for the homeroom teachers, so they can work together for collaborative planning. During collaborative planning, teachers brainstorm on the most effective, research based methods on how students can meet unified expectations. They plan differentiated lessons for students in various tiers of instruction based on what they know and what they can do

(Standard C3: 3, 9, 10). When planning, teachers also use the Programme of Inquiry (POI) that encompasses a scope of learning, student achievement, and reflection of diversity (Standard C2: 5,6,8). Much of this planning is based on data through Response to Intervention, Standardized test scores, and yearly benchmarks along with summative and formative assessments (Standard C1:5,6,7) (Standard C4:3). Conclusively, Bolton Academy works diligently through specialized services, collaboration, data, and reflection for all students to learn.

The Local, National, and International Legal Inclusion Obligations of Bolton Academy

Bolton Academy is obligated to follow local, state, federal, and [international laws](#) regarding students specifically with 504s and IEPs. Please read the legal obligations from each agency.

Local Agency-Atlanta Public Schools

- ***Response to Intervention***

Atlanta Public Schools follows Georgia's four-tiered Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions to provide appropriate and effective Response to Intervention services, which incorporates universal screening, targeted interventions, and a team approach to decision making and the development and implementation of services.

Tiers I and II Interventions are facilitated in the general education environment by grade level teams. Student data is utilized to make decisions regarding intervention needs and movement between tiers.





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

Tier III Interventions and services are facilitated by the Student Support Team (SST) and implemented by the teacher for a longer specified time. The SST Specialist ensures the process is followed and team decisions are made according to the outcome of data, indicating student progress.

Tier IV Interventions and services are facilitated through specialized programs or instructional delivery models such as the Program for Exceptional Children, English Language Learners, or Gifted Instruction.

- ***Early Intervention Program***

Children start school at a designated chronological age, but differ greatly depending on their development and experiences. The Early Intervention Program (EIP) is designed for students in grades kindergarten through fifth who are at risk of not reaching or maintaining academic grade level performance in reading or mathematics. The program is designed to provide intervention services for qualifying students to remediate foundational skills needed for academic success. It provides additional instructional support and resources to help students who are performing below grade level obtain the necessary academic skills in the shortest possible time.

Program Structure

The program design is developed in coordination with regular instruction and other educational programs. Development and evaluation of the program involves teachers, administrators, and parents at the school level. The Early Intervention Program includes three components:

Teaching Staff- Early Intervention Program is staffed by certified teachers with experience and expertise in teaching students with diverse needs and abilities. Early intervention funds provide additional staff beyond that provided through regular classroom funds.

Instructional Segments of Service - A segment for grades K-3 is defined as a minimum of 45 minutes daily. A segment for grades 4-5 is defined as a minimum of 50 minutes of daily instruction.

Reduced-Class Size Model- This model allows for the combination of EIP students with other student populations in smaller classroom communities. The reduced class size model uses a sliding scale in which the overall class size reduces as the number of EIP students increases.





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

The expectation of this model is that the teacher will provide all students with greater instructional support because the teacher has fewer students at a given time.

- ***Student Support Team***

The Student Support Team is a state-mandated and school-based intervention process. As outlined in Georgia's Student Achievement Pyramid of Interventions, Student Support Team Compliance serves as the basis for facilitation of Tier 3-Response to Intervention services.

The purpose of the Student Support Team is to provide support to both students and teachers with the outcome being to improved student performance.

(GaDoe: SST Resource Manual, 2008)

The Response to Intervention/Student Support Team (RTI/SST) is committed to providing training, resources, and guidance to grade-level teams to help ensure the delivery of high quality instruction, research-based interventions, progress monitoring, and prompt identification of at-risk students.

Student Support Teams are comprised of students, interdisciplinary teachers, support staff, nurse, psychologist, special education lead teachers, parents, translators (as needed), specials teachers, and other specialist as needed. The team uses a systematic, problem-solving approach to address learning and/or behavioral difficulties experienced by students. This includes neurodivergent students, students who are experiencing a lack of academic progress, and those eligible for Section 504 Plan or are in need of homebound instruction.

- ***Section 504***

Congress prohibited discrimination against persons with disabilities in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in a segment most often referred to simply as 'Section 504.' This was a broadly worded prohibition that covers both children and adults. It applies to programs that receive any federal financial assistance.





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against individuals whose physical or mental impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities, including: caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, and learning.

- 504 accommodations are implemented to ensure equity for all students with disabilities within the general education setting
- Section 504 accommodation plan are created and monitored through the Student Support Team.

- **Special Education**

The Atlanta Public Schools' special education programs are founded on the belief that students with disabilities will receive a quality education that will lead to meaningful academic, social, emotional and behavioral outcomes for our students. For students with 504 plans, Bolton Academy is compliant with the Americans with Disability Act ([ADA](#)) guidelines.

- **Gifted and Talented**

Philosophy

Through advocacy and innovation the unique needs of gifted and talented students will be recognized, valued, and nurtured so their inspired minds are equipped to change the world.

Legal Regulations

State Agency-State of Georgia Department of Education (GADOE)

Bolton Academy is subject to follow legal regulations from the State of Georgia Department of Education ([GADOE](#)).

Federal Agency-United States Department of Education (ED)

Bolton Academy is subject to follow legal regulations from the United States Department of Education ([USDOE](#)).





SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

BOLTON ACADEMY

With our special education services, Bolton Academy is compliant with guidelines from the Individual with Disabilities Education Act ([IDEA](#))

Confidentiality of Student Records at Bolton Academy

Bolton Academy's confidentiality of students' records reflects the policy guidelines in the Parental Rights for Special Education. The The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (**FERPA**) also ensures that all students' educational records are private. Bolton Academy also adheres to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (**HIPAA**) guidelines to ensure that data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information are honored. Parents can ask to have copies of only their child's records. School employees involved with a particular student may see a child's records and do not require a parent's permission. Nonetheless, they are obligated to keep a child's records confidential to parties that are not involved with that particular student. Besides school employees, no one else may see the results of a child's records without the parental consent.

Technological Resources at Bolton Academy

Bolton Academy has worked diligently to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that teachers and students have access to technology. Each classroom at Bolton Academy is equipped with a SmartBoard and at least 4 desktop computers. Each grade level is assigned a ChromeBook cart that houses 30-35 chromebooks to be shared between 4 classrooms. There are 4 I-Pad carts, 2 laptop carts for check-out in the Media Center, as well as 20-25 desktop computers with a printer access for use inside of the Media Center. Each grade level is equipped with a printer and the district has ensured that each certified staff is provided with a laptop. In this technological age, we continue to increase our stock in this area so that our students can continue to reach out across the globe in our quest for international mindedness.

