

The Ronald Edmonds Learning Center

An International Baccalaureate MYP Candidate School



REL C

Inclusion Policy
2023-24

Philosophy

RELC is committed to becoming a school where the academic achievement of students is no longer predicted by a student's race, level of income, gender, disability, sexual orientation, mobility, or initial proficiencies. Because of this, the staff strives to include each student in a full MYP experience and to provide academic, behavioral, and social support to students who need it.

Purpose

RELC develops life-long learners and global citizens who recognize the value of service to their learning, their community, and the world.

Our Instructional Leadership team's goal guides our commitment to the success of each learner.

IB (International Baccalaureate) MYP Team Goal: WE empower all students to achieve post-high school success.

For "all students" to "achieve post-high school success," our school has implemented structures that enable us to communicate about the needs of each learner, identify goals for personalized growth, and monitor progress. For RELC staff, our commitment to each student transcends compliance with the laws of the United States, the State of New York, and the policies of the New York City School District 13. We passionately believe that we must support the success of each learner in the Middle Years Program so that the student can thrive in high school and be prepared for whatever path he or she wants to pursue.

Access to the MYP:

Every RELC student is an IB-MYP student. The focus of a balanced education considers instructing the whole child, and for some students, this may mean placement in a district-supported environment that best suits the needs of that learner. No placement is possible without evaluations, observations, and assessments by a team of qualified teachers, and without consultation and collaboration with parents/guardians, per New York State and Federal law. Within each of these placements, students still have access to the MYP.

Practices

The following IB-identified practices promote equal access to the curriculum across the continuum and are essential to the development of the whole person.

- I. *Affirming identity and building self-esteem*: Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem.
- II. *Valuing prior knowledge*: New learning and understanding are constructed on previous experiences and conceptual understandings in a developmental continuum.
- III. *Scaffolding*: Scaffolding is a temporary strategy that enables learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be impossible or much more difficult to accomplish. Scaffolding should foster learners' increasing independence in taking responsibility for developing strategies for their learning, thus always extending the zone of proximal development.
- IV. *Extending learning*: Learners extend their learning by combining lofty expectations with numerous opportunities for learner-centered practice and interaction with cognitively rich materials and experiences. Learners who read extensively, both inside and outside an IB program, have far greater opportunities to extend their academic language and concepts than those whose reading is limited.

Inclusion

- I. To provide the least restrictive environment for learning, RELC has adopted the inclusion model. Inclusion is an ongoing process that increases both access and engagement in learning by identifying and removing barriers. Inclusion values and supports diversity in the classroom and among the school community. All students have the fundamental legal right to and the reciprocal benefits of inclusive education. Teachers build scaffolds for inclusion by using all supports. Students receive additional support from Special Education teachers who have specialized skills in math, reading, and study skills. This model allows teachers to maximize resources for the support of learning.

Differentiation

- I. Differentiated instruction is classroom instruction that is designed to meet individual needs. The use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction. Four classroom elements can be differentiated based on student readiness, interest, and/or learning profile:
 - a. *Content* – what the student needs to learn or how the student will get access to the information.
 - b. *Process* – activities in which the student engages to make sense of or master the contents.
 - c. *Products*– Culminating projects that ask the student to rehearse, apply, and extend what he or she has learned in a unit; and
 - d. *Learning Environment* – The way the classroom works and feels; routines, relationships, and how materials and resources are structured, and creating a safe environment

Assessment

- I. Assessment can be differentiated with a range of entry and exit points. Assessment should be diverse and relevant to the learner. The purposes and outcomes of the assessment process must be explicit. Refer to The RELC Assessment Policy for more information.

Special Education Structure:

- I. *Special Education Resource*: These students are part of mainstream instruction 50% or more each day. They receive a combination of differentiated mainstream instruction, with selected intervention classes for math, literacy, and/or study/organization skills.
- II. *Speech and Language Pathology Students*: These students need some form of communication support and receive pull-out services from the speech and language pathologist.
- III. *SLC (Student Life Center)*: The SLC is a Small Learning Environment with a focus on academics, behavior management, and social/emotional skills. These students are in mainstream classes with educator assistants and have an elective for emotional regulation strategies. The SLC is designed as a support when students need a different learning environment.
- IV. *SRC (Structured Resource Center)* This is SETTS based and self-contained environment that supports students with elevated levels of needs. In this environment, students focus on communication and life skills while being supported with their individualized educational goals.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Of the school:

- I. Provide Special Education services for students in line with State and Federal mandates. This includes but is not limited to, adhering to the proper timeline for meetings, following a student's Individualized Education Plan or 504 Plan*, and creating a master schedule that allows students access to the MYP curriculum as appropriate.
- II. IB MYP coordinator will work with staff to articulate the requirements of IB to maximize a student's MYP experience and personal growth.

Of the teacher:

- III. Classroom teachers will work with resource staff as needed to meet the requirements of a student's Individualized Education Plan or their 504 Plan. *Students, when possible, will participate in all eight subjects of the MYP curriculum. They will differentiate their lessons as best practice for classroom teachers.*
- IV. They will utilize MYIB.org or seek guidance from resource staff, including the IB site coordinator, as needed.
- V. They will communicate the expectations for a student, particularly in the case of a modified grade, promptly.
- VI. Will maintain professionalism regarding the confidentiality of student information.
- VII. Will use the language of the IB (Learner Profile, Approaches to Learning, Areas of Interaction) to help students document their growth over time.

Of the parents and students:

- VIII. Families will communicate their concerns about their student's progress in the classroom promptly.
- IX. Parents will provide necessary documentation requested by Resource staff if it is necessary to report to the IB.
- X. Families will encourage regular school attendance, will help foster the attributes of the Learner Profile, and will give students opportunities to be contributing members of their community.

* A student on a 504 Plan is not considered a special education student and the counselor, not the special education teachers, coordinates with teachers.

Policy Review Process:

A steering committee will review the inclusion policy annually. It will be revised as needed to reflect current best practices. Once the policy has been reviewed and revised by the steering committee, it will be shared with the program pedagogical leadership teams for final notes and feedback. Upon completion, the policies will be shared with all stakeholders.

All policies will be published on the school website where they can be accessed by students and community members.

Inclusion Policy Steering Committee:

Ghany Alexander: MYP Coordinator
Carmen Coward: MYP Language & Literature Teacher
Tiffani Davis: MYP Individuals & Societies Teacher
Nathan Matsui: CP Coordinator
Tamika Thomas-Murray: MYP Science Teacher/ Peer Collaborative Teacher
Tayzah Peeples: MYP SPED/Language & Literature Teacher
Carlos Vargas: MYP Individuals & Societies Teacher/UFT Chapter Leader
Tiffany Pierre: MYP Guidance Counselor
Jasmyn Washington: MYP Visual Arts Teacher

The final policy was shared with all teachers during a professional development session devoted to developing an understanding of all school policies. In the future, teachers will continue to receive annual professional development in all school policies.

This policy has also been posted on the RELC website along with the RELC Academic Integrity Policy, RELC Assessment Policy, and RELC Language Policy.

Each year in June immediately following the end of the school year, this policy will be revisited using data from the closing school year, new research, and input from all representatives and revised accordingly. The updated policy will again be posted on the RELC website.

As with other RELC information, students and parents who are new to RELC will be made aware of all four school policies.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The Ronald Edmonds Learning Center is a candidate school* for the MYP. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy-a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education that we believe is important for our students.

*Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programs: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme (DP), or the Career-related Programme (CP).

Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted.

For further information about the IB and its programs, visit <http://www.ibo.org>

