

Bear Valley International School (BVIS)

Inclusion/Special Educational Needs Policy

Philosophy

BVIS operates with an inclusive philosophy; there are no admission requirements, nor an application of any kind. Furthermore, equity is one of the Denver Public Schools' (DPS) core values, and we believe all students deserve access to quality schools regardless of their background or where they live in Denver. All DPS students are guaranteed admission to their neighborhood school; however, if they want or need to attend a different school, they can participate in the district's SchoolChoice program.

In the general education classrooms, teachers expect participation from all students at all times. Regardless of skill or cognitive ability, all BVIS students benefit from an IB education, particularly the inquiry-based and concept-driven curriculum, Approaches to Learning skills, international-mindedness, and Learner Profile.

External Requirements

The following documents are federal, state and district documents that formalize the services that students receive.

- Individualized Educational Plan (IEP): from IDEA, provides accommodations and modifications and services (as appropriate)
- 504: from Americans with Disabilities Act, provides accommodations due to learning challenges and/or medical issues
- READ plan: monitors students reading below grade level
- Advanced Learning Plan (ALP): articulates grouping strategies, extensions, enrichment, alternative content, and curriculum compacting
 - It is important to note that sometimes students can be “twice exceptional,” which means that they have both an IEP for a learning disability or other qualification category and an ALP for gifted and talented ability.
- English Language Acquisition (ELA) plans: monitor language development for students with No English Proficiency (NEP), Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and Fluent English Proficiency (FEP)

Tools

A wide variety of formal and informal educational assessments are used to determine present levels of performance in reading, writing and math including but not limited to

- Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI): identifies reading Lexile level
- ACCESS: measures proficiency in English
- Interim assessments: measure the learning of reading, writing, and mathematics curricula
- District World Languages exams: measure fluency in Spanish
- Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS): measures achievement of state standards in science, social studies, language arts and mathematics

- Achieve3000: measures and monitors reading ability by Lexile

Multi-Intensive Center

The Multi-Intensive (MI) center-based program is staffed with a special education teacher and paraprofessionals. Each student is assessed according to their individual needs and the IEP process is implemented.

The program strives to utilize the inclusion model of education. This means the students are included within the general education environment when possible. Many students in the MI center begin their days in Learning Communities and attend Integrated Arts classes with their peers. Furthermore, many attend small math and literacy skills classes. The special education teacher collaborates with the general education teachers to provide support and specifically designed instruction to meet the unique needs of all students.

Special Educational Needs

Most identified students at BVIS receive in-class accommodations and modifications implemented in collaboration with the special education case manager and general education teacher per the IEP. Open communication between the teacher, case manager, and parents is essential for supporting the students receiving these services. BVIS provides a continuum of special ed services based on student needs. Services range from in class support to targeted small group support to adapted Lang & Lit and math classes taught by highly qualified special educators.

Needs in language: Outside of the center-based programs, the educational needs of our students span a range and vary in complexity. Approximately 40% of our students are significantly below grade level in reading, so they receive additional support, specifically comprehension. Some of these students take an “elective” course, called Literacy Skills, instead of Language Acquisition. Many of our students on IEPs receive needed supports through adapted Language and Literature taught by special education teachers. For 15% of our students, English is not their mother tongue, and these receive supports through English Language Development (ELD).

Needs in math: Many of our students are not yet proficient in math; therefore, we have a math intervention team to push into general ed classes and pull out small groups as needed. Additionally, many of our students on IEPs receive needed supports through adapted math courses taught by special education teachers.

Gifted and talented. Our gifted and talented teacher provides supports, mostly through pull-out groups, for our students with ALPs who need curricula beyond grade level. Many GT students’ ALP needs and goals are met through collaboration between classroom teachers and the GT teacher (for example, focusing on depth and complexity during unit projects).

A goal of the GT program is for students to move toward owning and participating in the creation of their ALP goals and programming. Students also have the opportunity to experience extracurricular activities designed to enrich gifted learners such as Destination Imagination and Mathletics.

Response to Intervention (RTI)

When students are not experiencing the success they could be, grade level teams utilize the RTI process to identify what is working, identify research-based interventions and supports that match the identified need, and develop a plan to replicate current successes and provide opportunities for further successes in identified areas of need. If a student needs additional supports, either academic or non-academic, the team works to ensure those supports are put into place. Typically, the school tries tailored interventions for 4-6 weeks with the student, then evaluate for success, and make adjustments as necessary.

Committee Members

Katie Vandiver, MYP coordinator; Kindra Cook, Special Educator and Team Lead; Chase Dreiling, Multi-Intensive Center teacher; Coza Perry, Gifted Educator

Committee members will regularly review and revise all MYP policies as needed. Communication of any changes will be presented to all stakeholders.