



W. H Council Traditional School – an IB World School IB PYP Inclusion Policy

Established: February 2016

Revised: November 2020

Philosophy

W. H. Council Traditional School understands that all learners have different characteristics and needs to consider as they strive to meet and/or exceed their academic and non-academic potential. We apply approaches and support systems that address the individual needs and varied learning styles of students, including those identified with special needs. Our vision is to have seamlessly integrated inclusion services throughout all disciplines and grade levels so that our students have every opportunity to be successful in the IB PYP Programme. Furthermore, by recognizing the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of internationally minded people.

Purpose

The Inclusion Policy guides our practice:

- To maintain open access to the Primary Years Programme for all students
- To validate and enhance the efforts of our learning community to meet the educational needs of all students
- To define the roles, rights and shared responsibilities of stakeholders
- To unite the IB continuum within our school
- To define the structures and systems needed to support all students
- To align resources with adopted standards

Practices

Differentiation

All students receive research-based instruction from highly qualified teachers. Differentiation is seen as the process of identifying, within each learner, the most effective strategies for achieving agreed upon goals. Dynamic groupings within classrooms, tiered lessons, and the use of pre-assessments and formative assessments are used to uncover students' strengths and areas of need. Students receive targeted instruction, open-ended learning engagements, and provision of materials (such as leveled reading materials, enrichment packets, choice menus, and online reading/math programs) designed to address all student levels of readiness.

Access to intervention services is provided for struggling students using the universal screening process, grades, and teacher input. Struggling students are given Tier II and Tier III targeted intervention through the classroom teacher and/or are pulled out for small group instruction with the reading or math coach. After school tutoring provided by highly qualified teachers is also offered to students that are underperforming in math and reading. The Problem-Solving Team (PST) works with the classroom teacher to implement the services and interventions that address a student's specific needs and helps to identify special education students.

Additionally, students that excel academically are identified, and provisions are made to meet their needs. Advanced students may participate in more rigorous teacher created activities in the classroom or be recommended for the gifted program. In addition to the acceleration process, independent projects may be assigned by the gifted teacher.

Many extracurricular activities are offered to Council students. These extracurricular activities include but are not limited to Geography Club, Geology Club, Robotics, Math Team, dance lessons, strings instruction, and piano lessons.

Affirming Identity and Building Self Esteem

Provided opportunities to affirm and support the diverse affective needs of students include:

- 30-minute weekly guidance lessons for grades K-2 and 45-minute guidance lessons for grades 3-5 every two weeks
- Quarterly Council Accelerated Reader Program (CARP) celebrations recognize students who meet their Accelerated Reader point goal with 85% accuracy.
- IB Students of the Week are recognized from each class based on monthly IB Learner Profile focus
- Quarterly Honors Assemblies recognize students with honor roll and/or perfect attendance.
- One IB student from each class is recognized quarterly during the Honors Assembly. These students exhibit many attributes of the IB learner profile on a consistent basis and receive a pin to be worn on their lapel for one quarter.
- Quarterly IB Newsletter
- P.E. Classes of the Week
- Random Acts of Kindness recognition
- PTA Council's Got Talent (talent show) or Themed Fashion Show (multicultural)
- Elementary Student Council
- National Elementary Honor Society
- Girls Engaged in Math and Science (GEMs)
- Learner Profile board (highlights students exhibiting monthly learner profile focus)

Response to Intervention (RtI) Process

We are required to use the Response to Intervention (RtI) model to identify and serve students who require additional academic and/or behavioral support. The Response to Intervention (RtI) Process includes support for students, teachers, and parents. The Problem-Solving Team (PST) is comprised of the administrator, classroom teachers, reading and math intervention teachers, and the counselor. This team brainstorms and provides ideas for teachers to implement in the classroom that are specific to each student referred.

Support for Students

Classroom interventions based on recommendations provided by the school Problem Solving Team (PST) are implemented and data is collected weekly to determine student progress.

The PST model follows these steps:

- 1) Identify the student's needs, i.e. the specific academic skill or behavior to be targeted
- 2) Analyze the problem
- 3) Set goals and identify research-based programs and/or strategies for helping the student improve in their area(s) of need
- 4) Progress monitor with the current universal screener at least every 4 weeks to determine if the interventions are working, and, if not, what interventions need adjusting or if new interventions need to be added.
- 5) Behavior is monitored through Insights to Behavior.

Special Education Services

If a student does not show growth after several interventions have been tried, he/she is referred for an evaluation. The forms of assessment are determined by the suspected exceptionality. Testing for speech, behavior, and physical/motor skills are also conducted if determined to be appropriate.

Students who qualify for special education services can have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed to meet their needs. However, it is often difficult for students who need intensive accommodations to keep up with the pace of the magnet school accelerated academic program. Many

times, the option of returning to their home school is considered as their least restrictive environment. Other students, after being determined eligible, may have their learning needs met through a 504 plan.

Gifted Services (GT)

Gifted students are those who perform or have demonstrated the potential to perform at high levels in academic or creative fields. These children require services not ordinarily provided by the regular school program.

Gifted students may demonstrate the following characteristics:

- takes initiative
- shows leadership
- demonstrates extensive exploratory behaviors
- takes creative risks
- uses ideas and learning in new situations
- shows persistence
- becomes passionately interested in a topic or idea
- chooses difficult tasks
- displays a keen sense of humor
- expresses thoughts with ease, often at great length
- shows exceptional ingenuity
- uses effective and often inventive strategies for recognizing/solving problems

Students must be enrolled in a public school and be at least six years of age in order to be referred, evaluated and served. A student may be referred for gifted services by teachers, counselors, administrators, parents/guardians, peers, self or any other individual with knowledge of the student's abilities. Also, second grade students go through the Child Find process and are identified for referral after all the data has been collected.

For each referral, information is gathered in the following three areas:

- 1) Aptitude - individual or group test of intelligence or creativity
- 2) Characteristics - behavior rating scale designed to assess gifted behaviors (completed by classroom teacher)
- 3) Performance - three indicators of performance at the gifted level (i.e. achievement test scores, grades, products, work samples, portfolios, leadership, motivation)

The scores from the assessments/items used are entered on a matrix where points are assigned according to established criteria. The total number of points earned determines if the student qualifies for gifted services.

Once a student is identified as GT:

- parents are notified and asked if they consent to student participation in the gifted program (PACE)
- a Gifted Education Plan (GEP) meeting is held to discuss gifted program components and familiarize parents with the PACE curriculum

W. H. Council Traditional School offers direct Gifted Services in a GT resource room for a period of three hours weekly for students in Gr. 3-5, as well as, enhanced curriculum services. You may find more information on these services at "Mobile County Public Schools: Gifted Education." site.

<https://www.mcps.com/gifted>.

Support for Faculty

All teachers are trained on the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework, Insights to Behavior, and recognition of dyslexia. Also, the counselor and several administrative staff are trained to complete the BASC 2-SOS.

The Problem-Solving Team (PST) supports teachers of students who are not making adequate progress by working with the teacher to provide individualized ideas to implement in the classroom for each child referred.

Support for Parents

Council Traditional School provides numerous opportunities for parents to learn about support systems for students with academic concerns within the school and community settings, including:

- Multiple Parent Meetings
- Parent Nights (Open House, PTA meetings, Spanish Night, Science Night, Literacy Night, and Math Night)
- Monthly Bulletins
- Parent-teacher conferences
- School website
- Statewide Parenting Day
- Mobile County Public School System (MCPSS) website
- Communication and Evaluation of Policy

The Problem-Solving Team (PST) supports parents of students who are not making adequate progress by accepting parent referrals for those students.

Rights and Responsibilities

It is both the right and responsibility of teachers to refer students who have special needs in any area for additional assistance and to follow up with implemented strategies to determine if they are working or need to be adjusted.

It is both the right and responsibility of parents to refer students who have special needs in any area and to assist with the strategies determined to be of benefit for them in the home setting.

It is the right of students to be served in their least restrictive environment and challenged to meet their potential. It is the responsibility of students to show growth in all areas of learning by listening, participating, and asking questions during instruction, as well as to be cooperative with those working with them.

Policy on Reviewing/Updating this Policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated prior to each five-year evaluation date, unless changes are deemed necessary at an earlier time.