



# Rockridge Secondary Inclusion Policy

"British Columbia promotes an inclusive education system in which students with special needs [and diverse abilities] are fully participating members of a community of learners. Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education."<sup>1</sup>

## Philosophy of Inclusion

Rockridge Secondary is a fully inclusive school that welcomes any student within its geographical boundary, and then beyond. We recognize that our students come from a variety of backgrounds and have a range of individual needs. As such, we are committed to providing inclusive and responsible learning environments that value diversity and promote equity of access for all students, including those with disabilities and diverse abilities.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately, our goal is to provide the support necessary for all our students to demonstrate, and succeed in, their learning.

We abide by the philosophy of full integration of our students with additional needs, with specialized support through our Learning Support Program (LSP) and Connect. This means that all Rockridge teachers work with each student's unique strengths and stretches, including those with recognized disabilities or diverse abilities. However, an inclusive approach to education does not focus on labeling or understanding such students as having deficits that make them anything other than full members of the school community.<sup>3</sup>

As such, Rockridge teachers differentiate their teaching and support a multitude of learning styles regardless of whether or not they are teaching students with designated disabilities or diverse abilities. If, however, a teacher notices that a student may have reason to benefit from additional support, the teacher will, in conjunction with the student and parents, provide such support alongside other specialized individuals (such as Inclusive Education Teachers and counsellors) and teams (such as the School-Based Team).

## Legality of Our Inclusion Policy

As part of the British Columbia (BC) Public Education System, Rockridge is mandated to abide by the guidelines and policies outlined by the BC Ministry of Education. With respect to Inclusive Education, the ministry provides a written resource that "conveys policies, procedures, and guidelines that support the delivery of special education services in British Columbia's public schools."<sup>4</sup>

This resource—the Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines—provides guidance on six areas<sup>5</sup> regarding the delivery of Special Education:

- **Policy:** provides policy for the delivery of inclusive education programs and services in British Columbia
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** outlines the roles and responsibilities of the ministry, school boards, district and school-based personnel, parents and students in the development and implementation of inclusive education services

---

<sup>1</sup> "Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2016, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> "Inclusive Education." *West Vancouver Schools*, 2024.

<sup>3</sup> "Coordinator's handbook: Learning diversity and special educational needs." *International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> "Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2016, p. III.

<sup>5</sup> "Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2016, p. IV.

- **Developing an Individual Education Plan:** describes the process of identifying students who have disabilities or diverse abilities, planning and implementing individual programs for them, and evaluating and reporting on their progress
- **Ministry Designations:** defines the various kinds of students who have disabilities or diverse abilities and the essential elements that should be included in programs for them and the criteria that must be met for supplemental funding
- **Provincial Resource Programs:** describes what these programs are and lists those currently designated across the province

## Defining the Terms<sup>6</sup>

- **Differentiation:** the recognition that "differences exist among all students, [and] not just those with such labels", and that students will "approach learning tasks in different ways, bringing with them their own understanding, skills, beliefs, hopes, and intentions"<sup>7</sup>

differentiated instruction is a teacher's supportive and empowering "response to the diverse learning needs of a student", with the understanding that such differentiation "will need a wide range of strategies, and flexibility of timing and approach"<sup>8</sup>

- **Inclusion:** the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education; the practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with integration and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others
- **Individual Education Plan (IEP):** a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement
- **School-Based Team (SBT):** an on-going team of school-based personnel which has a formal role to play as a problem-solving unit in assisting classroom teachers to develop and implement instructional and/or management strategies and to coordinate support resources for students with special needs within the school
- **Special Educational Need:** characteristics which make it necessary to provide a student undertaking an educational program with resources different from those which are needed by most students  
special educational needs are identified during assessment of a student; they are the basis for determining an appropriate educational program (including necessary resources) for that student
- **Student with Special Needs:** a student who has a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioral nature, has a learning disability or giftedness.

## Support Within the Classroom

Teachers design learning experiences that allow their students to access the curriculum and demonstrate learning in ways best suited to the students. For students with disabilities or diverse abilities, Individual Education Plans

<sup>6</sup> "Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2016, pp. IV-1.

<sup>7</sup> "Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind." *Western and Northern Canadian Protocol*, 2006, p. 8.

<sup>8</sup> "Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes." *International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2010, p. 4.

(IEPs) provide the classroom teacher with information and strategies they can use to create meaningful and effective learning opportunities tailored to students' needs. This document is a collaborative effort between the Inclusive Education teachers, school counselors, specialist staff, the involved paraprofessionals, the student and the student's family.

In addition to collaboration between the involved parties, some IEPs draw recommendations for accommodations from psycho-educational testing reports generated from registered psychologists. On a yearly basis, the IEP is updated to reflect any changes to each student's status. IEPs are stored both digitally and as hard copies, and are accessible to those involved in ensuring the student's academic success.

As another means of supporting some students with special learning needs in curricular classrooms, Education Assistants (EAs) are assigned to individuals and groups of students to provide more individualized support. These professionals attend post-secondary training specific to addressing the learning needs of students with disabilities or diverse abilities to qualify them for this position.

The general principles listed below are respected when planning adaptations to teaching and assessment for students with disabilities or diverse abilities. In consultation with parents, Inclusive Education teachers and classroom teachers coordinate these adaptations.<sup>9</sup>

1. Where normal assessment conditions would put students with special needs at a disadvantage and prevent them from demonstrating their level of ability, reasonable adjustments must be given for administration of assessment. Technology may be used where available to support learning and assessment.
2. In assessment, special adjustments put in place to help students with special educational needs demonstrate their true level of ability must not put these students at an advantage.
3. Any grade awarded to a student in any subject must not be a misleading description of the student's level of attainment according to the course objectives. Schools may differentiate conditions in relation to the interim objectives developed by teachers to suit the needs of their students and the local context. In the final year of the MYP, the same assessment criteria must be applied to all students in a given course, regardless of whether they have diverse learning needs. Special adjustments in assessment conditions are intended only to minimize the effects of a student's functional issues resulting from a diverse learning need.
4. Where any special arrangements are made for assessment, they must correspond to a school policy on diverse learning needs and mirror the conditions available to the students in the classroom.

As it pertains to the IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) Language Acquisition requirement, students with IEPs may be exempt from taking a second language course. This is in accordance with the BC Ministry of Education's Language Education Policy,<sup>10</sup> as articulated in Section 5 of the BC School Act.<sup>11</sup>

All students must take a second language as part of the curriculum in Grades 5 to 8, except where students are:

- identified as having disabilities or diverse abilities, or are receiving English as a Second Language (ESL) services; and,

---

<sup>9</sup> "Coordinator's handbook: Learning diversity and special educational needs." *International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> "Language Education Policy." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2004.

<sup>11</sup> "BC School Act." *BC Ministry of Education and Child Care Governance, Legislation and Workforce Branch*, 2024.

- unable to demonstrate their learning in relation to the expected learning outcomes of the second language course; or,
- enrolled in late French Immersion in Grade 6

Should one of the above contexts apply, a student may be enrolled in an LSP block in place of a Language Acquisition course.

## **The Learning Support Program (LSP)**

The Rockridge LSP is a nurturing environment where hard work and mutual respect create a sense of community and a positive experience for all. The LSP offers students academic support, while assisting students to better understand their personal strengths, needs, learning styles and effective strategies.

It is important to provide our students with specific learning supports to suit their individual requirements. To provide this, it is first necessary to identify the most appropriate academic, social, behavioral and/or mental health designation for each student. Staff within the LSP administer a range of academic diagnostic assessments, as well as testing for both behavioral and mental health diagnoses. Our model for delivering inclusive education programs and services focuses upon the following:

- the central role of the classroom teacher
- the principle of active learning, providing appropriate curriculum, a diversity of instructional methods, an adaptation or modification of instructional methods and an adaptation of assessment practices
- the principle of inclusive education
- the practice of integration as a strategy to achieve inclusion
- the provision of programming and services in the most appropriate and least restrictive environment

The Rockridge LSP serves a diverse population of students with a broad range of learning needs and strengths. In keeping with the aims of the IB MYP, there is a focus on the Approaches to Learning skills, self-discovery and personal responsibility. Learning strategies taught in the LSP may include: reading and writing skills, organization, time management, study and test-taking skills and self-advocacy development. Helping students develop metacognitive skills is a major component of the LSP approach.

## **Rockridge Students Transitioning to LSP**

In order to service students with specialized learning needs with equity and efficiency, the following process is adhered to before students are placed into LSP classes. Students considered for Learning Support and placement into an LSP block should have:

1. A designated disability or diverse ability as defined by the British Columbia Ministry of Education
2. Been recommended by a previous teacher based on a history of learning challenges and/or past Learning Support success

The following process is followed for transitioning a Rockridge student into the LSP:

1. Teachers or parents bring forth student specific concerns to either a grade counselor or an Inclusive Education Teacher.
2. After SBT discussions, parents are contacted to see what interventions have been initiated at home.
3. Classroom intervention is attempted including differentiated curriculum, appropriate adaptations, and/or seeing teachers during Flexible Instructional Time (FIT).

If interventions are attempted and challenges persist, the Inclusive Education teacher or counselor will bring forth the student's name at the School-Based Resource Team meeting so that a collective decision can be made around appropriate intervention or possible LSP placement.

## **Connect Program**

Connect is a student support program designed to assist students with social, emotional, and academic challenges that may impact their educational progress. The program helps students recognize and overcome these challenges while ensuring they remain connected to and feel a sense of belonging within their local school community.

In addition to addressing social and emotional needs, Connect layers academic support within an inclusive education framework. This approach helps students develop the skills and strategies necessary to thrive academically, while fostering an environment of acceptance and understanding for all learners. Through individualized support and a collaborative approach with teachers, families, and school staff, Connect empowers students to succeed both emotionally and academically.

Connect is for students who have been identified and recommended as appropriate candidates by the school-based team. Each potential candidate is carefully considered to ensure that the program will meet their specific needs, providing the right balance of support to promote success in both social-emotional development and academic achievement.

## **School-Based Team (SBT)**

At Rockridge Secondary, there is a network of professionals designed to coordinate student support services within the school—the School-Based Team. This team is comprised of the following members:

- Administrators and Teachers: these are the 'front line' support workers who see students daily and provide curricular and emotional support
- Inclusive Education Teachers
- District Administrator of Inclusive Education Services
- Speech and Language Pathologist
- District Psychologist
- Indigenous Success Teacher

- School Counselors: the school and district counselors provide services directly to students; in addition, the counselors often provide services to parents, administrators, and teachers

the diverse role of counseling is multi-faceted and comprises these main areas of guidance:

- personal and social
- scholastic and educational
- administrative consultation and liaison
- instructional
- career and transitional
- Prevention Workers and Youth Outreach Workers: these workers support students in areas of drug and alcohol prevention and abuse, anger management, youth counseling and social issues; while these workers maintain an office within the school, have office hours, are available on-call, and organize youth activities within the school timetable and building, they are an independent group whose services are provided to the school

The SBT meets twice a month as a multi-disciplinary team of school-based personnel who oversees the delivery of services and programs to students who have challenges and are not meeting widely held expectations. At SBT meetings, the team discusses students and service delivery issues, problem solves and plans interventions for specific students. The meetings usually result in written plans with action items and strategies.

## Policy Review Process

Our Inclusion Policy is a working document. We will review the framework annually to ensure that the policy continues to reflect current IB standards and practices, as well as any updates to the BC provincial curriculum and Inclusive Education mandates. The review process will involve Administrators, MYP Coordinators and Teacher Leaders; departments and district leaders may also be consulted.

***Last updated October 2024 by Administrators, MYP Coordinators, the Learning Support Team and Connect, with feedback from school counsellors.***

## References

- "BC School Act." *BC Ministry of Education and Child Care Governance, Legislation and Workforce Branch*, 2024, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/legislation-policy/legislation/schoollaw/revisedstatutescontents.pdf>. Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Coordinator's handbook: Learning diversity and special educational needs." *International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2013, [https://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/MYP/m\\_g\\_mypxx\\_coh\\_1208\\_2/ibpublishing.ibo.org/test-exist/rest/app/pub.xql@doc=m\\_g\\_mypxx\\_coh\\_1208\\_2\\_e&part=5&chapter=5.html](https://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/MYP/m_g_mypxx_coh_1208_2/ibpublishing.ibo.org/test-exist/rest/app/pub.xql@doc=m_g_mypxx_coh_1208_2_e&part=5&chapter=5.html). Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Inclusive Education." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2023, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/inclusive-education>. Accessed 30 October 2024.

- "Inclusive Education." *West Vancouver Schools*, 2024, <https://westvancouver.schools.ca/about-wvs/inclusive-education/#:~:text=Our%20vision%20is%20to%20provide,with%20disabilities%20and%20diverse%20abilities.> Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Inclusive education resources." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2024, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/resources-for-teachers/inclusive-education>. Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Language Education Policy." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2004, <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/administration/legislation-policy/public-schools/language-education-policy>. Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Learning diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes: Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes." *International Baccalaureate Organization*, 2010, [https://www.istafrica.co.tz/uploaded/documents/WeeklyBulletin/Learning\\_diversity\\_in\\_IB\\_programmes\\_2010.pdf](https://www.istafrica.co.tz/uploaded/documents/WeeklyBulletin/Learning_diversity_in_IB_programmes_2010.pdf). Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind." *Western and Northern Canadian Protocol*, 2006, <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/b1a79a94-b2b6-4b85-bbd9-76b5dcc2a5f4/resource/575762b3-a8cf-4455-8f21-8b0e604f94b6/download/2006-rethinking-classroom-assessment-purpose-mind-assessment-learning.pdf>. Accessed 30 October 2024.
- "Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines." *BC Ministry of Education*, 2016, [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/special\\_ed\\_policy\\_manual.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/inclusive/special_ed_policy_manual.pdf). Accessed 30 October 2024.