



This policy supports the AISB and IB mission statements and ensures the school meets the relevant IB standards and practices. All stakeholders including administrators, the board, teachers, students, and parents will be familiarised with the Inclusion Policy annually through induction meetings for new staff, staff meetings, and parent and student handbooks.

## **AISB Vision Statement**

We aspire to be a creative, courageous and compassionate learning community.

## **AISB Mission Statement**

AISB engages learners with a rigorous and balanced international education that inspires students to get the best from themselves and others and to be ethical and open-minded in their thinking about our world.

## **IB Standards and Practices**

A.9 The school supports access for students to the IB programme(s) and philosophy.

B2.8 The school provides support for its students with learning and/or special educational needs and support for their teachers.

B2.9 The school has systems in place to guide and counsel students through the programme(s).

C1.4 Collaborative planning and reflection ensures that all teachers have an overview of students' learning.

C1.6 Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles.

C1.8 Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

C3.3 Teaching and learning builds on what students know and can do.

C3.5 Teaching and learning supports students to become actively responsible for their own learning.

C3.7 Teaching and learning addresses the diversity of student language needs, including those for students learning in a language(s) other than mother tongue.

C3.8 Teaching and learning demonstrates that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.

C3.9 Teaching and learning uses a range and variety of strategies.

C3.10 Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles.

C3.14 Teaching and learning fosters a stimulating learning environment based on understanding and respect.

C3.15. Teaching and learning encourages students to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways.

## **Definition**

### **Inclusion through Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated instruction is a teacher's response to a learner's needs. It is more than a set of strategies; it is a process, an approach to teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class (Hall, 2002). When teachers differentiate their instruction, they make curricular decisions around teaching practices to match the needs of the students, whether those students need additional support, are keeping pace with the curriculum, or are ready to extend their learning with more rigorous material. Teachers differentiate content, processes, products, and the learning environment; they employ continuous formative assessments and incorporate flexible grouping when needed. When implemented successfully, differentiated instruction has proven to be very effective in supporting students in growing, learning, and succeeding. The richness and rigor of the International Baccalaureate programmes here at AISB are perfect for the implementation of differentiation practices.

## **Purpose (Philosophy) of Policy**

### **The AISB Inclusion Policy aims to:**

- Ensure the effective delivery of the AISB curriculum by committing to the necessary professional learning and resources for all teaching staff.
- Support and extend the learning experiences of all students at AISB.
- Ensure that differentiation opportunities are developed, aligned, and implemented across the whole curriculum.
- Aid in the monitoring and support of differentiated teaching and learning in all three IB programmes.
- Create clarity in terms of differentiation expectations for all stakeholders.
- Support teachers in the implementation of approaches to teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class.
- Promote an inclusive learning environment that acknowledges and affirms diverse learners in the community.
- Foster and support student growth in all areas of the IB learner profile.

## Guiding Statements

<b>The American International School of Bucharest believes that:</b>	<b>Therefore, we stand by these <u>Guiding Statements</u>:</b>
<p>All students can learn, and may access and show their understanding in a variety of ways.</p>	<p>Teachers attend to student differences in terms of their learning styles, interests, and overall readiness.</p>
<p>Ongoing assessment drives differentiated instruction.</p>	<p>Teachers integrate ongoing assessments in order to collect and analyze evidence of student learning to inform future planning and instruction.</p>
<p>Planning for learning reflects an understanding of the unique learning styles of students.</p>	<p>Teachers modify content, processes, and products so that students have multiple pathways for attaining information and demonstrating mastery of learning.</p>
<p>Student work is linked to clear learning outcomes/objectives that support a learning progression.</p>	<p>Teachers provide work for all students, taking into consideration appropriate and adequate challenges.</p>
<p>Student voice is critical in the learning process.</p>	<p>Teachers empower students as they consider student interest and choice and promote the development of independence and life-long learning.</p>
<p>Students are best supported in flexible and fluid grouping opportunities.</p>	<p>Teachers balance group and individual needs so that grouping opportunities can vary. Teachers seek to group students in ways that support students in the Least Restrictive Environment (e.g. co teaching, small groups, short term pull-out, longer-term pull out).</p>
<p>A student's identity, including social and emotional, should be considered in the student's learning process.</p>	<p>Teachers acknowledge individual student characteristics and dispositions to inform the differentiation of content, process, product, and the learning environment.</p>
<p>We are all teachers of all students. We are responsible for the differentiated learning of our students.</p>	<p>Teachers collaboratively plan and share in the delivery of four principles of good practice: affirming of identity, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding, and extending learning.</p>
<p>Collaborative planning is linked to best practices in differentiation.</p>	<p>Teachers and administrative leaders aim to foster regular and systematic collaborative planning among all stakeholders.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>(These Guiding Statements were adapted from <u>The Differentiated Classroom</u> by Carol Ann Tomlinson)</i></b></p>	

## Procedures and Practices

### Inclusion at AISB:

Students of all ability levels are placed in grade-level classrooms. This heterogeneous placement of students is supported by a systematic and regular collaborative planning process that acknowledges the best practices for affirming identity, valuing prior knowledge, scaffolding, and extending learning. Ongoing universal, formative, and summative assessments are used to develop student learning profiles, determine student needs, and inform and modify the differentiated instruction of content, process, product and the learning environment. At each stage of the instructional sequence, differentiated instruction is delivered through the collaboration of student choice and interest to promote students' voice and their development into inclusive, independent, lifelong learners.

### Extended Learning (EL)

The School does not have a 'Gifted and Talented' program per se; the IB programs in and of themselves are designed to extend the learning of all students, particularly those with advanced skills or aptitudes in certain areas of the curriculum. In Elementary an Extended Learning (EL) teacher is available to provide instructional support to students of extremely high ability levels. As students are continually assessed throughout the year, the EL teacher in Elementary will be able to identify which students will benefit from EL, offering the opportunity to participate at different times in the year and in different curriculum areas. With Extended Learning we offer a wide range of students in our community with the opportunity to show just how far they can push their thinking, learning and creativity.

### Learning Support (LS)

Learning Support teachers work in collaboration with classroom teachers in both elementary and secondary to provide instructional support for students with identified needs at both ends of the learning spectrum. LS and classroom teachers use external and internal assessment data to inform possible "outliers" in different subject areas and work within the curriculum, providing differentiated instruction to students determined to reach their potential. Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) and Accommodation Awareness Plans/Student Support Plans (AAP/SSPs) are used to ensure that students with special educational needs gain access to the IB mission and programmes through differentiation, technology, evidence-based instructional practices, and AISB's tiered Response-to-Intervention delivery model. In addition to academic support, the teachers also address the social/emotional identity needs of these students.

### Support Tiers :

- Tier 1: A whole-school instructional delivery model. Students receive differentiated instruction provided by their regular classroom teachers.
- Tier 2: In addition to tier 1 supports, students receive short-term, goal and research driven interventions that are articulated, documented, and reported for parent communication
- Tier 3: In addition to tier 1 supports, students will have at a minimum not responded to at least one cycle of tier 2 intervention. With a non-response, the intensity of the intervention will have to be increased. Generally, **organizational structures** (eg time or student to teacher ratio), **assessment methods** (eg more formative or more detailed diagnostic), or **instructional**

**methods** (eg more opportunities to respond, more guided practice, more direct instruction, etc) are the areas where intensity is increased.

### **Admissions:**

Teachers at AISB collaborate with Learning Support teachers who are trained to address a range of mild-to-moderate disabilities including autism spectrum disorder, emotional disturbance, speech and language impairment (limited), visual/hearing impairment (limited), physical impairment, other health impairments (e.g. ADHD, Executive Function Disorder), and specific learning disability (e.g. Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia). AISB is not able to accept students with needs beyond reasonable accommodation, including significant modification of general curriculum.

Either at the time of the application process or after successful registration, students with academic and/or behavioral needs may be required to have further cognitive, achievement, and/or developmental evaluations to support the student's educational program. Assessments may be administered by the Special Educational Needs Department or by an independent, qualified Educational Psychologist as approved by the school. The cost of testing, reporting, and translating, where appropriate, is the responsibility of the family.

Any educational, social-emotional, physical, sensory, or medical needs must be fully disclosed in detail during the admission application process. All academic or psychological reports and/or any additional academic support the applicant is receiving or has received in the past (e.g. achievement or diagnostic assessments, psycho-educational evaluations, IEP, tutoring) must be disclosed at the time of application for admission. Failure to do so will delay the admission process, and may result in a revocation of an offer of admission, or the withdrawal of the student from AISB. All diagnostic evaluations are stored securely and will only be shared with those working directly with the students, either wholly or via a summary provided by the relevant Learning Support Teacher or Counselor.

AISB will not deny entry to students requiring learning support or with diagnosed needs unless the required support requires staffing that is unavailable at the school. Parents whose children require specialised support or therapy services such as Speech and Language Therapy or Occupational Therapy should be aware that such services are extremely limited within Romania for non-Romanian speakers and AISB can provide very limited support in these areas.

AISB reserves the right to contact previous school administrators and/or teachers to gather additional information needed to inform the student's application.

## **Roles & Responsibilities**

### **Teachers:**

- Teachers differentiate based on student readiness, interest, and/or learning profiles. Teachers differentiate:
  - Content: information that each student needs or wants to learn and how the student will get access to that information

- Process: learning experiences in which each student engages in order to make sense of, master, or expand the content
- Products: culminating projects that ask the student to review, apply, and extend what he/she has learned
- Learning Environment: the feel and dynamics of the classroom
- Learning Support Teachers support differentiated practices in a specialized capacity - please reference the *Extended Learning (EL) and Learning Support (LS)* section above.
- Please see guiding statements above for additional roles and responsibilities.

#### **Parents:**

- Support their child with their learning by being an active participant.
- Promote independence in their child.
- Maintain and promote a positive growth mindset regarding their child's ongoing learning.
- Regularly foster an awareness of their child's needs and learning goals.

#### **Leadership Team:**

- The school provides opportunities for all staff to develop their knowledge and skills for differentiation.

**Leadership Team ensures that the collaborative planning process takes place regularly and systematically among all stakeholders.**

### **Terminology**

AAP/SSP - Academic Awareness Plan / Student Support Plan

AAP/SSP are support documents written for students in Tiers 1 - 3. These documents outline the student's learning needs, required differentiation strategies, and required resources. AAP/SSPs are a source of information for teachers in order to help them support their students more effectively. The AAP/SSP is reviewed twice during the academic year. Students on an AAP/SSP do not have learning goals.

IEP - Individual Education Plan

IEPs provide highly detailed information regarding a student's learning needs including diagnostic information. IEPs have specific, measurable goals that are established in collaboration with teachers, Learning Support Teacher, Student & Parent.

RTI - Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is a three-tiered learning support delivery model to **differentiate instruction** based on early evaluation and response to student learning and academic behavioral needs.

LS - Learning Support

Learning Support provides all services relating to students who require support within the tiers of intervention. This includes identification, documentation, direct teaching, provision of strategies and resources to homeroom/subject teachers, and regular parent, teacher and student communication.

## EL - Extended Learning

Extended Learning provides differentiated learning for students who have shown areas of strength in particular areas of the curriculum. In Elementary students are provided with direct teaching through co-teaching and small group instruction provided by the EL Teacher. Student groups are fluid and change depending on the subject area and strand being taught. In Secondary the Learning Support Teacher consults with subject teachers and provides strategies or resources to be used with students requiring Extended Learning.

## EAL - English as an Additional Language

EAL is the subject area providing English language instruction to students whose mother tongue is not English and who have had limited exposure or experience with English. Students are classified as Beginning, Developing, or Bridging depending on scores derived from the WIDA assessment.

## Work Cited

[Learning and Diversity in the IB Programs \(2019\)](#)

[Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom \(from IB, 2013\)](#)

[Special educational needs within the IB Programmes \(2010\)](#)

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Tomlinson, Carol A. "How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms." ASCD, 2001

Tomlinson, Carol Ann, and Caroling Cunningham Eidson. "Differentiation in Practice (Grades 5–9)." *Cell 505* (200-5472). Tomlinson, Carol Ann. *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Ascd, 2014.

Policy drafted in 2017 by AISB staff members Darryl Roberts, Jonathan Climas. Leadership evaluation & reapproval in 2019, facilitated by Justin Jarmin, Sean Whitney and Jonathan Climas, with input from a variety of stakeholders, Learning Support Teachers, and Leadership Team.