



International School of Curaçao

Policy for Students with Special Needs

Reviewed September 4, 2023



International School of Curacao Policy for Students with Special Needs

Introduction

All students are unique. Development and growth patterns differ from student to student. ISC's academic program values each student's learning style in the classroom and provides differentiation within the curriculum. Each ISC student is an individual and should receive instruction that meets their learning needs.

At times, a student's needs may require more accommodations, modifications, and interventions based on academic, social-emotional, and/or medical difficulties. ISC's Admission Policy states that the school admits students with mild medical, physical, or academic needs with the condition that complete medical and/or psycho-educational reports (with recommendations) are made available to the school, and it is determined that the school can meet the needs of these students. These students can receive support from our Student Services department, including socio-emotional support and interventions, and/or be required to receive additional support outside of school.

Learning disabilities may surface at any time throughout a student's school life and may be identified after a student has been accepted to ISC. Learning disabilities range in severity and affect the acquisition, organization, retention, understanding, or use of verbal or nonverbal information. In order to ensure that all students benefit from the educational experience provided at school, interventions must be in place to assist students who could possibly have a learning disability interfering with their learning. Academic interventions, accommodations, and modifications are available for any student diagnosed with a learning disability or suspected of having learning problems.

Aim of the policy

The aim of the Policy for Students with Special Needs is to provide a framework of the school's policies on services offered to students with special needs including referral, identification and assessment, interventions and planning, and monitoring of student progress.

Referral process

The SST refers to ISC's Student Support Team, which consists of the Director of Student Services, the School Counselor, and level Principal(s).

In cases where a learning disability becomes apparent, or when performance is inconsistent, the following process will be followed:

- Teachers should put their own intervention plan in place. If these interventions give insufficient results, they should send a referral form to the SST.
- The teacher sends the filled Student Support Team (SST) Referral to the Director of Student Services. The referral should include documentation such as any applicable standardized test results (MAP), student work samples, and interventions made by the teacher prior to the referral. In the case of concerns, the teacher has to inform the parent prior to making the referral. The Director of Student Services will present the referral at the next SST meeting. The SST will decide on actions, which may at this point include revision of student records and data, observing the student, obtaining feedback from teachers, contacting parents, and further assessment.
- Care should be taken to ensure that developmental differences are not automatically seen as disabilities. However, further assessment should be done if the student shows several characteristics normally associated with a learning disability.
- Teachers and parents/guardians can refer a student directly to the School Counselor if there are any concerns regarding the emotional well-being of a child or if there are behavioral concerns noted within the classroom or at home. After meeting with the child and/or parents the School Counselor will decide if the particular case needs to be brought to the attention of the SST. The School Counselor will keep these referrals confidential and will only share on a need-to-know basis with other faculty.

Identification and assessment

- Parents are requested to provide any testing information and/or reports available as part of the admissions process.
- Parents are asked to comply with testing requests made by the school when concerns arise. Depending on the reason for referral this could include, but is not limited to,
 - o Continuous educational assessment
 - o Detailed health assessment (e.g. hearing, vision, physical and neurobiological)
 - o Psycho-educational assessment
 - o Speech/Language assessment
 - o Social, family history
 - o Assessment of observed behavior in a variety of settings
- If parents wish to receive the name and contact information of specialists in the community (e.g. psychologist, psychiatrist, speech therapist, physical therapist) this can be provided by the school. To receive the compiled list, contact the Director of Student Services or the Counselor. Costs for these services will be covered by parents/guardians.
- Identification procedures for students suspected of having learning disabilities should be done in the student's native language whenever possible. Otherwise, the language of instruction, English, should be used.

- Parent(s) are asked to share the assessment results with the SST and relevant information is shared with the student's teacher(s) and used for further interventions and planning with parental consent.

Interventions and support planning

- Assessment results, including learning styles, strengths, interests, needs, and socio-emotional development, will dictate the most effective educational program for the student.
- Results of medical and psycho-educational reports should be translated into instructional expectations and interventions to meet the needs of the student. This information is confidential and shared only with staff that is directly involved with the student.
- Academic recommendations will be implemented by the class teacher(s) under the supervision of the Principal(s) and Student Services teachers. Emotional/behavioral interventions will be implemented with input from the class teacher(s) and Principal(s) under the supervision of the School Counselor.
- Students referred to the SST may receive recommendations for enrollment into the Learning Resource Program, Reading Support Program, and/or EAL(formerly ESL) Program after they have been assessed.
- Once a learning disability is determined, program planning for the student will fall under the responsibility of the SST, Student Services teachers (Learning Resource, Reading), and class teacher(s).
- The SST will be responsible for monitoring the progress and efficacy of interventions once the plan is in place by receiving feedback from the classroom teacher, Principal(s), School Counselor, parents, and others involved in the student's academic life.
- Student Support Plans (SSPs) for students in the Learning Resource Program will be written by the Learning Resource teachers with input from the students' teachers. These will include goals for improvement and development in all or some of the following areas,
 - Reading (including phonics, phonemic awareness)
 - Writing (including spelling, vocabulary)
 - Mathematics
 - Organizational skills
 - Memory skills
 - Functional skills
 - Assistive technology

SSPs will also include the recommended accommodations and/or modifications stated in the assessment/testing reports.

- SSPs are reviewed yearly and shared with parents.
- Students with diagnosed learning, medical, or physical disability are eligible to receive accommodations during class tests, standardized tests, and exams whenever possible. Accommodations for IB exams are provided after approval is obtained from IBO through the IB Coordinator.
- Parents are asked to disclose when students are medicated as part of the treatment of their disorder. If medication is prescribed to the student, ISC, with the assistance of the School

Nurse, will monitor the intake of medications and report any noted irregularities to the parents. Medication benefits have to be apparent or a new medical assessment will be recommended.

- Regarding medical and physical disorders, the School Nurse and the Student Support Team will maintain communication with the student's physician, to ensure that the needs of the students are being met.

Monitoring student progress

- Monitoring of student progress is an essential part of the support provided for students with special needs at ISC. Students enrolled in any of the Student Services Programs will receive quarterly progress reports from their Student Support teacher(s).
- Students with special needs should receive the accommodations and modifications that are recommended in their test reports. When a student receives such modifications and/or accommodations in their regular academic program for any subject, this will be indicated on the quarterly class report card by placing the code **M** next to the subject. The decision to add the M codes is made by each students' teachers. This can change and the M code is added or removed depending on whether the student received these accommodations/modifications.
- These students may be eligible to receive accommodations for standardized tests such as the MAP, PSAT, SAT, ACT and IB. ISC will follow the specific protocol of each testing provider.
- ISC expects interventions to benefit student learning and will do the utmost to implement the educational modifications and accommodations needed for the students to experience success in the mainstream classroom. In this same manner, recommendations made by SST should be followed closely to ensure a unified approach, always keeping the student's best interest in mind. If it becomes apparent that a student is not showing adequate progress, the Student Support Plan can be modified or changed. In some cases alternative educational options may be discussed with the parents, such as transferring the student to another school that better suits the student's needs.
- Students with disabilities or disorders will be serviced by ISC for as long as the school determines it can meet their needs. The school will do its utmost to provide support and interventions for the student so that they can be successful in the regular classroom. Parents will be informed regularly about their child's progress throughout the school year. In the case that such a disability or disorder becomes unserviceable within the confines of what ISC can provide, the school will discuss alternative educational options with parents to exit these students when it is determined that the student's needs cannot be met.

Review schedule:

ISC's Policy for Students with Special Needs will be reviewed each school year.

Last reviewed/revised: September 2023.

**For more information on all student services offered at ISC, please refer to the ISC Parent Student Handbook and the Support Programs section on our website.