



# Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes: Special Needs Policy

## MISSION

The mission of ALBA School is founded on the conviction that bilingual students can reach their full potential academically, in English and Spanish, when challenged through a rigorous curriculum that develops critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity through the integration of the fine arts. Our students will develop self-confidence and self-worth as their Hispanic cultural identity is both recognized and valued through the curriculum as they prepare to be internationally minded life-long learners. Parents are vital partners in this mission.

The Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes (ALBA) IB Primary and Middle Years Programme World School faculty shall agree that:

The Academia de Lenguaje y Bellas Artes Primary Years Programme recognizes that students come from a variety of diverse cultures and backgrounds with a wide range of academic, physical, social and behavioral needs. ALBA is committed to serving all students including those with the need for specialized education services. This may include students with:

- Autism spectrum disorders
- Deaf and hard of hearing
- Developmental cognitive disabilities
- Developmental delays
- Emotional or behavioral disorders
- Other health disabilities
- Specific learning disabilities
- Speech or language impairments
- Traumatic brain injury

Furthermore, the staff of ALBA agrees that students with special education needs at ALBA are able to participate in the school's mission of empowering the whole child by nurturing the development of personal growth, strong character, academic excellence, and global vision. To ensure the ALBA School mission is accessible to all students:

- ALBA staff will provide individualized special education services to meet the unique needs of students with special needs.

- Special education may include modifications to teaching or instruction in the general education classroom, individual or small group specialized instruction or related services such as occupational, speech/language or physical therapy.
- Services are developed and provided in accordance with a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which details the necessary services and accommodations that are to be provided.
- Students with special needs are serviced in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), which grants increased parental participation and protection for students.
- 504 plans are issued for students who experience medical conditions that require certain temporary or long-term accommodations.

## **A. Common Practices of the IB Continuum**

To achieve the ALBA and IB mission while addressing the unique needs of our special education students, we adhere to the following common practices:

1. We promote International Mindedness in all of our students through the IB Learner Profile.
2. We teach through inquiry in all subject areas.
3. We provide second language acquisition for all students in addition to supporting primary native languages.
4. A third language, French, is introduced to students in 7th and 8th grade.
5. All students in the Primary and Middle Years Programmes (PYP and MYP) participate in a culminating project for their programs.
6. Students are encouraged to take action to extend their learning by helping in their community.

## **B. Assessment**

1. All teachers use a variety of formative assessments to determine students' prior knowledge, needs and abilities and adapt their instruction accordingly.
2. Teachers develop summative assessments after adequate instruction, which are differentiated to provide necessary accommodations and modifications for learners with special needs.

## **C. Support**

1. Students with special education needs will receive support from a special education teacher, case manager or paraprofessional. These services may include curriculum modification, enrichment, accommodations, small group instruction or one-on-one support or instruction.
2. Students receive IB instruction within the regular education classroom unless it is determined that the students' needs are more significant and cannot be met in the regular education setting. When appropriate, individualized pull-out services are provided to meet student academic, social, communication, physical, sensory or behavioral needs.

## **D. Documentation**

1. Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are written for students who are identified as having special education needs. Plans are reviewed and revised annually and are shared with staff who work with the student.

Progress is reported in writing four times a year with report cards and at the annual IEP meeting.

Copies of student progress reports will be kept in student files.

Data relating to academic achievement of all students is located in the student database. Teachers have access to this database and it is used to track student progress and make

educational decisions.

Documentation of services received will be provided for students with special education needs. When students change schools or move from one IB program to another, all cumulative folders will be transferred. For students with IEPs, the special education staff from both schools will meet to ensure a smooth transition from one program to another.

### **E. Staff Development and Collaboration**

1. All ALBA School teachers receive IB training to develop understanding of the components of the respective IB programs.
2. Teachers receive staff development on co-teaching as a strategy to meet the needs of special education students in the regular education classroom.
3. All teachers meet regularly to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning and to plan for differentiation for students with special needs.

As a school community, the ALBA staff, administration and Governance Board has been involved in the development of the Special Education Policy. This policy will be reviewed and revised biannually.