



Mount Vernon High School Access and Inclusion Policy 2022-2023



Purpose

The purpose of the access and inclusion policy is to articulate how Mount Vernon High School (MVHS) collaborates with stakeholders to meet the needs of its diverse learners. We recognize that our students bring with them gifts and talents that allow them to be successful in advanced classes. Therefore, our policy strives to ensure all students, despite any barriers they may face, have access to the IB curriculum. Mount Vernon High School believes that this inclusion policy strongly supports the International Baccalaureate (IB) mission statement to “encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.” MVHS works diligently every day to create a school environment where academic success is not predictable by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, language proficiency or disability. MVHS faculty understands the need to be skillful in determining and addressing the learning needs and styles of all students.

International Baccalaureate (IB) Mission Statement

The IB program develops inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through education that builds intercultural understanding and respect. At Mount Vernon High School, all students participate in the IB Middle Years Program in 9th and 10th grades and have the option of pursuing the Diploma Program or the Career Program in 11th and 12th grades.

MVHS Overview

Mount Vernon High School is a vibrant educational environment characterized by a commitment to excellence where students access a world-class curriculum. Through our open-enrollment course selection process after engaging in conversations with the IB Coordinator and their counselors and teachers, students choose from a wide range of course offerings, including International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. Individual needs are accommodated through special education programs, an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program, and advanced or accelerated courses in all disciplines. At Mount Vernon High School, technology enhances and adds dimension to instruction in all curricular areas.

In addition to outstanding academic programs, Mount Vernon High School offers students a plethora of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities designed to meet and extend the broad range of student interests. Fine and Performing Arts students and athletic teams have received numerous awards and recognitions.

Demographics

MVHS is one of 28 high schools within the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) system. Contributing to Mount Vernon High School's unique character and strength is its diversity. This diversity is enjoyed and celebrated daily, as well as through a series of cultural events that bring students, parents, and faculty together and demonstrate cooperative living in a multicultural world. Mount Vernon High School is further enriched by the support of an active community.

Hispanic or Latino	51.35%
Black	22.83%
White	16.51%
Asian	5.43%
Other	3.88%
General Education	87.84%
English Learner Services	23%
Dual-Identified Students (students who receive both ESOL and Special Education Services)	6.5%
Special Education Services	18%
English Proficient	77%

Free & reduced Lunch	60.09%
----------------------	--------

We are a Purple Star school where 20% of our students are military-connected due to our close proximity to Fort Belvoir Army Base. Our Purple Star designation is granted yearly and based on our commitment to ensure a smooth transition between schools for our military-connected students.

Philosophy

In FCPS, the shared belief is that a high-quality education is the fundamental right of every child. All children will receive the respect, encouragement, and opportunities they need to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a global society. At Mount Vernon High School, we believe that all students can achieve success; therefore, we promote and facilitate the IB curriculum and learning experiences for all students, despite any barriers they may face.

We believe that collaboration, effective professional development, and the use of data and problem-solving are the keys to removing barriers so that our students' needs are met in school and in the community. MVHS is committed to providing equitable opportunities to all students by fostering a culture of caring, knowledgeable, open-minded, and reflective students. We believe that learning opportunities offered inside the classroom should include all students. MVHS faculty understands the need to be skillful in determining and addressing the learning needs and styles of all students. We believe every student has the right to participate and effectively engage in their learning, teaching, and assessment without being negatively impacted by barriers. We believe in working in a collaborative manner to overcome barriers to learning. All teachers receive professional development on instructional best practices and differentiation strategies which meet the needs of our diverse learners.

Barriers Include:

First or best language is not the language of instruction
 Cultural variations
 Hearing
 Intellectual exceptionalities
 Movement and coordination
 Medical
 Mental Health

Numeracy
 Processing
 Reading
 Seeing
 Social-emotional
 Speech and Language
 Writing

Referral Process for Students with Disabilities (SWD)

MVHS teachers accommodate students with identified learning disabilities and tailor curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the individual needs of these students. In order to meet the demands of a least-restrictive environment, Mount Vernon offers general education, team-taught, and self-contained classes. Teachers certified in special education who work in the team-taught setting are partnered with content certified teachers to differentiate course content for students. Teachers working in the self-contained and team-taught settings collaborate with the Collaborative Learning Team (CLT) for their subject to ensure access to the curriculum for their students. These teachers must work with staff to assist with instructional needs during instructional periods and at times of school-wide, high-stakes assessments to meet the testing accommodations for students with individualized educational plans.

Special education teachers work in collaboration with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team to create academic plans that meet the needs of students with disabilities. A referral for special education services can be made by stakeholders, to include parents, teachers, school counselors, and administrators.

Elements of the Special Education Process

- **Referral:** The process of informing a school that a student is experiencing some type of difficulty and/or may have special learning needs.
- **Local Screening Committee:** Must meet within 10 business days of receipt of the referral by the designee to review the referral.
 - If testing is recommended and permission granted, Special Education Evaluation process begins.
- **Evaluation:** The process of completing psychological, sociocultural, educational, and other assessments, as appropriate, in all areas of a suspected disability.
- **Eligibility:** The process of determining whether the student meets specific criteria required to be found eligible as a child with a disability and in need of special education services.
- **IEP Development:** A process that provides an opportunity for parents, the student (if appropriate), and educators to work together as team members to identify the student's needs, to identify services that will be provided to meet those needs, and to describe the anticipated outcomes.
- **Reevaluation:** The reevaluation process applies to students who have previously been identified as being eligible for special education services. A re-evaluation must be conducted every three years.
- **Dismissal:** The process undertaken by an eligibility committee to determine whether or not a student continues to qualify as a student with a disability and is no longer eligible for special education.

Stakeholders & Knowledgeable Committee Members

Students

Parents

General Education Teacher
ESOL Instructor
Service Providers (Speech & Occupational Therapist)
Professional School Counselor
Case Manager

Special Education Teacher
Psychologist
Employment Transition Representative (ETR)
Administrators

Roles & Responsibilities

The Knowledgeable Committee are responsible for:

- Creating an individualized program for each student
- Assessing and evaluating student need and progress
- Ensuring all records, academic files and student learning needs are communicated to teachers at the beginning of each academic year, and are accurate and up to date
- Communicating individual needs and accommodations with parents
- Providing appropriate support and guidance to teachers
- Monitoring student progress and make adjustments as needed
- Communicating and reporting on progress to parents
- Maintaining open and clear communication, while maintaining confidentiality
- Write IEPs in collaboration with the inclusion team and other relevant personnel
- Arranging, communicating and facilitating assessment accommodations to staff, assessment coach, and IB Coordinator
- Providing the link between school and outsourced support services

The Leadership Team is responsible for

- Providing support for inclusive policies and practices
- Facilitating training and resources for teachers and staff to support students' individual learning needs

The IB Diploma Coordinator is responsible for:

- Working in collaboration with the Knowledgeable Committee to ensure every child is successful
- Prior to any IBDP examinations and or assessments, the IBDP Coordinator will communicate with the IB Office and outside assessment agencies in order to request inclusive assessment arrangements (8 months prior to the examination session)
- Keeping all pertinent documentation relating to students with learning needs confidential and protected

Teachers are responsible for:

- Understanding each student's IEP/ 504/ ESOL Accommodations
- Keeping all confidential student information confidential
- Identifying and referring students who may require inclusion support
- Differentiating their instruction and assessment creating inclusive teaching and learning environments
- Working in collaboration with the Inclusion team to ensure every child is supported according to their IEP

Parents are responsible for:

- Playing an active role in their child's education.
- Communicating and providing documentation needed to receive any accommodations.
- Working collaboratively with the learning support team to implement strategies to support their children's learning at home.
- Agreeing to terms and conditions of learning support program and fees.

Students are responsible for:

- Being actively involved in all stages of the IEP/ 504
- Participating in the IEP/504 process, including understanding:
 - their own unique learning needs in order to advocate for themselves.
 - the purpose and benefits having an IEP/504
 - the steps in the process.
 - who is on their learning team and what their roles are.
 - the format and types of information recorded on the IEP document.

Identifying Our English Language Learners (ELL)

Students with a primary home language other than, or in addition to English, as reported by the enrolling parent on a home language survey, are administered a World-class Instructional and Assessment (WIDA) English language proficiency screener to determine if they are in need of language services. The WIDA screener assesses a student's academic English skills in listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Once identified as an ELL, the student can have instruction in English Language Development (ELD) and receive services

through the ESOL Department.

ELLs take an academic English language test (WIDA) every year. Like the WIDA screener, the yearly WIDA test assesses students in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Test information helps determine ESOL course placement and assists the school and the teachers best meet the needs of our ELLs. Test scores are also used to determine when a student's language development has reached a level of achievement to no longer need English language support (ESOL services). Students who score a 4.4 on the yearly WIDA are exited out of ESOL services and moved into monitor status for 2 years. After the 2-year monitoring period, a student is identified as a Former ELL.

MVHS teachers accommodate students identified as ELLs and tailor curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the individual needs of students. In order to expose our ELLs to grade level, content-specific curriculum while meeting their language development needs, Mount Vernon offers general education, team-taught, and sheltered classes. Teachers certified in ESOL who work in the team-taught setting work with content certified teachers to differentiate course content for students. ESOL teachers work closely with their content CLTs to ensure team-taught and sheltered classes are aligned with state standards and the Fairfax County Program of Studies and expose students to the same level of rigor as their native English-speaking peers.

Instructional Program

The PreK-12 curriculum for FCPS is guided by the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and the FCPS Program of Studies (POS) which includes objectives that have been identified for each grade level and curriculum area. This curriculum is a tool for planning, monitoring, and evaluating students' work and progress on a continuous basis. Specialized instructional programs for reading, writing, and mathematics, are evidence-based, providing students with targeted, systematic, and explicit instruction on a consistent basis as determined by the IEP team. These programs are used to supplement the general education instructional program and provide students with differentiated approaches to access the curriculum.

Teachers provide special education services across a continuum of delivery options, ranging from the least to most restrictive learning environments in the following areas:

- Consultation with general education teachers/employers to include co-teaching with the general education teacher
- Individual and small-group support within general education classroom
- Individual and small-group pull-out services outside of the general education classroom
- Small-group self-contained classes within a general education school
- Special education schools co-located within general education sites
- Separate special education schools

Teachers receive ongoing, school-wide professional development for instructional strategies and work with the staff development teacher who designs the professional development to distinguish among innovation strategies and differentiation strategies which meet the needs of our diverse learners with equitable practices. A few examples of supports provided include:

- Extended testing time
- Use of laptop to type responses
- Adapted instructional materials (graphic organizers, use of calculator, large print)
- Outlines or notes provide by the teacher
- Large assignments broken down into segments
- Due date extensions

Monitoring and Reporting Student Progress

Student academic progress is monitored daily and reported on a regular basis. Grades are reported using a rolling gradebook. Parents and students have real-time access to grades via ParentVUE and StudentVUE. Special education students receive IEP progress reports once a quarter, and at the same time, all students receive a report card. All students are expected to make adequate measurable progress during the school year. When students are underperforming, teachers work with students and parents to develop an action plan through our multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) that leads to their success.

FCPS commits support to schools for aides and resources, where appropriate, that may be necessary to provide the students with a least restrictive school environment. Monitoring of student progress and the provisioning of feedback to parents regarding their child's development occurs on an annual basis through IEP and 504 meetings and the administration of the yearly WIDA test.

Celebrating Success

At MVHS, we believe that *all* successes deserve recognition and celebration. We take a positive behavior approach linked to PRIDE (Preparation, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Excellence) and reward our students who demonstrate PRIDE on a daily basis through a points-based system. Academic success is recognized in many ways, from individual teacher and classroom celebrations to All A and A/B Honor Roll and End of Year Awards Ceremonies for seniors and underclassmen. Our Activities Office holds a college signing day for our athletes, and our Student Services Department sponsors a signing day for all seniors to announce their post-secondary plans. IB diploma recipients are invited back to MVHS in December of their first year out of high school to be recognized. We recognize students who

achieve a 7 on any IB assessment on our Wall of 7 in the main lobby of the school.

Formulation and Dissemination of the Policy

Reviewed and Updated

The Access and Inclusion policy is to be reviewed annually by teachers and staff at Mount Vernon High School and updated as needed.

Edited by:

2023 Inclusion Policy Contributors

Students

General Education Teacher

IB Teacher

ESOL Instructor

Work Awareness and Education for Employment Instructor

Systems of Support Advisor

Parents

Administrators

Special Education Teacher

Crisis Resource Teacher

Professional School Counselor

IB Coordinators

Reviewed by: MHVS Instructional Leadership Council, MVHS Faculty

Approved by: MVHS Administrative Team

Made public on: March 22nd 2023