

## **Old Mill Middle North SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY**

As our students come to us from a variety of backgrounds and have a range of academic, physical and other needs, we recognize that implementation of the IB MYP must include learning experiences that will allow all students, including those with special needs, to meet the objectives of all eight subject groups. By differentiating their teaching strategies, teachers will provide all students with opportunities to reach these goals. Differentiated teaching aims to maximize students' potential, and allows them to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

We are federally mandated to focus on "appropriate" educational settings for every student in the "least restrictive environment", which will differ for each and every student. Anne Arundel Public Schools has a philosophy of providing opportunities to all students in inclusive settings, a philosophy that is in line with least restrictive environments. We attempt to include all students in courses when possible, with the support of an IEP, a general educator and a special educator or a 504 plan with a general educator. If it is decided that full inclusion is not in the best interest of the child, then he is placed in a smaller self-contained classroom with a special educator.

Our students come to us with a variety of needs, ranging from those simply requiring consultation services or indirect support to those with severe emotional and educational needs.

At the middle school, 8.85% of our students currently have an IEP. Teachers are interested in the success of all students in their classes and, as such, provide instruction and oversight, while continuing to ensure that the student is meeting with success. Teachers are required to keep the student and parents apprised of any concerns and have the several support staff available to assist them in meeting students' needs, including a Special Education Department Chairperson, school counselor, school administrator, school nurse, speech and language pathologist and school psychologist. Anne Arundel County Public Schools provides several workshops, in-services and professional development seminars on differentiated instruction. In addition, staff members who instruct students with an IEP or a 504 plan will meet with the Special Educator at the beginning of the school year to familiarize themselves with the needs of the student.

Testing tools are used to diagnose a student's needs when the staff suspects a disability that has an educational impact. These diagnostic tests vary depending on the nature of the concern. If it is a concern that may warrant special education, the intervention team can be quite comprehensive and may include a special educator, school psychologist, general educator who teaches the child, administrator, and frequently the speech and language pathologist. In the case of a need for a 504 plan, both a current diagnosis and input from all current teachers are used to determine educational impact of the disability and to prepare appropriate accommodations. In instances where evaluation occurs, the "test" administered is determined by the full team of either the 504 or IEP team and test results are communicated to the parent within federal guidelines.

## Old Mill Middle School North and Old Mill High School IB MYP Partnership

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Both the IEP facilitator and Special Education Department Chair monitor IEPs of all students in the school. Students' 504 plans are monitored by the school administrator assigned to this duty. The 504 plans accommodations are copied each semester and provided to the teachers who teach the student. Students with IEPs receive quarterly progress reports and an annual review. Providers maintain a record of services provided. Teachers provide accommodations per the plans and students know that they are receiving them. If there is concern from a parent or student that they are not receiving their accommodations, a meeting can be called at any time to express this concern. All documentation is maintained in the cumulative folder. After a student graduates the information is maintained for 7 years and then discarded. No information is sent to a third party without a release and there is no indication on transcripts that a student has a disability. Only those who have a direct need for information will have access to a student's records. Generally, school psychologists, special educators, administrators and guidance counselors access the student file. General education teachers may also see the student file to review information if they teach the child.