

# ST. JAMES CATHOLIC GLOBAL LEARNING CENTRE

## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY

*Each one called by name...(Isaiah 43:1) To be nourished, to be sustained, to grow, to the fullest extent of his/her gifts and abilities*

St. James is a publicly funded Catholic school which accepts all students. Our inclusive education policy contains information which guides our practice with respect to students with diverse learning needs. This includes teacher beliefs, actions and commitment to addressing and supporting all students' growth and development. It also includes practices that students and teachers must do to provide valuable learning experiences for all children at their level of understanding.

### **As an inclusive school community we are committed to:**

- Providing a faith-based education to all students in our school that is designed for them to be successful in an inclusive classroom;
- Keeping the student at the centre while promoting and nourishing the relationship between home, school and community;
- Promoting accessibility and mutual respect, and honouring diversity through the demonstration of transparency and fairness;
- Honouring each student's unique identity, modeling the D-P motto that "Everyone Belongs"
- Using all forms of assessment (assessment for, assessment as and assessment of) to determine students' level of achievement and creating an action plan to support students in reaching their potential;
- Reporting to parents the current level of achievement of their children as well as the strategies and accommodations put in place to support their learning;
- Creating and implementing an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for any student who requires individualized supports to be successful.

## INCLUSION

Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.

### Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools

In the Ontario context, education is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings, and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

### International Baccalaureate: Special Education needs within the IB Programmes

#### **Affirming Identity and Building Self-Esteem**

St. James CGLC encourages the qualities, attitudes and characteristics identified in the IB Learner Profile promoting responsible citizenship and international mindedness. Social and emotional conditions for learning that value all languages and cultures and affirm the identity of each learner promote self-esteem. In keeping with our Catholic faith and traditions, all persons are valued and respected.

#### **Allocation of Staff**

Special Education Staff is not allocated by student need, but rather based on school population. Funding for this is managed through the Board, but allocated from the Ministry of Education. Funds are provided based on the number of students formally identified in each school. Allocation of Child and Youth Worker (CYW), Social worker (SW), Psychology, and Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP) follows the same process. Educational Resource Worker (ERW) staffing, however, is based on student need as outlined in the data collected through High Needs Profiles that are shared with the School Board level team.

Support Services personnel, as part of Family of Schools and/or the Special Education and Support Service Department, collaborate with educators, in particular, with the classroom teacher, to ensure that all students with diverse learning needs and/or who are at risk academically, physically, socially, emotionally, and behaviourally, are supported through differentiated learning experiences that are informed by timely, appropriate, assessments, supports and interventions.

The role of each person on the Special Education team is dynamic and collaborative. Some responsibilities of each role include:

- Special Education Resource Teacher (SERT):
  - support students, parents and teachers in understanding the rights and responsibilities of students with diverse needs
  - support colleagues with delivery of program, accommodation/ modification of expectations and assessments
  - collaborative completion of IEP's with classroom teachers
  - organize and participate in team meetings to share and suggest strategies
  - submit SEA grants which support the allocation of one-to-one technology for students
- Child and Youth Worker:
  - work directly with SERT and classroom teachers to provide strategies for behavior management

- provide counsel to individual or groups of students
- participate in TEAM meetings to discuss academic and behavioral challenges
- Social Worker:
  - support families in connecting with outside agencies (e.g., Erinoak)
  - provide counsel for home support
- Psychology Staff:
  - administer and analyze educational psychological assessments
  - provide strategies to teachers which include academic approaches to improve student learning
  - outline connections to outside agencies for further support when needed
- Speech and Language Pathologist:
  - administer introductory assessments to identify language impairments
  - provide referrals for students who require speech therapy
- Itinerant (Blind/Low Vision, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Autism, etc.)
  - work on a consultation basis with school staff
  - complete observations of students during class time and participate in follow up meetings to outline next steps for staff and student
  - issue referrals and check-ins regarding physical-medical equipment
- Educational Resource Worker:
  - work directly with students who have academic and/or behavioural challenges
  - support the implementation of the curriculum, with accommodations or modifications, as provided by the classroom teacher

## **DIFFERENTIATION**

The St. James CGLC staff is committed to refining their understanding and implementation of inclusive strategies and instructional practices that reflect the diverse needs, learning styles, and readiness to learn of all students. Planning for inclusion focuses on the differentiation of content, process and product. These inclusive strategies are used to support learners as measured by increased achievement levels on report cards for students with identified learning needs.

### **Universal Design (UDL)**

UDL focuses on using teaching strategies and pedagogical materials designed to meet diverse needs to enhance learning for all students. Through the use of flexible curriculum we create pathways towards fair and accurate assessment practices. When we act on the belief that failure is not an option; that every student can learn regardless of age, skills or situation; then we will have achieved academic success for every student.

### **Valuing Prior Knowledge**

St. James CGLC teacher will explicitly activate learners' prior understanding, use prior understandings to differentiate tasks and activities, record information in learning profiles that will support planning for future differentiation, consider the time and strategies necessary for activating and building up background knowledge.

### **Scaffolding**

In keeping with best practice, St. James CGLC teachers will scaffold curriculum for learners to accomplish a task that would otherwise be much more difficult to accomplish. Scaffolding will foster learners' increasing independence in taking responsibility for developing strategies of their own. Some of the strategies in place include: visual aids, demonstrations, dramatizations, technological supports, collaborative groups, and mother-tongue resources.

### **Availability of Technology**

To support the differentiation of student work and accessibility of information, students at St. James CGLC have access to a wide variety of technology options. Every classroom is equipped with an interactive white board. Full day kindergarten classrooms have access to ipads, grades 1 to 6 have access to chromebooks or laptops for each student. Every grade 7 & 8 student are assigned a chromebook with Edwin access.

### **School Health Support Services**

The mandate of the School Health Support Services program is to provide access to school health professional services for students. The goal is to support the student in achieving their optimal level of functioning within the same school setting. Support services include: Occupational / Physical therapy, Nursing, Speech and Language Pathologist

The level of support is determined by the multi-disciplinary school team members, upon parental consent.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

"According to Policy/Program Memorandum No. 11, "Early Identification of Children's Learning Needs" (1982), every school board in Ontario must have procedures in place to identify the level of development, learning abilities,

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and needs of every child who is enrolled in the school, and to ensure that educational programs are designed to accommodate those needs and to facilitate the child's growth and development. These procedures are part of a process of continuous assessment and program planning that should be initiated when a child is first enrolled in school and that should continue throughout a child's school life."

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

### **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**

"For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP)."

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

"For a student with special education needs who requires modified or alternative expectations, assessment and evaluation of his or her achievement will be based on the modified curriculum expectations or alternative expectations outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). For a student with special education needs who requires "accommodations only", as described in his or her IEP, assessment and evaluation of achievement will be based on the appropriate subject/ grade/course curriculum expectations and the achievement levels outlined in the curriculum documents."

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/policyfunding/growsuccess.pdf>

### **Categories of Exceptionalities as outlined by the Ontario Ministry of Education**

"The Education Act identifies five categories of exceptionalities for exceptional students: behavioural, communicational, intellectual, physical, and multiple. These broad categories are designed to address the wide range of conditions that may affect a student's ability to learn, and are meant to be inclusive of all medical conditions, whether diagnosed or not, that can lead to particular types of learning difficulties." <https://www.ontario.ca/document/special-education-ontario-policy-and-resource-guide-kindergarten-grade-12/categories>

- Behavioural
- Communication
  - Autism
  - Deaf & Hard of Hearing
  - Learning Disability
  - Language Impairment
  - Speech Impairment
- Intellectual
  - Giftedness
  - Mild Intellectual Disability
  - Developmental Disability
- Physical
  - Physical Disability
  - Blind and low vision
- Multiple

### **The Identification Placement Review Committee (IPRC)**

The IPRC process will determine the best placement for student success. Note that these are not static placements; rather they come under annual review and can be adapted to compliment students' changing needs. The form of this may be any of the following:

- *Regular Class with Indirect Support*: The student is placed in a regular class for the entire day and the teacher receives specialized consultative services;
- *Regular Class with Resource Assistance*: The student is placed in the regular class for most or all of the day and receives specialized instruction, individually or in a small group, within the regular classroom from a qualified special education teacher;
- *Regular Class with Withdrawal Assistance*: The student is placed in the regular class and receives instruction outside of the classroom for less than 50% of the school day, from a qualified special education teacher;
- *Special Education Class with Partial Integration*: The student is placed in the regular class (where the student/teacher ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31) for at least 50% of the school day, but is integrated with a regular class for at least one instructional period daily;
- *Special Education Class Full Time*: The student is placed by the IPRC in a special education class (where the student ratio conforms to Regulation 298, section 31) for the entire school day.

## **PROCESS at ST. JAMES C.G.L.C.**

We understand that an inclusive environment at St. James CGLC fosters and nourishes safe, caring and respectful learning environments rooted in faith. We create a culture of respect for differences within a Catholic context. Classrooms are equipped with the necessary resources including, staff, access to technology, and other materials to support all learners.

Procedures are also in place to ensure that all students receive a program that best suits their differing needs. This may include accommodations, modifications, both or neither. Goals to ensure personalized learning for all, as well as the identification process are outlined below:

- students with diverse needs require differentiated programming and additional supports to appropriately address their specific learning needs;
- assessment tools assist in developing and implementing appropriate programming for students with diverse needs (e.g., Weschler, CASI, PM Benchmarks, CCAT, EQAO);
- special education programming is based on the assessed needs of students and is delivered through differentiated programming;
- programming decisions are based on current assessment data, are made on an individual basis, and identify the most enabling environment for the student, while at the same time giving consideration to the learning and safety needs of all students;
- educating students with diverse needs in inclusive settings, in their community schools, is the first placement option;
- Identification, Placement and Review Committee (IPRC) decisions are made in collaboration

with school teams with parents as the primary decision makers. These decisions may include an identification under any of the following exceptionalities:

As students transition from Year to Year and from PYP to MYP, they will encounter different staff and learning environments. To ensure that transitions are seamless, the school has transition procedures in place, as outlined below:

- September: Ontario Student Records (OSRs) are reviewed by Special Education staff, administrators, teachers and information about student profiles are shared with the appropriate resource staff. The Special Education consultant as well as outside agencies are also contacted for additional supports for exceptional learners;
- October: Individualized Education Plans (IEP) are developed based on students' needs; parents/guardians are invited to provide input
- IEPs are formally reviewed and updated each reporting period (November, February, June);
- April/May: School level Identification, Placement and Review Committee convened School team, Parents/guardians and receiving high school personnel (in Year 3 only) meet to share learner profile and recommend transition plans to best support the student from elementary school to secondary school.
- May/June: Teachers summarize student profiles and shares with Special Education staff, administrators and next years' teacher; to support successful transition to the next grade level
- June: Transition to high school is completed with OSR's being forwarded to the intake school
- Ongoing throughout the year:
  - Team meetings occur for collaborative sharing to discuss student progress and challenges; to brainstorm next steps and suggested resources/activities/tools to support individual student learning and achievement; to inform parents; to formally request services by school support staff and/or outside agencies; to ensure all staff involved in this student's education are informed and equipped to meet his/her needs.
  - Identification, Placement and Review Committee meet to hear presentation from school team regarding student profile, assessment results and recommendation for identification and placement.

### **Documentation/Reporting/Assessment**

See assessment policy

## SOURCES

This policy is based on the principles and guidelines provided in the following sources:

International Baccalaureate Resources:

Learning Diversity and Inclusion in the International Baccalaureate Programmes  
Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes  
Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom

Ontario Ministry of Education Documents:

Learning for All - Ontario Ministry of Education– Meeting Student Learning Diversity in the Classroom  
Education for All – Ontario Ministry of Education  
Learning for All - Ontario Ministry of Education  
Growing Success – Ontario Ministry of Education

Dufferin-Peel CDSB policies, General Administrative Procedures, Guidelines:

Policy 12      GAP 328 - EQUITY AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION  
Policy 11.01   GAP 901.06 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act  
Policy 9.01    GAP 530 - Catholic Code of Conduct  
Policy 2.10    GAP 408 - Selection Guideline for library learning commons resources  
Policy 24 - Access to Elementary Programs of Choice  
Policy 34 - Indigenous Education  
Policy 8.72 - First Nation, Metis and Inuit Students, Self Identification  
Gender Expression and Identity Guidelines: Elementary and Secondary Student Support  
Catholic Board Improvement Learning Cycle - 2023-2027