



Inclusive Education Policy

Purpose of an Inclusive Education Policy

To create a caring, challenging, and engaging learning environment which reflects the values and vision of the Canadian International School.

To enable all students, who are learning in-person and/or online, to reach their full potential and increase the capacity of CIS to include and offer placements for students with mild to moderate special education needs, and those who are gifted or talented, as per ADEK Policy 48: Students with Special Education Needs.

We strive to inspire and empower our students to think creatively and critically, pursue lifelong learning, and contribute to the global economy.

Inclusive Education in Alberta and the UAE

Alberta's education system is built on a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students. Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that demonstrates universal acceptance of, and belonging for, all students.

In Alberta and Alberta accredited schools, inclusive school settings are a first placement option for students with special education needs. Admission to CIS will not be withheld on the basis of mild to moderate needs; however, parents are required to declare the needs of their child prior to enrollment. Inclusion refers to specially designed instruction and support for students with special education needs in regular classrooms. Access to additional academic supports will continue in the online learning environment.

To support diverse learning needs and inclusion, school authorities are required to provide special education programs based on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) designed to meet the educational needs of identified students. As an Alberta accredited school under the jurisdiction of Alberta Education, CIS provides supports for all students with special education needs, inside and outside the classroom, and online.

CIS Inclusive Education Philosophy

At CIS, we believe that all learners have unique needs to consider when helping them to meet / exceed their academic and non-academic potential. To provide access to meaningful learning opportunities, we apply approaches and support systems that address the individual needs and varied learning styles of students, including those identified with special needs (special education and gifted and talented).

By recognizing the diversity of our collective learning community, we support the development of global citizens.

At CIS, we support the following beliefs about inclusion to foster inclusive systems that become the norm and underpin our school culture:

- students are at the center of learning and can take responsibility for their learning
- resources are made available to all students to enable them to be successful
- procedures and provision remain consistent
- the learning environment (social, physical, online) supports differing learning needs
- differentiation is supported from planning through to instruction and assessment
- early identification leads to targeted, evidence-based interventions.
- co-operative partnerships with parents and specialists are vital to success

Principles of Inclusive Education

The following six principles are key to achieving Alberta's vision for inclusive education and supporting Students of Determination in the United Arab Emirates:

Anticipate, value and support diversity and learner differences – Welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments create a sense of belonging for all learners and families.

High expectations for all learners – Creating a culture of high expectations begins with an accessible curriculum and meaningful and relevant learning experiences. Educators and families act on the idea that, with the right instructional supports, every learner can be successful.

Understand learners' strengths and needs – Meaningful data is gathered and shared at all levels of the system – by teachers, families, schools, and school authorities – to understand and respond to the strengths and needs of individual learners.

Reduce barriers within learning environments – All education partners work together to identify and reduce barriers within the curriculum, the learning environment and/or instruction that are interfering with the students' ability to be successful learners and to participate in the school community.

Capacity building – School leaders, teachers, education professionals, families and community partners have ongoing opportunities, relationships and resources that develop, strengthen and renew their understanding, skills and abilities to create flexible and responsive learning environments. Capacity building takes place at the personal, school and systems levels.

Shared responsibility – All education partners, including school and jurisdictional staff, families, community service providers, post-secondary institutions, teacher preparation programs and government are committed to collaboration and are committed to the success of all learners.

CIS Inclusive Education Practice

The Canadian International School uses a Continuum of Supports model, based on Universal Design for Learning (Ross & Meyer, 2011). CIS has several formal and informal support services available, including Response to Intervention (RTI). The RTI members include School Administrators, Students Services personnel, School Counsellors, Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Shadow Teachers, in addition to specialized service providers (Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Consulting Specialists).

The RTI model is the starting point to identify and serve students who need additional academic or behavioural support to make satisfactory progress towards meeting grade level expectations. Teachers remain the main point of contact for students and parents, whether students learn in-person and/or online.

The provision of accommodations or modifications could benefit the success of students with special needs. Students are required to provide documentation of a diagnosis to modify curriculum, as this can impact the students' educational trajectory. Understanding the differences between accommodations and modifications is critical when supporting the success of students with special needs, and will be provided whether the student is learning in-person and/or online.

- Accommodations change how a student learns the material or completes assessments. Grade level curricular outcomes **do not change**.
- Modifications change what a student is taught or expected to learn. Grade level curricular outcomes **change**.

Shared Shadow Assistants

Shared Shadow Assistants (SSAs) may be recommended for some students, to increase their ability to access the curriculum and experience success at CIS. SSAs maintain regular contact with classroom/course teachers and play an integral role in supporting the student's learning and achievement.

SSAs are direct supports for students and remain active participants in the online learning environment. Whether the student is learning in-person and/or online, coordinated online meetings function as the direct interaction between the SSA and the student with whom they provide assistance, as needed. Associated fees will be reflective of the level of support and direct

interaction the student receives, and be in accordance with ADEK Policy 48: *Students with Special Educational Needs*. SSA No Objection letters are made available to parents for confirmation of agreement for SSA support.

Additional Resources

General Rules for the Provision of Special Education Programs and Services (Public & Private Schools)

<https://www.moe.gov.ae/Ar/Legislation/Documents/English%20Side%20Final.pdf>

Government of Alberta: Inclusive Education

https://www.alberta.ca/inclusive-education.aspx?utm_source=redirector