



# Inclusion Policy

Michelangelo International Elementary School

(M I E S)

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## **Michelangelo International Elementary School**

### **Purpose**

Michelangelo International Elementary School is an International Baccalaureate World School serving pre-kindergarten to grade 6 students. We are committed to the inclusion for all students. We, as a school, believe that all children learn differently and all children can learn. We teach within a differentiation model in order to meet the individual needs of all of our students. We believe that students with academic and/or behavioural needs can succeed within the regular classroom when accommodations, adaptations, scaffolding and support are implemented. Michelangelo International Elementary School's Inclusion Policy is designed to address the needs of students with exceptionalities and allow all to be internationally minded and successful learners.

### **Michelangelo International Elementary School Mission Statement**

Michelangelo School endeavours to successfully integrate students into present and future day life by providing the tools required to play a constructive role in society while developing positive values. The focus is not simply on the acquisition of knowledge, but on fostering in young people the desire to create a better and more peaceful world through respect and understanding of the many cultures of this world. The school provides students with the essentials of lifelong learning by creating environments that arouse intellectual curiosity.

### **International Baccalaureate Mission Statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end, the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



## The IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners, we strive to be:

**Inquirers** – We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

**Knowledgeable** - We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

**Thinkers** - We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

**Communicators** - We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

**Principled** - We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

**Open-minded** - We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

**Caring** - We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

**Risk-Takers** – We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

**Balanced** - We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

**Reflective** - We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

## Overview:

**Philosophy:** Michelangelo International Elementary School provides an inclusive and collaborative learning environment. We are committed to provide our students with academic excellence, to challenge our students with high quality education and to develop life-long learners by creating an environment of respect and intellectual curiosity.

**Practice:** At Michelangelo International Elementary School, students with varying learning disabilities, disorders and conditions are educated the majority of the time in general education environments with additional resource support. Identified students also known as coded students receive services and support from resource teachers with specialized degrees and/or certifications through a co-teaching/assisting model and through a pull-out program for part of their instructional day.

**Differentiation:** Differentiation means tailoring instruction to meet individual needs through the use of tiered activities. This can be done by differentiating content, process, products and/or learning environment through the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping. Differentiation includes flexible-pace learning, collaborative learning, progressive tasks, digital resource and interactive tools, verbal support, teacher/student interaction (dialogue), ongoing assessment and feedback approach.

## Stakeholders at Michelangelo International Elementary School

This policy of inclusion applies to all stakeholders in our community:

- Administration (Principal, Vice-Principal)
- Teaching Staff (general education teachers)
- Specialists (Resource Teachers, Physical Education, Music, STEAM, Media/Art)
- Support Staff (Student Attendants, Special Education technician, Daycare Educators)
- Parents/Guardians
- Students
- Governing Board

It will be communicated to all stakeholders by:

- Being included in a Special Education section in the staff handbook and through professional development
- Being discussed during the first Governing Board meeting at the beginning of every school year

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Resource Team and the school Principal and necessary revisions will be made.

## **PYP Inclusive Education at Michelangelo International Elementary School:**

At Michelangelo International Elementary School, the philosophy of inclusion is promoted by the principal, resource team, special education team which includes the student attendants and the special education technician, school psychologist, school speech and language pathologist, and the special education consultants from the English Montreal School Board. These professionals partner with general teachers and school-wide staff to ensure direct, indirect, interactive, independent and experimental instruction as well as maximized inclusion and integration for all students with academic and/or behavioural needs. The resource teachers serve on the ARC committee where decisions are made on appropriately spending the special needs budget. The committee meets on average three times a year to discuss budget and special needs in the school. This is when a discussion takes place to decide whether an extra resource teacher is needed in order to ensure that all grade levels receive resource support. The special educational consultants at the English Montreal School Board develop and implement professional training to resource teachers and general education teachers to teach new strategies of differentiation and to offer knowledge about different disabilities dealt within our school. To deepen our school-wide awareness and understanding of the best practices related to teaching students with academic and/or behavioural difficulties, the resource teachers will periodically offer professional development to the staff. During staff meetings and/or on pedagogical days, new strategies will be shared with teachers as well as revised confidential information about students.

### **Resources:**

Our school has access to the expertise of the school psychologist, school speech and language pathologist, CIUSS (Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux) social worker, resource teachers and the special education consultants from the English Montreal School Board. These professionals make themselves available to all teachers and support staff, answer questions, and hold multidisciplinary team meetings. They lead MDT meetings (Multi-Disciplinary Team) meetings, assess students who are on the waiting list to be assessed, they observe students within the classroom setting and provide feedback and recommendations. When a student is assessed, the professionals who assessed the student meet with the school principal, student's parents and resource teachers to go over the results of the assessment and the recommendations. These recommendations are then written up into the IEP-Individualized Education Plan that is written by the resource teacher and the student's classroom teachers. If a student attendant is assigned to that specific student then he/she attends the IEP meeting. We promote the use of the WordQ + SpeakQ computer software program for all students with a learning diagnosis. WordQ + SpeakQ is a simple writing tool that helps students improve writing skills, particularly spelling and grammar through word prediction, speech feedback and speech recognition. The goal is to help students

create better quality written work with greater independence, confidence, and ease. Our school psychologist is trained in a wide variety of testing and screening tools, including the WISC-IV/WISC-V (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for children), BASC-2 (Behaviour Assessment System for children), WPPSI-IV (French version of WISC-IV) and ABAS-II (Adaptive Behaviour Assessment System).

If a student requires testing in French instead of English for specific reasons, the psychologist is qualified to assess in French and will therefore bring to school the French assessment equivalent to the English ones she uses. Our school speech and language pathologist is also trained in a wide variety of testing and screening tools, including, PPVT-IV (Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test), EVT-II (Expressive Vocabulary Test), CELF-V (Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals) and WRMT-III (Woodcock Reading Mastery Test).

In addition, screening and testing is also available for occupational therapy. When needed, the school principal can request for other professionals at the school board to assess and/or observe specific students. These professionals include the autism spectrum consultant, special educational consultant and behavioural integration consultant.

## **Roles & Responsibilities:**

At Michelangelo International Elementary School, we strive to meet the needs of all of our learners, promote the integration and inclusion of all of our students and to decrease the number of unnecessary referrals made for special education services. The goal is to provide resource to Preschool cycle (K4 and K5) and cycle one (Grade 1 and 2) students who are struggling in order to prevent unnecessary referrals in the future.

### **Step 1**

At Step 1, our teachers implement thorough instruction aligned with the Quebec Education Program and Quebec's Progression of Learning standards. Our teachers differentiate instruction tailoring it to meet individual needs whether it is through differentiating content, process, projects, and/or learning environment. Teachers use technology in the classroom to support different learning styles, small group teaching such as guided reading, and a significant emphasis is placed on the IB Learner Profile attributes to support the social and emotional growth of all learners. They differentiate by assigning project-based group work activities geared to different learning styles, interests and levels of thinking.

### **Step 2**

When a student continues to experience learning difficulties in the differentiated general education setting, the general education teacher holds a meeting with the resource teacher allocated to that specific grade level. During this meeting, the general education teacher discusses his/her concerns about the student, highlighting strengths and weaknesses and providing students' different works. The resource teacher then begins to observe the student during different time periods of the day. The resource teacher then assesses the student using the PM Benchmarks, GB+ and the Math

Diagnostic Assessment from the English Montreal School Board. PM Benchmark is designed to assess students' instructional and independent reading levels using meaningful texts. These benchmarks assess the student's decoding, inferencing and comprehension grade level. The GB+ is the French version which is designed to assess the same areas. The Math Diagnostic Assessment from the English Montreal School Board was designed to assess the child's grade level in mathematical concepts and situational problem solving. The tools used by the resource teacher indicate the difficulties the student is experiencing. Based on the results of these assessment tools, resource teachers meet with the general education teacher (s) and discuss the specific adaptations that can be implemented to facilitate the student's learning.

### **Step 3**

When, despite these levels of Step 1 and Step 2 support, a student's behavior, reading, writing, and/or math is consistently below grade level, the resource teacher further investigates the student's needs by having the general education teacher fill out a MDT form. Once this form is filled out, the school principal holds an MDT meeting during school hours to allow all professionals and general education teachers to be present. During this meeting, we discuss the student's difficulties and assess student's work that is provided by the general education teacher. The resource teacher proceeds by making an appointment with the student's parents. The meeting is to discuss the student's continued difficulties and the possibility of an academic assessment with the parents to understand where the difficulties come from and how to best help the student improve and succeed. Once the parents agree to an assessment, the resource teacher has the parents sign an authorization form to allow our school professionals to assess the student. A case conference is held to discuss the child's difficulties. Those present at the case conference include the school principal, the resource teachers, the psychologist, the speech and language pathologist, the special education consultants from the EMSB and the general education teacher if they are on break. During this case conference, the professionals give their input and a decision is made to see if the student's difficulties are linked to a language disorder or a learning disability. Once this is determined, the appropriate professional sets up evaluation dates and the evaluation process begins. In the meantime, the BASC and the student information package from the EMSB needs to be completed by the resource teacher as well as the Conners checklist needs to be completed by the general education teacher (s). Once the full evaluation has been completed by the professional, a meeting is held with the parents, school principal, resource teacher, psychologist and/or SLP and general education teachers to discuss the student's diagnosis as well as areas of needs and recommendations. The interventions discussed at this meeting will begin to be implemented immediately the following day. The resource teacher is in charge of meeting with the student attendants and special education technician to see if the student is allowed their services depending on the results of their evaluation.

It is important to note that the student is followed in resource. In the cases that the student continues to show significant difficulties and has not progressed within two years of resource support and IEP implementation, the resource teacher gathers more information with PM Benchmarks, GB+ and Math Diagnostic from the EMSB and holds a case conference with the school principal, psychologist, SLP (Speech and Language Pathologist) and special education consultants where she pleads his/her case that the child is not progressing. The resource teacher provides significant proof of evaluations and student work. If there is a consensus that the student is not progressing despite the different interventions and adaptations implemented, a decision to have the student's program modified is made. The resource teacher then sets up a meeting with the student's parents where he/she discusses with them the possibility of modifying the student's program. It is important that the resource teacher explains to the parents that when a child is following a modified program in grade 5 or 6, the student is no longer accessible to graduate with a high school leaving diploma nor is he/she allowed to go to a regular high school. The only high school option the student has is a specialized high school or a regular high school following a modified workload for the first three years and then a work oriented training path. If the student is in grade 1, 2, 3, or 4, then the above does not apply. They can go to a regular high school following a resource program. If the parents agree to a modified program, the resource teacher completes a full package that includes, assessments, IEP, report card, student's works and an ETS online form needs to be thoroughly completed highlighting all of the interventions implemented up-to-date. This package is then submitted to student's services at the EMSB where it gets reviewed and an approval for a modified program gets emailed to the school principal.

### **What is an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)?**

An IEP stands for Individualized Education Plan. This plan lays out the special education instruction, supports and services students need to thrive in school despite of their diagnosis. The process of an IEP is quite specific.

**IEP Team Committee:** It is the responsibility of the child's resource teacher to write up an IEP for the child. It is expected that a student's IEP will provide a clear and comprehensive analysis of how a student is doing in all academic areas including socially, emotionally, and physically. Once the resource teacher writes up the IEP, she schedules a meeting with the child's general education teachers and attendants and/or behaviour technician if applicable, where the IEP is revised and information is added, discussed or removed. Once the IEP is completed, the resource teacher makes sure that the professionals implicated in its writing process sign the IEP. A meeting is scheduled for the parents to meet with the resource teacher and the IEP is discussed with them. Parents have the chance to voice their concerns and/or ask for clarification of the elements written in the IEP. Interventions indicated on the IEP have to coincide with the recommendations made in the psychological assessment reports. Once the IEP is discussed with the parents, the resource

teacher provides the parents with a copy and places the original in the students file located in the school principal's office under lock and key. The resource teacher is responsible for overseeing that the implementation of the IEP is being followed with fidelity by all the professionals working with the child.

**Examples of Adaptations:**

- Be given a detailed timeline for completion of assignment(s)
- Colour coded books and copybooks
- Encourage use of agenda
- Model appropriate organization
- Provide student with place to store material in class
- Reminder poster in locked
- Adequate time for completion of work in class
- Assistive Technology
- Check often for understanding
- Computer-assisted instruction
- Conference with student
- Establish classroom routines
- Follow a less desirable task with a more desirable task
- Give alternative tasks
- Give clear instruction
- Give opportunity to rewrite assignment
- Hold student account
- Mnemonics strategy
- Monitor quality of student work while working
- Monitor the initiation and completion of written assignments
- Paraphrasing
- Parents will be notified when work is completed
- Peer monitoring
- Positive reinforcement
- Project based learning
- Project will be broken down in smaller chunks
- Provide a schedule of classroom activities to student at beginning of class
- Provide a visual list
- Provide daily routine
- Provide feedback regularly
- Provide reinforcement of key themes
- Provide sample assignments
- Provide scaffolding i.e. self-talk
- Provide short and frequent instruction time
- Rehearsal strategies for complex tasks
- Resource support
- Teach metacognitive strategy
- Teach self-questioning
- Use of multiple intelligences based strategies
- Use student's strengths

- Visual imagery
- Buddy system within classroom
- Cues before beginning of instruction
- Establish a rapport with student through interaction in and out of class
- Highly structured environment
- Limit distractions
- Making sure you have his/her attention
- More frequent breaks
- Outline rules of social interactions and behaviour
- Positive reinforcement
- Praise
- Provide examples of positive attitude
- Reflect on positive elements of the period/day/week
- Reinforce group activities
- Reinforcement of extra-curricular activities participation
- Alternative work space
- Preferential seating
- Quiet setting
- Computer with no spell check
- Enlargement of print
- Extra time
- Reader
- Scribe
- Separate room

### **Who Needs an IEP and When?**

An official IEP is written up for a child who has undergone a psycho-educational assessment, a Speech & Language Assessment, Occupational assessment and when a conclusion/diagnosis has been made. If a child is on a waiting list either at the school or at a private clinic for an assessment; the child gets an unofficial IEP which highlights the child's needs and indicates some adaptations that can be implemented until an assessment is completed and we get a better understanding of the child's difficulties. Children from Prek to grade 3; who appear to have difficulties and are followed by the resource teacher will receive an action plan. This plan is generally for children who are flagged with a learning or behavior difficulty but who the team feel they would benefit from a full assessment in the future. This action plan highlight the child's strengths, weaknesses, concerns and adaptations.

### **Confidentiality**

IEPs and all confidential information (Psychological assessment/copies of hospital records/professional observations) are held in the principal's office where the door is locked when she is not in the building. They are placed in the child's confidential file under lock and key in one of her special education file drawer. All teachers or professionals who work with the child daily is allowed access to the file however the file is not to leave the office area. It needs to stay within the boundaries of the head office and returned to its proper location immediately after being read. It is important that all files be returned and in the exact state that it was in before. If professionals working with the child have additional questions regarding the child's diagnosis, they are to meet with the resource teacher. This confidentiality policy is often mentioned during monthly staff meetings and provided in the staff handbook.

### **Continuum of Services**

Currently, Michelangelo International Elementary School supports students with Special Education Needs in the following programs:

- General Education with Resource Support
- Resource support (in-class and/or small group instruction)
- General Education with Resource Room
- Jolly Phonics Groups (grade 1-2)
- The Writers Workshop Groups (grades 3-4)

The resource program is provided to students from grade 1 to 6. The hours of resource each class gets depends on the number of students who are coded (have a specific code linked to a diagnosis at the EMSB & MESR). Resource support is provided to students in grades 1 to 3 for prevention and for early intervention/detection.

### **Technology and Students with Learning/Special Education Needs**

At Michelangelo International Elementary School, technology is an important part of what we offer all students in their weekly instruction. We provide a Media class one hour a week for all classes. Our Media teacher helps all staff members use the technology available in the school for the maximum benefit of all students including those with special education needs. All of our classrooms have a Smart Board. Projectors, laptop carts, iPads, tablets, and the computer laboratory are available to all classes and all students with a signup sheet. All of our computers in the building have WordQ and SpeakQ installed so that all students can benefit from this software. There are four resource computers located in the resource room. Headphones with mics are also found in the resource room so that all students with special education needs can use the wordQ and SpeakQ program to its full capacity.

## **Accommodation for Assessments**

The students assessed and coded at the school board level write EMSB exams at the end of cycle 1 and 2 with the resource teacher where they receive all of the adaptations implemented. The end of cycle 3 Ministry exams is written in the resource room with the resource teacher and once again the adaptations are implemented as indicated in their IEP. If a child is following a modified program, the resource teacher can ask for the child to be exempted. If exemption is granted, the child does not write the exams. Assessments that take place through the school year are usually written in the resource room with the resource teacher. Exceptions are made accordingly.

## Education – Commitment – Excellence

Written and revised by: Stefania Fuoco (Resource Teacher), Elisa Di Genova (Resource Teacher), Michael Salzani (Resource Teacher) in collaboration with Ida De Laurentiis (IB PYP Coordinator) 2021.