Earlington Heights

Earlington Heights Elementary school IB Primary Years Programme Special Educational Needs Policy (Last Revised January 2016)

**Rationale/Purpose**

 Earlington Heights Elementary School strives to provide a high quality education in a nurturing academic environment for all students. In order to ensure that each learner receives the appropriate support in order to obtain their maximum potential, our teachers use differentiated instruction, expose the students to the content in many different ways to reach all learners, and provide a variety of activities and resources that accommodate leaners at all levels of skill and knowledge.

 We are committed to working with parents, educational specialists, teachers, and student services staff to ensure that all students reach their maximum potential, regardless of their exceptionality or medical condition. Example of special educational needs include:

* Specific learning disabilities
* Hearing and/or language impairment
* Behavior/emotional disorders
* Attention disorders
* Medical conditions, such as diabetes, severe allergies, and heart problems
* Mental health conditions
* Autism

Earlington Heights Elementary School offers a resource/small group model in which special education students receive instruction outside the regular classroom. A special education teacher provides direct instruction.

**Response to Intervention (RTI)**

Response to Intervention is a process through which the school uses student data to track student progress in both academics and behavior. There are 3 tiers that are included in this intervention process, which include Tier 1, 2, and 3. Tier 1 is the core instruction provided by the teacher, tier 2 is group interventions, and tier 3 refers to intensive, individualized interventions. Some students who need to the most intensive level of support, tier 3, may be referred for possible eligibility determination for special education.

**Identifying Student Needs**

Parents or school personnel may refer the student to the Child Study Team. The Child Study Team will review the data for the child and determine if the child needs additional intervention. This referral may lead to a child being identified as a student with a disability who needs special education services in school.

This evaluation process includes ongoing assessments, also referred to as progress monitoring, of the child’s response to instruction, interventions, interviews, the analysis of this information, and often includes individual tests administered by a school psychologist or a speech/language pathologist. Once the team decides that it has enough data to determine whether the child is eligible for exceptional student education (ESE), the evaluation procedures are complete.

If the child is not eligible for ESE services, the team will continue to monitor the student to identify and implement effective instruction and interventions. The team’s problem-solving process continues in an on-going effort to improve and maintain an effective education for every child.

**Individual Educational Plan (IEP)**

If the student is eligible for ESE services, an individual educational plan (IEP) is developed to address the child’s specific needs. Depending on the IEP, these special education services may include individual or small group instruction, teaching modifications; and/or physical, occupational, and speech therapy. The parent/guardian must provide consent of the identified services before the IEP can be implemented.

The school conducts IEP meetings with parents on a quarterly basis in order to discuss the student’s progress towards their goals. The quarterly status report on the goals reflects that the students either mastered their goal, has made adequate progress towards their goal, has made some progress, or insufficient progress.

**Section 504 Procedures for Students with Disabilities**

Section 504 is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities. Students who have been identified to have one or more conditions affecting major life activities, such as caring for one’s self, seeing, breathing, walking, hearing, speaking, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and performing manual tasks, may qualify for a Section 504 Plan.

In order to initiate the process for a Section 504 plan, first, the student must be referred to the School Support Team (SST). If the SST determines it is appropriate to refer the student for 504 services then they will meet to draft the initial 504 plan. Parents and students are also encouraged to take part in this process.

The SST meet annually, or throughout the year if necessary, to revise the plans. Reevaluation of a 504 plan is recommended annually, before any significant changes can take place, or if a parent or student personnel requests it. At the time of a 504 evaluation, information is reviewed from a variety of sources including teacher observations, standardized tests scores, report cards, and any information from the parent and/or nurses and medical providers, in order to determine the effectiveness of the plan in meeting the needs of the student.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law that protects the rights of students with disabilities and provides additional support and assistance in special education services. These rights, or procedural safeguards, are intended to ensure that parents have the opportunity to be a partner in all educational decisions regarding their child.