

Special Education Policy

Philosophy

First and foremost, all students are legally and morally entitled to a comprehensive education tailored to their needs. At Hamilton Middle School, we have an open admissions policy and our school is well equipped to serve students with multiple exceptionalities. We have two center programs: an Affective Needs program and a Multiple Intelligences Program, as well as Mild Moderate services. These services are supported in a continuum model by our experienced Special Education Senior Team Lead, educators, paraprofessionals, social workers, psychologists, counselors, and nurse. From inclusion in mainstream courses to self-contained classrooms, we strive to meet the needs of every child and tailor that child's educational experience to meet their needs.

Legal Underpinnings

As a public school, Hamilton Middle School adheres to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Colorado state Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA), and supports our scholars with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) that are uniquely designed to best support each student. Denver Public Schools also supports parents and students at the district level with Special Education Engagement Sessions and a Special Education Advisory Committee.

Mission Statement Connection

Hamilton Middle School's mission of promoting balanced academic, physical, artistic and emotional development for all scholars grounds our Special Education work. Special Education students receive a comprehensive academic education with the necessary emotional supports to help them achieve. Additionally, throughout Hamilton's mission statement we emphasize all scholars. All means ALL here at Hamilton.

Hamilton Middle School fosters lifelong global learners, through the nurturing of a compassionate and intercultural community that leads change towards a more peaceful world. As international educators, we promote balanced academic, physical, artistic and emotional development for all scholars.

Scholars at Hamilton explore multiple disciplines and demonstrate understanding through inquiry and rigorous assessment. Our scholars are empathetic towards people and their beliefs, and utilize diverse intellectual, linguistic, and cultural perspectives to inform their lens.

We challenge learners and inspire globally-minded scholars to become lifelong, enduring learners, servant leaders, and critical thinkers.

Financial Implications

Special Education services at Hamilton Middle School are supplemented with district, state, and federal funding based on our Special Education student enrollment to ensure proper support of services and service providers.

Alignment with IB Expectations

An IB education requires students to become inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk takers through a holistic approach. Hamilton Middle School's Special Education policy maintains this holistic approach through the expansive social, emotional, and physical well-being supports we have available for our students. Socially, students are supported by the inclusion

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model to be surrounded by their peers regardless of their exceptionality. Emotionally, Hamilton supports students with an expansive whole-child team. We are proud to have two school social workers, a school psychologist, two counselors, a nurse, three grade-level Deans of Culture, three Restorative Justice coordinators, and a multitude of special education educators and paraprofessionals. Physically, students' well-being is supported by our restorative approach to Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) to provide an all-encompassing approach to student safety.

As we strive to support students holistically, legal requirements surrounding Individualized Education Plans, as well as achieving high levels of support, may warrant substitution for coursework requirements. All students will experience inquiry-driven units in their courses regardless of the general education or special education nature of their courses.

Policy Maintenance

- The MYP Committee will review and make any necessary revisions each spring in preparation for the coming school year.
- Upon revision, the policy will be presented to Hamilton's School Leadership Team and Collaborative School Committee for approval.
- The policy will be posted on hamilton.dpsk12.org and will be distributed to students, parents, and staff at the beginning of each school year.

Sources

MYP: from Principles into Practice. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014.