

# Special Needs Policy

Silver Spring International Middle School



Silver Spring International Middle School, in conjunction with Montgomery County Public Schools, is committed to providing a “free appropriate public education” to all students. Students with intellectual, physical, behavioral or emotional disabilities are evaluated to determine eligibility for the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) with appropriate services, and re-evaluation.

Services at Silver Spring International Middle School are provided based upon the individual needs of the student as outlined in the IEP. All students at Silver Spring International at IB students. Therefore, all students who receive special education services are afforded the level of support needed for their success in middle school. The following are illustrative examples of services that students may access depending upon their own IEP.

- Adapted instructional materials and/or presentation (large print, audio assistance, etc.)
- Modified assessments
- Additional support for study skills, social skills, or academic achievement through the Autism Resource Services program and Resource Classes

Silver Spring International Middle School provides for the needs of special education students through the intense cooperation of faculty. Students identified as needing special services are assigned a case manager who ensures that the student’s IEP is understood and followed by all classroom teachers. This case manager is also responsible for following all of the necessary steps in creating, implementing, and revising a student’s IEP so that the document continues to outline appropriate goals, services, and accommodations for the student.

We believe that all students have learning needs that must be acknowledged and cultivated. Silver Spring International Middle School is committed to creating an environment that promotes acceptance and tolerance. We believe in developing the whole learner and know that educating our students with special needs requires the collaboration and support of all stakeholders in the community. We are a diverse community with many skills and talents and share the common belief that with scaffolding, differentiation, and authentic learning experiences, all students will be able to access the learning goals of the IB Program. Collaborative planning and teaching play an integral role in providing equitable access for our students with special needs. We hold all students to high standards. Our current schedule facilitates common planning time to collaboratively plan in our professional learning committees, alongside the special needs educators and in some cases paraeducators.

## **Ways we support our Special Needs Students**

We evaluate the individual needs of the students and schedule them in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). Our goal is to have 100% of our special needs students participate in a comprehensive middle school experience in the LRE. To better support the social learning, we intentionally create a setting for students to interact with their grade level peers (lunch, classes,

and special events). Annual training based on student need is given to staff who need support on how to handle special situations as they arise. During Autism Awareness Month, staff members deliver content on what it means to teach students with Autism at our school.

This policy will be implemented in the following manner:

- a. It will be posted on the school IB web page so that stakeholders may view it at any time
- b. It will be included in the IB Manual which is distributed to students and parents at the start of the school year

This policy will be reviewed and revised each school year by the school leadership team.