The Next Frontier:
Inclusion in International Schools

A Practical Guide for School Leaders

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Our greatest debt of gratitude goes to the International School of Brussels, which has served over the past twenty years as a lab school for inclusion – showing time and time again what is possible. Much of the content of this Guide was prepared and field-tested at ISB. The appendix is a collection of sample documents, forms and policies that have been developed at ISB. We are grateful to Kevin Bartlett and Kristen Pelletier for their generosity in granting permission for us to share their work with the larger international school community.

Bill and Ochan Powell

September, 2014
1. Introduction

The Big Question

Do schools reflect society, or do schools transform society? We believe that excellent schools have the potential to do both.

A Historical Perspective

International education can trace its roots to the end of World War Two. Before that time there were “overseas” schools that served children of expatriates living outside their home countries, but these tended to be national schools (usually British, French or American) that had been transported into a foreign environment.

Out of the ashes of World War Two came a powerful movement to increase international understanding and cultural tolerance. Its centerpiece was the formation of the United Nations; education was also profoundly influenced by this spirit of internationalism.

At approximately the same time, we saw a powerful political movement in the developing world as European colonies were demanding and receiving their independence. The winds of change were sweeping over the old colonial world, particularly in Africa and Asia. This, too, had a profound effect on education.

In 1962, many schools in Africa, Asia and the south of the United States were segregated by race. Such separation is now unthinkable. Greater tolerance and cultural appreciation has come to pervade many schools and systems of education.

We applaud these developments and also look to the future. What is the Next Frontier for international education? In education, like most other worthwhile human endeavors, there is no status quo – we are either developing and improving or we are deteriorating.

We believe that the education of children is an inalienable human right. We do not see this as qualified by race, ethnicity, gender, by how a child learns or by the speed with which a child masters certain skills.

We believe that the Next Frontier for international education is the inclusion of children who learn differently.

Thirty years ago when Kevin, Bill and Ochan started their careers in education at the International School of Tanganyika in Dar es Salaam, most international schools did not provide for children with special educational needs. The attitude was that if a child had such needs the parent should not have accepted a job overseas. International schools placed the full onus of responsibility on the child and his or her parents. At the time, many international school leaders believed that the education of such children was beyond our capability.

Thankfully, such beliefs and attitudes have begun to change.
We fundamentally and firmly believe that inclusive educational programming has a value that enriches the whole community. Every nation and culture has people with disabilities. We believe it to be our responsibility to teach all students, and that by doing so, we come to know our own humanity and enrich our school community. We embrace the challenge of serving the whole family – students with a range of disabilities, from mild to intensive. We also embrace the challenge of developing our abilities to meet their needs. We understand and appreciate the complexities of providing support for students within this range. This Guide was prepared to address those complexities.

Like any worthy initiative, the Next Frontier is predicated on a vision with a foundation in Core Beliefs that lead to Guiding Principles:

Core Values and Guiding Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We believe that:</th>
<th>So we:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-esteem is an essential part in student well-being and learning</strong></td>
<td>□ Are respectful to students, when talking to and about them</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Keep expectations high and offer respectful, age-appropriate learning tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Use strength as a channel to overcome/ameliorate deficits</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Celebrate accomplishments privately and publically</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Listen carefully to what students have to say about themselves and their learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education is essential in establishing strong inclusive communities</strong></td>
<td>□ Model continuous learning in our own growth and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Use positive presuppositions in all of our work and actively seek to address any misperceptions about students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Each child has a right to privacy</strong></td>
<td>□ Follow established protocols for managing confidential information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness and self-knowledge are essential for success in life</strong></td>
<td>□ Are strong advocates for students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Teach student acceptance, meta-cognition, and self-advocacy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Understand and accept multicultural perspectives in relation to disability while balancing advocacy for student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Teach students how to monitor their stress levels</td>
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<td></td>
<td>□ Teach social skills within the context of our daily interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>□ Consciously support students in developing emotional intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Each student has her/his own challenges and needs</strong></td>
<td>□ Use multiple methods of assessment to come to know students very well and holistically</td>
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The Next Frontier: Inclusion - A Practical Guide for School Leaders

The Journey

The journey to inclusion is one that we embark on knowing that the destination is not definitive. We are and should be systematically and seriously looking at our practice so that we continue to grow as individuals and learning institutions. To this end NFI has developed Toward Inclusion protocols that supports schools by offering a framework that helps schools self-assess where they are on the journey and to make plans for their next steps. It is not offered in the spirit of dogmatic protocols, but as a guide that will help schools continually move forward.

Defining Inclusion

So, how do thoughtful schools define the concept of “inclusion”? We believe that inclusion is the careful and thoughtful marriage of educational excellence and equity. Inclusive schools successfully serve a managed number of students representing the full range of learning differences: mild, moderate, intensive needs and the exceptionally able. Although percentages vary, we would expect around 10-13% of any school-age population, regardless of nationality or culture, to require learning support reflective of mild learning needs. Another 2 – 3% would require moderate support; and 1% of the population would require intensive support.

We do NOT believe that inclusion is synonymous with 100% mainstreaming. Certainly we strive for the most challenging goals possible for all students, and more often than not, students exceed our expectations. International schools have a history or denying access to our highest level programs based on learning needs, and fortunately we are seeing a shift as students with moderate learning disabilities continue to prove us wrong and succeed despite what their “ability” is projected in their testing. We continue to seek the balance of high expectations and well matched post-secondary opportunities for students who learn differently. Students with intellectual disabilities who have intensive needs, have an important place in our schools, and we need to be sure that they are getting what they need not only in terms of academics, but with functional life skills, transition planning and community awareness. There was a time when inclusion, with every good intention, overly
romanticized the notion of everyone doing everything in school.....instead of everyone having access to what they need most for a successful and fulfilling life.

We are also profoundly suspicious of educational dogma, particularly theories that suggest there is one right way to teach and learn. Neither is there one correct way to develop an inclusive program.

Inclusion, like everything else in education, is a journey, not a destination.

The contents of the Guide are the product of the authors’ years of trial and error experience in the classroom and in leading inclusive schools. We sincerely hope that it will be useful to other international schools and that you will choose to join us on the journey to the Next Frontier.

**Talking About Disability**

There is a lot of talk about labeling and it has been an ongoing debate that will likely continue until we fully embrace that neurodiversity is the new normal. It will happen. All children are reachable and some day we will evolve to an understanding that there are no “learning disabilities” but it may make way for the new labeling of “teaching disabilities”.

Until that time arrives we need to frame our thinking around a diagnostic process as a method (the best one we have for now) for understanding a learner so that we may offer them the best matched strategies and tools to support how they learn differently. Labeling is not the problem. The problem lies in how we perceive and use labels, and that is within our control in developing a growth mindset oriented toward understanding students with neurodiversity.

For the vast majority the diagnostic process allows for new hope. It names what is happening for students and families and shows a way forward. The anxiety before the diagnosis is consistently far worse than finding out and making a plan. Countless students have shared that they were relieved to hear that they weren’t “stupid” or “weird”, and that they are not alone.

People with disabilities do not want pity. It is condescending to them, no matter what the sympathetic intentions are. Student may try to use a “disability crutch” to make excuses for their learning or behavior and it is paramount that we do not allow or play into it. If we buy it, or play into it, we do them a huge disservice that will follow them because the message they will get from you is “You are right, I don’t think you can do it either.” A very high degree of emotional intelligence is required, even if, and especially if you have doubts about the student’s achievement. Actually, using disability as an excuse is quite rare, but when it does appear, it is most likely the result of feelings of self-esteem, or not yet having the strategies or tools they need to be successful. All people want to be successful and feel valued. There are no exceptions.

How we talk about people who learn differently matters, both in what we say and in our affect as we say it. It takes practice, and conviction.
The following are four “rules of thumb” and “two big toes” that help us navigate and build positive culture around learning differences. It is up to you to lead the “new normal”.

**Two Rules of Thumb and Two Big Toes**

- **Tell your success stories**

  Take every opportunity to tell your success stories. Defining success to each child is personal, celebrate those successes and put them out there for people to hear and see. We have the opportunity to shape thinking through stories.

- **Use “person first” language**

  A person is a person first. If you must name the disability, it is a child with a learning disability or a child with autism. NOT an autistic child. The identity belongs to the person with the name his or her parents gave at birth.

- **“Nothing about us without us”**

  As soon as children are ready, involve them in the conversation about their needs. It will build his or her sense of self-knowledge, give them a sense of responsibility over their own learning, and with guidance will teach them the power that self-advocacy brings them for their whole life. Parents and professionals make countless decisions for children and their learning and it is really important that we go to the source, hear their perspectives and include them in some decision making with good guidance.

- **Put on your brave face**

  It is up to the adults to guide young people and set the tone that either feeds or eliminates stigma associated with special needs. When we talk about people with special needs we need to present it as “normal” because it is. It is someone’s brother, sister or child and to that family it is perfectly normal. It is ok to be different. Give straight up, nonjudgmental, language. We celebrate it as we do with other forms of diversity in fact, for what he or she can bring to the community, and if you say it like you mean it, and it is normal to talk about it, people will follow. Deliver hope, model resiliency.
2. Inclusive Service Delivery Models

The Goal: The goal of all inclusive special education programs is to provide children with disabilities with a meaningful and respectful learning experience that engenders in them self-confidence and a sense of belonging to a larger community. The strategies that we might use to achieve this goal are many and may actually change from day to day and week to week. There is no one right way to teach. And there is no one right way to learn. Be deeply suspicious of anyone who tells you otherwise.

Much time and energy has gone into debates and discussions about special education service delivery models. In 1975, the United States Congress passed PL 94-142 which stated that children with disabilities would be educated in “the least restrictive environment (LRE).” That phrase has been used to define, excuse, justify and describe a host of service delivery models. We have heard educators engage in heated arguments over whether “push in” programs are more effective than “pull out” programs, whether resource centers were out of date, whether differentiation stigmatizes children, or whether the words “remediation” and “disabilities” should actually be banned in a school.

One of the major problems in these debates is that the participants often confuse the goal with the strategy. The goal of inclusive service delivery remains the provision of meaningful and respectful learning that will engender in our special needs students enhanced self-confidence and a sense of belonging in a larger community.

Characteristics of Inclusive Service Delivery Models

A focus on how children learn: A child with a learning disability sometimes struggles with basic skills not because the skills are too complex or too hard, but because the child has not yet learned how best to learn. This brings us to the core of any inclusive special education program, and that is our responsibility to support these children in learning how to learn. Some children will learn this simply by exposure, but most children with learning disabilities will not, and they must be taught explicitly.

The International School of Brussels has developed a set of meta-cognitive learning standards and aims to provide all students, but especially those with disabilities, with a meta-cognitive toolkit so that they will be able to set meaningful learning goals for themselves, monitor their progress and refine the learning strategies.

Learning support teachers are the facilitators of these meta-cognitive plans.

A firm commitment to a collaborative, team approach: Although individual teachers can gain a great deal of valuable information by observation in the classroom, many situations are just too complex for teachers to “go it alone”. One of the most pervasively absurd notions in education is that teachers should work alone. How much sense would it make to instruct a single engineer to go off by himself to design and build a 747 jet airliner? Asking a single teacher to
care for the academic, emotional, moral, and physical learning needs of twenty-five children is no less complex! For this reason, we are firmly committed to a collaborative team approach to problem identification and the design of interventions that will enhance learning (please see sections on the Child/Student Study Team and Co-Teaching).

**Based on a sensitive and supportive school culture:** Our experience has been that uncovering a learning disability is often a relief for students. They no longer need to feel that they are “stupid” or “weird”. They have a language to describe how they learn and gain new hope for a direction forward in school and life. Often parents and students will express anxiety about the identification process, concerned about stigmatization and labeling, that this will result in peer group teasing, lowered teacher expectations, and/or a negative self-fulfilling prophecy in terms of the child’s own self-concept. These are real fears that need to be addressed directly and promptly. Over and over again, we have found that with a sensitive and supportive school culture and language that is descriptive (not evaluative) school leaders can wage the battle against stigma... and win.

We need to be aware of the language and metaphors we use when speaking about specific challenges faced by students with special needs. The pernicious influence of labeling children is borne out in Hattie’s (2009) meta-analysis of educational research.

**Provide appropriate levels of challenge:** In any learning situation, but especially for a child with a learning disability, it is crucial for the teacher to provide an appropriate level of challenge. We do this by coming to know our students as individual learners and by knowing our curriculum at a deep conceptual level. The combination of our advanced knowledge of the curriculum and our learners allows us to identify the student’s zone of proximal development (zpd). The zone of proximal development was a phrase coined by the great Russian cognitive psychologist Vygotsky, who described the zpd as the frontier between tasks that are too easy and therefore boring, and tasks that are too difficult and therefore either meaningless or paralytic in their stressfulness. Challenges that fall into the child’s zpd are ones the child can successfully accomplish, but not without adult intervention and support. These are the challenges, according to Vygotsky, that optimize learning.

For a child with a learning disability the identification of the zpd in different subjects and skills areas can be very complex and is impacted by emotional, social, cultural, linguistic and familial issues. It is critical that a team approach is taken and that expertise and craft knowledge is shared.

**Flexible, not rigid in structure:** We suggest that it may be useful for schools to consider a tiered approach to the design of an inclusive special education program once students have been identified. We find it useful to think of these tiers in three broad bands: Mild Support, Moderate Support, and Intensive Support, but before jumping into full identification of students, and Response to Intervention (RTI) or tiered intervention process, with clearly defined criteria and timelines should be attempted as a first step as it could eliminate the need for a full process of identification of a learning disability, and the need for ongoing intervention.
**Mild Support** is provided by trained professionals in a balanced service delivery model of consultative support, accommodations, small group instruction or in-class support. The dimensions of Mild Support include:

- Consultative support from a learning support specialist
- Monitoring student performance
- Literacy support (reading, writing, speaking and listening)
- Mathematics support
- Small group instruction
- Learning Support Center (strategies and focused skills classes)
- Assistive technology (e.g. voice to text software)
- Speech and language therapy (as needed)
- Occupational Therapy (as needed)
- Counseling (as needed)
- Coaching

**Moderate Support** can be thought of as a program through which children with more specialized needs are supported in a combination of co-taught and small group support, in conjunction with appropriate therapies. The dimensions of Moderate Support might include:

- Co-taught classes in core literacies
- Specialized small group instruction
- Specifically designed courses in mathematics (primarily for secondary students)
- Social skills support
- Study and organizational skills support
- Assistive technology
- Formal accommodation (e.g. extended time for in-class and standardized testing.)
- Curricular modifications – when required and appropriate
- Speech and language therapy (as needed)
- Occupational Therapy (as needed)
- Counseling (as needed)
Coaching

**Intensive Support** is provided for children and young adults with cognitive or developmental disabilities/intellectual disabilities. The International School of Brussels has four such self-contained classrooms – one each at the early childhood, elementary, middle and high school levels, and several other international schools are now opening up similar programs. These students work with a small team of specialist professionals and with other mainstream teachers. There is an emphasis on social inclusion and maximizing academic inclusion based on student strengths. As graduation approaches (Intensive Support students graduate from ISB with an individualized diploma) there is increased emphasis on independent life skills and vocational studies in order to prepare these students for a successful life after high school.

Intensive Support can be characterized as a self-contained program that can include:

- A student/teacher ratio of 2-3 students to one faculty member, depending on student need. Teams are staffed with a lead teacher and support staff based on enrollment.
- Individually designed inclusion opportunities
- Speech language therapy
- Functional academic and life skills
- Pre-vocational skills (secondary)
- Social skills
- Adaptive physical education, music and art
- **DELETE THIS ONE** Adaptive music -
- Adaptive and/or assistive technologies
- Therapeutic horseback riding
- Special Olympics participation
- Occupational Therapy

Another way in which international schools offer support to children with intensive special needs is to have parents provide a personal assistant who will accompany the child to school and be present throughout the school day. Some schools call such personal assistants “shadow teachers”. We would caution that this service delivery option should be used with close supervision by a knowledgeable special education professional and selectively when other options are not available. (Please see the job description for a Personal Assistant/Coach that is included in the Appendix.)
3. Co-Teaching

Co-teaching is a robust form of service delivery that has the potential to improve learning for all students, but particularly for students with learning disabilities. At its most basic level, students have a choice of adults to refer to for support and assistance in their work. The co-teaching relationship also embeds the professional learning of teachers as part of the daily cycle of planning, implementing instruction, assessing, and reflecting. Such professional collaboration is the norm in high quality and improving schools (Garmston & Wellman, 2009); however, the skills of collaboration and co-teaching do not magically emerge in most of us. These skills need to be explicitly taught through structured professional development.

Historically, teaching has been one of the most isolated and lonely professions. In many schools, teachers are expected to work on their own, separate from adult colleagues. They plan their lessons, teach their classes and design their assessments by themselves. Even their critical reflection is a solitary endeavor. Such schools are modeled on the design of an egg crate (Lortie, 1975). Egg crates are very good for transporting eggs, as the crate insulates the eggs and prevents them from cracking. However, egg crates are a much less effective model for the design of schools.

Teacher isolation flies in the face of everything that we have come to know about the effectiveness of professional collaboration.

In 1990, Roland Barth wrote, “The quality of a school is often reflected with remarkable precision in the quality of the adult-to-adult relationships within the schoolhouse . . . The manner in which adults speak to each other, share ideas, form partnerships and even manage conflict is a profoundly accurate predictor of the quality of learning for students within the classroom.”

Co-teaching can work in different combinations of practitioners. The key, we believe, is flexibility of approach and structure. One successful model is to pair a mainstream classroom teacher with a learning support specialist. This brings differing expertise and perspectives to the planning and implementation.

Co-teaching that pairs a mainstream teacher with a learning support teacher maximizes the instructional experience so that it:

- Is highly differentiated for a wide range of learners
- Is innovative in design and allows for greater flexibility in meeting student needs
- Has the potential to lower student-teacher ratios
- Teaches the regular curriculum to diverse learners at the same pace as the traditional model
- Promotes the idea that “two heads are better than one”
- Leads to increased creativity in lesson design
Encourages mutually supportive teacher learning

Models team work and lifelong learning

Diminishes the stigma that may be associated with children who have special needs

Encourages flexible groupings that can specifically target learning styles, multiple intelligences, interest areas, or readiness

Provides additional opportunities for enrichment and/or acceleration for the exceptionally able student

Provide for specific remediation within the context of the curriculum

Does not exclude the use of some ‘pull out’ (for individuals or small groups) according to student needs, for set periods of time and with specific goals.

One of the objections that school leaders often raise to co-teaching is the cost. Teacher salary is the largest line item in almost every school budget, usually in the range of 65 to 75% of the annual recurrent expenditure. School leaders understandably ask: is co-teaching financially feasible and sustainable?

We believe it can be.

Ochan’s last teaching assignment was at The International School of Kuala Lumpur, as a member of a three-teacher team that taught Grade Eight humanities. Ochan has a strong background in special education. Her two other team members had strong backgrounds in teaching ESL and social studies/English respectively. They brought diverse strengths and expertise to the design of their lessons. Their classes ranged in student numbers from 45 to nearly 60, but since almost all work was done in small collaborative groups and they had a very large instructional space, large class size was not an obstacle to student learning nor was cost significantly increased.

We also see flexibility as a key component to managing the cost of co-teaching. For example, one year there may be a larger number of children with learning disabilities in a certain grade and this may call for a co-taught class. In other years, this may not be the case. As a school, we must be ready to deploy resources to where they are most needed. This may be on an annual, or even semester, basis.

We also hear from colleagues that for co-teaching to work, the “chemistry” between the teachers must be right. There is a degree of truth to this and it is worth de-constructing the concept of “chemistry”. We believe that in order for co-teaching to be highly effective the following factors need to be in place. The teachers . . .

Are volunteers and are committed to the collaborative relationship;
☐ Have undergone specific staff development in the theory and practice of collaboration;

☐ Understand that they have equal status and share responsibility for the entire class;

☐ Are provided regular planning time within the school day and that time is well used;

☐ Receive administrative support and commitment; and,

☐ Engage in on-going evaluation and refinement of the model.

(Please see the Appendix for a rubric on dimensions of co-teaching and levels of collaboration.)
4. Specialist Services:

Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and language therapists (SLTs) have specific knowledge and skills in human communication and are important members of a multi-disciplinary team that works in close collaboration with learning support and mainstream teachers. The role of the Speech and Language Therapist is to identify, evaluate and treat speech, language and communication disorders in individuals of all ages in order to enable them to communicate to the best of their ability.

Specifically SLTs assist and support students in five areas: *Speech Difficulties, Language Difficulties, Social Communication, Voice and Resonance Difficulties, and Oral-Motor, Feeding and Swallowing Disorders.*

**Speech Difficulties** include the production of certain sounds, pronunciation of specific words, the use of alternative communication systems (e.g. sign language, voice to text software etc.) and vocal fluency (stuttering, cluttering, etc.)

**Language Difficulties** include understanding spoken language; following directions, expressive language (word retrieval, the construction of sentences, the expression of ideas, needs and wants); auditory memory for words, sentences and conversational speech; understanding written language; reading, spelling and writing difficulties.

**Social Communication** includes the understanding and use of non-verbal language (e.g. gestures and eye contact); communicating in social settings (e.g. conversational repair, turn talking); and, cognitive communication (e.g. reasoning, problem solving and organization).

**Voice and Resonance Difficulties** include voice quality (e.g. hoarse or strident); voice resonance (e.g. hyponasal); voice pitch/ volume (too high/too low/too soft/too loud); loss of voice; and laryngectomy.

**Oral-Motor, Feeding and Swallowing Disorders** include weakness in muscles used for talking and eating; drooling, swallowing solids, soft foods or liquids; chewing/controlling food in the mouth; initiating a swallow; coughing; choking; throat clearing; excessively slow eating associated with weight loss; and signs of aspiration.

Generally, the SLT works in a collaborative partnership with both the learning support and mainstream teachers. The SLT undertakes a full evaluation of the student at the start of therapy. Student needs are then matched with the most appropriate models of therapy, which can take place in or outside the class, individually, in pairs or in small groups.

Some schools include the cost of the SLT within the regular student tuition. Other schools consider this an additional service and provide the parents with a supplementary invoice for the service.
Specialist Services:

Occupational Therapy

Schools vary in their approach to Occupational Therapy. Very few international schools provide it as part of the regular program of study. OT is an essential therapy for students who need it and high quality occupational therapy can ameliorate significant issues that directly affect student learning and development. Furthermore, growing teacher understanding and strategies to support sensory processing and how movement supports learning is essential for good teaching. Some international schools outsource it to resources in the community, which of course assumes that such resources are available. The International School of Brussels has developed what it refers to as a “Satellite Clinic”, which uses a program out of the United Kingdom called Maximum Potential (http://www.maximumpotential.org.uk/). While the Satellite Clinic is located within the school, the services are private and are paid for by the parents in addition to the regular tuition. Occupational Therapy can include the following:

The evaluation of:

- Neuromuscular status
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills/handwriting, sensory processing
- Visual perception skills, oral motor-skills.

The treatment of:

- Sensory integration skills
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor/handwriting skills
- Visual perception skills
- Self-help oral motor skills

In addition, the Satellite Clinic also provides parent and teacher training in understanding sensory integration, the usefulness of play in both gross and fine motor skills development and the design of supplementary home treatment routines.

There are other creative models that are being tried whereby a senior Occupational Therapist comes in, conducts assessments, trains support staff to deliver therapy, sets up home programs with parents, and periodically checks in
which has significantly reduced cost to a school and provides valuable opportunities. More schools are being creative in developing models as they come to recognize the importance of this work in supporting students and teachers.

**Specialist Services:**

**Educational Psychologist**

Depending upon the size of student enrollment, international schools either employ an educational psychologist or may outsource this service. The educational psychologist focuses primarily on helping students who are experiencing problems either in their home or educational environments. These may include difficulties with learning, social relationships and/or emotional problems. The psychologist may work with the student on an individual basis or with small groups. Confidentiality is a high priority.

An educational psychologist’s professional responsibilities fall into three general areas: evaluation, consultation and counseling.

An educational psychologist undertakes the full psycho-educational evaluation of students, which may comprise both cognitive and academic skills assessment. The result of such testing is then used to design strategies and interventions that will be included in the child’s Individual Learning Plan (ILP). In addition to formal assessment, the psychologist will engage in observations of individual students in the classroom, advise teachers on interventions and instructional strategies, develop behavior management programs, and recommend changes to the learning environment that may positively influence a child’s development.

The educational psychologist is a member of the Child/Student Study Team and regularly consults with multi-disciplinary teams (teachers, learning support specials, SLT, occupational therapists, and parents) to determine the best provisions to support a student’s development.

The educational psychologist will also engage in individual and small group counseling.
5. Modifications, Accommodations, Accelerations, Exemptions and Other Conundrums

We believe it is the responsibility of every teacher to maintain the highest expectations of learning in the classroom in order to ensure that every student is included, challenged and successful. To this end, differentiation strategies, accommodations and modifications offer all students equal access to learning.

In many international schools, there exists some confusion over terms such as modification and accommodation. Some schools have specific policies that teachers will provide accommodations and, at the same time, prohibit any modifications. Unfortunately for the confused classroom practitioner, many of these schools have not defined their terms.

We see modifications as changes in what a student is expected to learn. Modifications are made when the regular curricular expectations (the standards and benchmarks) are either beyond the student’s level of ability or readiness OR when the student has already mastered those standards. With modifications, the student is expected to learn something different from the general education standards. Changes are made to the curriculum to provide opportunities for students to participate meaningfully and productively along with other students in the classroom.

Modifications include changes in:

- Instructional level
- Content
- Performance criteria

It is important to note that modifications are rarely implemented, as the general education learning standards, when presented through differentiated instruction, should be appropriate for the vast majority of students. However, when a child’s disabilities are significant, or a child is exceptionally able, it may be appropriate to employ modifications. Generally, modifications are NOT made by individual teachers acting in isolation. They are determined by a Child/Student Study team as a result of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and are closely monitored by a Case Study Manager.

Accommodations are changes in how a student accesses information or demonstrates learning, and may be seen as a way of differentiating instruction. Accommodations do not change, alter or lower the expectations of the curriculum and do not alter what the test or assessment measures. The changes are made in order to provide students with equal access to learning and equal opportunities to demonstrate learning. Accommodations are simply different approaches to achieving the same curricular goals.
Accommodations can include changes in the following:

- Presentation and/or response formats/products and procedures/processes
- Instructional strategies
- Time/scheduling
- Environment
- Equipment
- Resources and materials

It is important to note that accommodations are an essential feature of differentiated instruction and serve to optimize the learning of all students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modifications</th>
<th>Accommodations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Definition</strong></td>
<td>Different curricular or learning expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different methods of reaching curricular goals that capitalize on student strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum</strong></td>
<td>Changes made to the curriculum to meet the individual needs of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No change to the curriculum; learning outcomes remain the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment</strong></td>
<td>Criteria of assessment may be changed in order to meet the needs of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No change to the criteria for assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grading</strong></td>
<td>Grades may be modified and so indicated on report cards or transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No change to grading criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of student</strong></td>
<td>Only those with significant disabilities or those who may be exceptionally able</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students, particularly those who are:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Diagnosed with mild or moderate disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- ESL/EAL/ESOL/ELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- English Language Delayed (ELD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Struggling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Determination of Service</strong></td>
<td>At a Child/Student Study Meeting as an ILP is being prepared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May be made at the teacher’s discretion or at a Child/Student Study Team meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Through collaboration with Learning Support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documentation of Service</strong></td>
<td>☐ ILP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Letter home outlining how changes of curriculum affect student’s future academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Progress/Grade Reports by Case Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>☐ Transcripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documentation not required for informal accommodations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documented in comment section of Report Cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal documentation may be required when seeking accommodations on external examinations (e.g. IB or AP).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of Modifications and Accommodations

Below are types of modifications and accommodations and possible examples. This is NOT a complete list:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Modification</th>
<th>Accommodations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partial completion of requirements:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Presentation:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Learning 10 words instead of 20</td>
<td>□ Material of the same unit content at a simpler or more complex reading level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Learning knowledge-based, concrete facts instead of abstract cause-effect relationships of various conflicts in history</td>
<td>□ Layout of worksheets, tests, etc. is clear and uncluttered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjustment made for learning rate:</strong></td>
<td>□ Directions are repeated or presented in small steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Reinforcement of basic operations while rest of the class learns fractions</td>
<td>□ Graphic organizers are utilized as note taking aids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Providing altered reading level text when reading comprehension is being assessed as a standard or benchmark within a unit; typically in an English or Modern Language class.</td>
<td>□ Use of taped books instead of print copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternate Curriculum Goals:</strong></td>
<td>□ Key vocabulary terms are highlighted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ For social inclusion, a student’s grade is weighted to reflect collaboration skills and maintenance of appropriate behavior as opposed to solely academic achievement</td>
<td>□ Variety of visuals for new vocabulary or concepts used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternate Assessments:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Responses:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Assessment task reflects changed curricular expectations/learning standards and is graded according to individual achievement of the modified standard.</td>
<td>□ Alternate versions of tests created to accommodate the students learning disability or language level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ For social inclusion, a student’s grade is weighted to reflect collaboration skills and maintenance of appropriate behavior as opposed to solely academic achievement</td>
<td>□ Answers marked in book rather than transferring responses to separate paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting:</strong></td>
<td>□ Oral or non-verbal answers such as pointing to the correct answer in place of written work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ For social inclusion, a student’s grade is weighted to reflect collaboration skills and maintenance of appropriate behavior as opposed to solely academic achievement</td>
<td>□ Short answer questions replace essay prompts, with the exception of when essay writing is being assessed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acceleration is a broad term that encompasses a variety of options. We consider the acceleration of students under two broad categories: content-based acceleration and grade-based acceleration. In either case, whether a child should be accelerated should be carefully considered by the Child/Student Study Team which should include the division level principal. We suggest that grade-based acceleration should only be considered as an option when it is determined that that the child’s learning needs cannot be met within differentiated classrooms.

**Content-based acceleration** provides students with opportunities to develop more advanced skills or deeper understandings than those generally expected at a specific grade level (Southern & Jones, 2004b). Students typically remain with their age peers for most of the school day but receive more complex levels of instruction for part of the day. This instruction may take place within the regular classroom on an individual or small group basis. It may also involve allowing students to participate in instruction with a class at a higher grade level for part of the day.

*Some examples of content-based acceleration:*

**Curriculum Compacting:** A student is assessed to determine his/her understanding and/or skills in a particular area. If the student demonstrates a level of understanding or skill development significantly beyond what is expected at grade level s/he may engage in work that develops more advanced skills and understanding. This may take place in the “compacted” area (the same area they were assessed in) or in another area. Students typically remain in the regular classroom although they may participate in flexible groupings with students from other classrooms. In the case of high school classes, schools can consider offering graduation credit if and when grade level proficiency is demonstrated.
Single Subject Acceleration: This involves moving to a higher grade level for a single subject and may occur in varying formats. For example, a third grade student who performs above grade level in reading or math may go to the fourth grade teacher every morning for instruction in that area and then return to third grade for the rest of the academic day. Another example might include a musically gifted 6th grader who is enrolled in a high school instrumental music course, but returns to the 6th grade for other subject areas. We might even see a group of 5th graders attending a middle school pre-algebra class.

Another way of facilitating single-subject acceleration is to provide credit by examination of prior experience. The school may allow an advanced student to demonstrate proficiency in a course or grade level in a specific academic area based upon the results of an end-of-unit or end-of-year test or by reviewing the student’s portfolio of work in a given academic area. The student may then be allowed to pursue more advanced work in that area.

Both International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement courses offer opportunities for single-subject acceleration.

Grade-based acceleration: Grade-based acceleration is commonly called “grade skipping” (but can include other means that shorten the years the student will spend in the Pre-KG to 12 system). In practice, the student is placed in a higher level grade than would typically be appropriate given the child’s age. The purpose of grade-based acceleration is to provide appropriately challenging learning opportunities.

Grade-based acceleration needs to be processed very carefully with consideration given to the child’s social and emotional welfare as well as their academics needs. We suggest that before such a decision is taken a full psycho-educational evaluation is undertaken. We also recommend that such a decision be considered by the Child/Student Study Team (C/SST).

When the C/SST entertains either content or grade-based acceleration for a specific student, it should consider the results of standardized testing (MAP, ISA, etc.), teacher observations, parent observations, interviews with the student, work samples, previous report cards, psycho-educational evaluations, cognitive screening, and social/emotional stability.

Exemptions

Exemptions are exceptions to rules and it is often very challenging for school leaders to decide when it is appropriate to break their own rules. Nevertheless, one of the most important functions of school leaders is to make reasonable exceptions to reasonable rules.

Take for example the case of Jeanne. Jeanne was a middle school student at the International School of Kuala Lumpur and an outstanding swimmer. She had realistic aspirations of being part of Malaysia’s Olympic Swim Team. Jeanne practiced her swimming strokes five hours each day. When she came to enter the ninth grade, her parents requested that she be exempt from the physical education graduation requirement in order for her to use that time to swim. The
request caused a storm of controversy in the PE department and there was no consensus of opinion. Ultimately, Bill – as head of school -- took the decision to grant the exemption in order to allow Jeanne to continue to develop her remarkable talent.

Students can be exempted from standardized testing (e.g. insufficient English) or from specific course requirements (e.g. students with significant delays or developmental issues whose participation would not be appropriate; or students who are so far ahead that to complete course pre-requisites would in effect cause them to repeat material already learned).
6. Staffing

Staffing in inclusive schools generally includes mainstream teachers and a Learning Support Specialist Team. In the most effective inclusive schools these two groups work closely and collaboratively. Inclusive schools demand a great deal from mainstream teachers – particularly a mindset and attitude that they are expected to teach all students. Their classes are diverse in terms of learning needs, and, in order to be successful, teachers need to respond positively to this challenge. To this end, we recommend ongoing professional learning for teachers, to support their growth as educators who teach all children.

The size and composition of the Learning Support Team will depend upon the following variables:

- School size
- Inclusion parameters set by policy (e.g. the International School of Brussels limits the school-wide enrolment of mild and moderate learning support students to 15% of the total population and intensive needs students to 1% of the total population.)
- Level of learning needs expressed in the student population
- Type of program(s) and services offered
- Model(s) of service delivery
- Capacity of mainstream staff in working with students with special needs

In other words, it’s not an easy question to answer! Some schools look for formulaic answers (set ratios or percentages). Other schools take a more pragmatic and holistic approach. We recommend a blend of the two, balancing flexibility of service delivery with financial prudence. In our experience, learning support staffing is always a ‘work in progress’ and, as such, is constantly under review.

Having said that, we include here some general guidelines:

- **Flexible deployment:** We recognize that student populations in international schools shift, and learning needs across grade levels will vary from one year to another, or even change from one semester to the next. For this reason, we recommend a flexible deployment of staff resources. It is extremely useful to have faculty members who have multiple certifications, who are themselves flexible in terms of teaching assignments.

- **Learning specialist assignments:** Generally speaking, learning specialists should be assigned to a narrow band of grades in order for the specialist to focus attention on a specific age level and curriculum. In addition, for the learning specialist to have maximum effectiveness, there should probably be no more than four
mainstream teachers that s/he is assigned to collaborate with. Please bear in mind that it is difficult to know the curriculum well and manage multiple relationships when the learning specialist’s assignments span more than two grade levels.

• **Student/learning specialist ratios:** Learning specialists will probably be able to serve and monitor between 20 – 25 students with mild learning needs in collaboration with class teachers. If the caseload includes a mixture of mild and moderate needs, the learning specialist may effectively serve between 15 – 20 students. However, with intensive learning needs, the ratio of teacher to student should probably not exceed 1:10 (with other adult support).

• **Capacity of mainstream staff:** International schools that have implemented the Response to Intervention model of service delivery have included professional development offerings to enhance the capacity of mainstream staff to intervene with Tier 1 learning issues (mild learning needs). In this way, learning support staff can more easily focus their time on working with students who have more moderate needs, as well as support mainstream teachers. One international school in Southeast Asia has also trained Teaching Assistants to collaborate with Learning Specialists and mainstream teachers in working with needy students.

• **Team structure:** Learning specialists need to belong to their grade level professional learning communities as well as the learning support department, with one specialist appointed as chair. In addition, there might also be staff with school-wide responsibilities. At ISBrussels, these include the Head of Learning Support (principal status), an educational psychologist, two speech and language therapists, and an outsourced occupational therapy program.

Staffing for learning support will always be somewhat of a contentious issue because we are not dealing with a problem with a solution. We are, instead, managing the polarities of high quality student learning and high quality fiscal responsibility.
7. Facilities

Generally, mild to moderate students are supported in their learning in typical classroom settings by teachers who differentiate instruction and provide necessary accommodations and modifications to them. However, the learning support team at each division needs to have “home base”. This might comprise a small suite of offices – ideally separated by large windows so that testing accommodations can be administered while the learning support specialist is engaged in direct instruction in another area of the center.

The facility needs of the school will, of course, reflect the size of the school and the degree to which the school can provide the supporting services (e.g. speech and language).

While the Special Education classrooms (intensive needs) at ISB are self-contained, the students are attached to a grade level peer group and are included in many of their activities. These classrooms can be specially designed with adaptive working space and sensory integration centers.

Office and instructional space need to be included in the Learning Support Center for the speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, and school psychologist. In addition, in most schools the counselors work closely with the learning support specialist and it is useful to have their respective offices close by.
8. Finances

There are a number of different ways that international schools organize the funding of learning support programs. Most schools believe that a portion of the learning support program should fall under the regular tuition payment. So for example, the International School of Brussels (ISB) includes both mild and moderate levels of learning support in the standard tuition fees. They do, however, levy an additional tuition fee for intensive support. In our experience most organizations that pay tuition fees on behalf of their employee's children are prepared to accept these additional costs. In the case of parents who pay the fees themselves, we have explored need-based scholarships.

Supplementary charges are also often made for psycho-educational evaluations, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. In terms of these types of therapy, much can be achieved through outsourcing and partnerships. For example, ISB has established a highly successful partnership on the provision of occupational therapy with a centralized service based in London that provides the services of peripatetic therapists who visit the school three days a week. The school provides the facilities and equipment and the parents pay fees for sessions directly to the service provider. This partnership has proved its viability over a number of years of uninterrupted success.

In addition, 'inclusion' is a natural attractor of grants and donations as it clearly has high moral value and tangible impact. This can include grants and donations from major organizations, as well as from individuals. Given that inclusive schools often provide a transformative experience for children and their families, family individuals with the available financial means may often wish to express their support through donations. Once solicited and secured, these donations and donors should be 'managed' according to best practice in 'development'.

In summary, financial barriers to success are often illusory. Given the will, determination and a shot of creativity, they are open to solution.
9. Admissions

In some schools that we visit, there is a tendency to want to become formulaic in the admissions procedure of special needs children and to over simplify the criteria for admission. We often hear teachers saying that the administration needs to clarify the admissions policies. Sometimes clarification can become confused with over-simplification. For example, one school specifies that a child must have a full scale IQ of at least 85 and average to above average grades in order to be admitted. While such clear criteria may make admissions decisions simple and easy, they do NOT, in our experience, necessarily reflect best practice. It is common that student files are much scarier that the student. It is easy to be intimidated by huge files with complex numbers and we need to keep in mind that behind all that paper there is a child who wants to be successful.

When Bill and Ochan worked at Jakarta International School, they were engaged in researching what factors might serve as accurate predictors of a special needs child’s potential success at JIS. Interestingly enough, one of the most powerful predictors of a child’s success had little to do with the child herself – it had to do with how supportive the parents were of the child and of the school. We recognized that we could deal with some fairly intensive needs if we had the parents on board as partners. However, even a mild learning need could be severely exacerbated by a dysfunctional or hostile home environment.

So, we recognize that the admission of children with special learning needs is complex, requires thoughtful professional judgment and needs to be undertaken on a case-by-case basis. There needs to be a complete application for admission including at least three years of progress reports, previous ILP’s and psycho-educational reports. Collecting all of this information at the point of admission certainly complicates and potentially slows down this process, however it provides great opportunities to get students off on the right foot and start in a new school with the support that they need. A thorough application process and conversation with parents about expectations (both theirs and the schools), placement in support, and fees that will be a requirement, saves months of negotiation. Statement of these terms as conditions of enrollment along with student acceptance letters assures parents that the school is dedicated to good support of their child’s learning and clarifies expectations for them to support. At times, it is appropriate (with parental permission) to contact the previous school with specific questions as to how the child functioned. The application and supporting documentation need to go before an admissions committee in order to determine whether the school can meet the educational needs of the child while at the same time maintaining a high level of learning support. We recognize that inclusive schools have a limited amount of space in their learning support programs and that admissions must be managed so as to protect the student teacher ratios and to ensure service of high quality.

One of the knottiest issues facing international schools is whether admission to one division of the school means that the child will be able to be promoted to the next division of the school. Typically, the elementary division of a school may feel that it can enroll a wider range of special needs students than
the middle school or high school can. (In addition, learning disabilities may become apparent after the child has been enrolled. The early identification of learning disabilities in young children may also be compounded by developmental issues). As a result, as students with disabilities approach the transition grades (elementary to middle and middle to high) concern may be expressed as to whether the child will be able to cope with the academic rigors of the next division. Accordingly, some schools have developed “escape clause” policies that state something to the effect that students are not “guaranteed” such transition. This leads in some schools to the regular and frequent exiting of students at the end of the elementary and middles schools. One large international school in Asia proudly asserts that 10% of its pre-schoolers don’t make it into kindergarten!

We believe that there are two major problems with such policies. The first is that they may be in contravention to the laws of the host country. We have seen several successful law suits brought against international schools that have attempted to exit students under such circumstances. However, even more concerning is the potential for such policies to create negative, self-fulfilling prophecies in that they foster the rigid expectation that the child must fit himself to the curriculum, not the other way around. The stress and tension that such policies create for the student and his parents will almost certainly negatively impact the child’s learning experience in the time he is at the school.
10. Referral Criteria and Procedures

It is important that all teachers understand what the referral process is and how it works. In the past we have witnessed the referral process being misperceived as a transferring of responsibility from the mainstream teacher to the learning support teacher. The mainstream teacher breathes a sigh of relief that the problem child is now someone else’s headache. This is a profound misunderstanding of what the referral process is.

The referral process is recognition that there may be issues surrounding a child’s learning that require the collective attention of a group of educators (specialists and generalists alike). It is an invitation to professional inquiry about a child’s learning and a commitment to share responsibility and accountability for the design and implementation of strategic interventions.

The referral can come from the mainstream teacher, the learning support teacher, the parent or in some cases from the student him or herself. Generally, a pre-referral checklist that should be completed. While mainstream teachers should not be reluctant to refer a child, neither should they do so frivolously, as the referral process is time consuming and labor intensive. Therefore, significant groundwork needs to be done by the referring teacher before the case reaches the Child/Student Study Team. (A Sample Pre-Referral Checklist is included in the Appendix.) In the Response to Intervention Model, Tier One is the responsibility of the mainstream teacher and it is his or her responsibility to describe and detail the specific interventions that have been tried before any such referral is made.

Many schools have developed simple flow chart diagrams to help teachers and parents understand how the referral process works.

Decisions about eligibility for learning support are generally made by a team of professionals who work with the student, facilitated by a case manager. The decision for a child to receive learning support is made in close consultation and with the consent of the parents. The decision should include the level of support required (mild, moderate or intensive) based upon the data that has been collected and analyzed. (Please see sample documents “Entry and Exit Criteria for Learning Support” and “Criteria for Eligibility and Student Placement in Learning Support” in the Appendix).

Students are exited from the learning support program when they are:

- Working to their potential on a grade level standard for a sustained period of time (at least half a school year) based on standardized assessment instruments;
- Understand their learning profile;
- Demonstrate the use of strategies to compensate effectively for their disability; and
- Demonstrate effective self-advocacy skills.
11. The Child/Student Study Team (C/SST)

The purpose of a Child/Student Study Team (C/SST) is to provide a confidential, structured forum for teachers and specialist educators to discuss students who are experiencing problems in their learning and to design a learning plan (or modify an existing one) in order to support these students’ learning. The C/SST provides support to both the student and the teacher.

We suggest that an effective C/SST should be composed of:

- A building administrator
- The head or coordinator of learning support
- A school counselor
- At least one member of the learning support team
- Teachers who work directly with the student in question
- A speech and language therapist (or other professionals who work with the student – including outside consultants. We have also found it useful to have the school nurse included.)

A permanent member of this team should be appointed as convener or facilitator of meetings, and a weekly meeting time should be set aside. If there are no direct cases on the agenda, the time should be used to review current lists of students receiving support or to review baseline data. All information should be held in a centralized electronic file. Parents should be notified about the meeting before it happens. Each student should be assigned a Case Manager. Any teacher, counselor or administrator can request a C/SST meeting.
12. The Individual Learning Plan

The purpose of an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is to document a student’s needs to ensure common understanding of his or her learning profile, to identify modifications and/or accommodations, and to set expectations about a common approach amongst teachers, parents, therapists, administrators and students as they work towards common goals.

We believe that each student who has been diagnosed with a learning disability should have a written ILP that will be reviewed and revised at least annually. The assigned case manager will generally have responsibility for updating the ILP and distributing it to teachers who work with the student.

In the case of new students entering the school with a previous diagnosis of a learning disability, the ILP should be written and the Child/Student Study Team Meeting held within a month of admission. For students who are being newly diagnosed with a learning disability, an ILP should be written and a C/SST meeting held within one month of the diagnosis. (please see sample document “Baseline Data for learning Support” and sample “ILP form” in the Appendix).
13. Un-Masking Success:

Defining and Measuring Our Goals

Perhaps the greatness paradigm shift associated with the Next Frontier Initiative has to do with the ways we perceive student success. We tend to see only that for which we have developed ready-made metaphors and schema. Accordingly, we can be blind to much of the experience that surrounds us. The obvious is rarely obvious until it is obvious.

For example, we educators have a tendency to define student success by comparing the achievement of one child to that of another or alternatively comparing the achievement of a child to prescribed grade level standards and benchmarks. This is often what we come to think of as either norm or criterion referenced assessment. There is nothing wrong with such comparisons as long as the resulting analysis enlightens us – as long as it helps us to come to know our students at deeper and deeper levels as learners, and as long as it encourages and supports future learning.

Unfortunately these outcomes are not always the results of such comparisons. Often when we compare a child with special educational needs to regular education peers, we become literally blinded by the deficits we see in the special education child. Teachers are understandably concerned with what their learning support students can’t do – what they don’t understand or what they are still struggling with. It is natural that we are concerned but at times that is all we can see.

Make an experiment: ask a teacher to describe a particularly challenging student that he or she currently has in class. After the teacher has spent a few minutes describing the child, ask the same teacher to describe the child’s strengths. Often there will be a significant pause, sometimes a long one, suggesting that the notion of strengths in that particular child is a new or even novel idea.

Sometimes we need to support teachers in unmasking the success of students with learning disabilities.

What then, is success?

The concept of success is complex, multifaceted and eminently malleable. At the simplest level, success in the classroom is often thought of solely through the lens of academic achievement. As a result, many students with learning disabilities appear to be failures. We would suggest that the problem here is not with the student but rather with our perceptions.

Contrary to popular opinion, academic achievement is not a good predictor of success in life. We have all encountered many sterling students who grew up to be miserable, unpleasant, unhappy and unfulfilled adults.

So what does success look like? Most people would agree that success in life involves some combination of a close circle of friends, positive family
relationships, being loved, healthy self-esteem, a degree of job satisfaction, physical and mental health, a degree of financial comfort and stability, and a sense of having meaning or purpose in one’s life (Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins, & Herman, 2003). It is interesting to note how few of these attributes of success are directly linked to academic achievement in school.

While academic achievement must be a goal for all students (including students who have learning disabilities) it is not the only or even the most desirable goal. There are other aspects of success in life that are even more important for us to develop and when we measure how successful our efforts at inclusion are, we need to take these other goals into close consideration.

Over almost 30 years, the Frostig Center (http://www.frostig.org/), has conducted research in identifying those factors that contribute to success for individuals with learning disabilities. The results of this research suggest that personal characteristics, attitudes and behaviors may have a far greater influence on success in life than factors such as academic achievement, gender, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and even IQ (Raskind, Goldberg, Higgins & Herman 2003). This is also supported by research in emotional intelligence (Powell & Kusuma-Powell, 2010; Goleman 1995).

We have drawn upon the work of the Frostig Center as well as research in Cognitive Coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002) to suggest five success attributes or internal resources that can be developed in students. These include Consciousness, Efficacy, Perseverance and Flexibility, Craftsmanship and Goal Setting, and Interdependence. We suggest that school leaders use these attributes as lenses in assessing the success of special needs students and the success of the program itself. Let’s look briefly at each in turn:

**Consciousness** is self-awareness. It is developing self-knowledge about ourselves as learners – our strengths as well as weaknesses. For the student with a learning disability, it is understanding the problem areas and being open about how the areas of deficit affect achievement. However, self-aware individuals do not define themselves in terms of their disability. Consciousness is also coming to understand that a learning disability can create times of considerable stress, anxiety and even depression. As we come to know ourselves, we can identify the situations in which we may experience such stress and evoke appropriate emotional coping mechanisms. Inclusive educational programs support students in developing consciousness by explicitly teaching meta-cognitive strategies. “When tasks are very complex for the student, the quality of the meta-cognitive skills rather than the intellectual ability is the main determinant of learning” (Veenman, Prins, & Elshout, XXXX).

From self-knowledge, the student with a learning disability can learn to self-advocate, which bring us to the attitude/disposition of efficacy.

**Efficacy** is an appropriate sense of one’s own potency, one’s power to influence the social and physical environment. Efficacy is the belief that the individual can cope with the present and influence and effect desired change in the future. It is the belief that ‘I’ can make a difference, that my contribution is important, that in some meaningful way I can be the architect of my own future.
Efficacious people are problem solvers. They believe that their behavior can influence outcomes and they see complex dilemmas as opportunities. They are optimistic and self-actualizing, cognitively active, lifelong learners. Efficacious people realistically accord responsibility to self and others. They are not simply the passive recipients of other people's decisions and actions. These are not the blaming voices of withdrawal, manufactured excuses and helplessness, or the voices of resistance to change and rigidity. High efficacy, on the other hand, suggests a strong internal locus of control. Efficacious people believe that they have a degree of control over their destiny. They are opportunity-minded, optimistic and creative. They have a healthy self-concept and demonstrate self-confidence. They set realistic goals and consider problems as challenges and momentary setbacks as opportunities. Efficacious students are decision makers; they take the initiative, assume responsibility for themselves and others. They do not blame others for their own failings. They are pro-active. Efficacious students cultivate growth mindsets (Dweck, 2006) in which they see a direct relationship between effort and achievement.

Perseverance and Flexibility: A number of years ago, an insurance company ran a full-page advertisement in a popular magazine. It was a photograph of a delicate Alpine flower growing out of a small crevice in barren, wind-swept, rocky crag. The caption was, 'Perseverance in the face of adversity is only matched by the glory of the results.'

The persevering student understands that through effort and practice comes achievement, that perspiration is as important as inspiration. The persevering student keeps his eye on the ultimate objective and doesn't become easily discouraged.

However, there is an important distinction between perseverance and stubbornness and this is where the importance of flexibility comes in. When we balance perseverance with flexibility, we understand the difference between relentlessly focusing on a broad meaningful goal and mindlessly repeating a futile strategy. Often it is easy to confuse the goal with the strategy. For example, for a student with attention deficit disorder, a broad goal might be effective time management. The goal is not keeping a homework diary. Our student might experiment with a number of strategies in order to achieve better time management and find that a pocket voice recorder works better for him than a written homework diary. The strategies change, but the goal remains constant – the balance between perseverance and flexibility.

Craftsmanship and Goal Setting are crucial to success in school and in life. Students with learning disabilities often perceive themselves as poor craftsmen in school. They don’t set meaningful and challenging goals for themselves because they have learned (perhaps they have been taught) that they are incapable of realizing them.
The master craftsman strives after excellence and precision, taking pride in both the process and product of her labor. Whether it is the concert pianist, the Olympian athlete or the persevering child in the math lesson, craftsmen work to expand their present expertise, to polish their current performance and to improve and enhance the product of hard work.

*Risking, reflecting and refining* are the essence of craftsmanship (Kusumapowell & Powell, 2000). These are behaviors that students can learn and we can teach. Craftsmanship is an energy source that compels people towards clarity, refinement and precision. The craftsman tirelessly strives to deepen her knowledge and improve her skills, setting goals that are beyond the present level of performance and monitoring the process they make towards those goals. Such goal setting is the springboard to internal achievement motivation.

**Interdependence** is the recognition that we live in a community with others and we need to give and receive help and support. Children with learning disabilities need recognize and know how to use effective support systems within our schools. They need to be guided as they journey from dependence to interdependence. Teachers support such journeys when they support students with guidance and encouragement.

When children with learning disabilities are helped to develop these five success attributes, they also develop learning resilience – the capacity to fail forward, the self-confidence to persevere in the face of adversity.

When we measure the progress of children with learning disabilities we should be just as concerned about whether they are developing these five success attributes as we are about the grade level at which they are reading or the percentile they achieved in a standardized math test.

We also need to measure and evaluate our own inclusive programs of education against these five success attributes. We need to address the questions:

- What would increased self-knowledge look like in a child with a learning disability?
- In what ways have I as a teacher specifically supported a student’s growth of efficacy? How have I helped a student to see the connections between effort and improved achievement?
- When have I seen my most challenged students engaged in perseverance? What were the conditions? How might I recreate them?
- In what ways am I explicitly teaching goal setting, reflection and refinement?
- How am I supporting my students in their journey towards interdependence?
14. Marketing the Vision

By David Willows

Director of External Relations

International School of Brussels

So how do we market the inclusive school? And what is the marketable value of these kind of schools?

These questions have been very much on our mind over the last few years. It turns out, though, that in defining ourselves as an inclusive school we now have a great story to tell – a story that is engaging, truthful, and potentially transformative for every member of our school community; a story that has already enhanced our brand reputation and positively impacted our school enrolment. In short, it is both a story that we can believe in and a story that we can sell.

But let's first step back a little and consider what we mean by ‘marketing’ anyway.

What we have learned over the years at ISB is that, in the end, behind all of our plans, publications, websites, social media pages and promotional campaigns, it all boils down to this: telling the story of our school and helping others find their place in that story.

The task that we face, in other words, is to bring all of our best ideas, resources, communication tools and, critically, energy to the task of narrating a story of learning to all stakeholders: prospective and current families, prospective and current faculty and staff, members of our alumni community, as well as potential partners and sponsors of any one of our initiatives and projects.

Of course, in reality, schools are complex organizations and behind every ‘story’ there’s a lurking “yes, but...” never too far away. That said, here are a few principles that have guided us along our way:

1. **Decide on the short story.** At ISB, the short story is clear: ‘everyone included, everyone challenged, everyone successful’. These six words capture everything that we want to communicate about the ISB learning experience. And even though we know, when it comes to truly understanding what inclusion looks like in a school, how complicated it can become, we relentlessly find ourselves going back to this simple, essential statement of our Mission.

2. **Ensure your stories are compelling.** You can have the best website in the business. You can stand on the cutting edge of innovation and latest ideas. The fact is, though, if you don’t have a good story to tell in the first place, you may as well give up anyway. So start by looking for stories of learning that are powerful, truthful and engaging. What we have found is that, committed to a value of inclusion in an international school setting, these stories are never too far away.
3. **Bust the myths.** When you tell a story – whatever it may be – there’s always the opportunity for misinterpretation. This gives rise to myths that have a habit of sticking around. Like the one about the inclusive school that accepts anyone and therefore contributes to lowering academic standards for all. We learned over the years to spot these myths and publish stories that offer a very different kind of take on reality.

4. **Capture the student voice.** The voice of one student is worth a thousand brochures. Some of the most moving and profound storytelling moments have been when we have had the privilege to listen to our students talking about their experience of being in an inclusive school. The art of marketing is to find ways to capture these ‘moments’ and ensuring others can ‘listen in’ on these powerful conversations about learning.

5. **Tell the story of who you want to be, as much as who are already are.** 
   Here’s the irony. When we commit to marketing a learning vision there’s always a certain dilemma: we are always wrestling between a description of who we already are and who we want to be. Of course, our stories must always be truthful, never prone to exaggeration or making promises that we simply cannot keep. Even by speaking of ‘everyone included’, however, we are also consciously expressing the future that we want to make real for school and our students.

There is, of course, much more that could be said. However, these are some of the principles to which we constantly return. And, in the end, if the story is simple, engaging, honest, and ultimately ‘rings true’, there can be no doubt that people will quickly find their place in this story and make it their own – irrespective of their cultural background, educational experience or learning style. A good story, after all, is truly all-inclusive.
15. Conclusion

We recently attended a panel discussion in San Francisco on university entrance for international school students. The panelists were the directors of admission or deans of students from five leading American universities. Each panelist introduced him/herself by stating how very selective their institutions were in terms admissions. The impression was that these universities take great pride in and gain a great degree of their identity and reputation from excluding students.

This is a curious phenomenon.

One can certainly understand that an educational institution would take pride in the number of applications for admission it received. That represents demonstrable evidence that the public at large has confidence in the high standards and rigor of the organization. But why take public pride in the number of students that you reject?

We believe that the opposite should be the case. We should take pride in how inclusive we can become. And the reason for that inclusive pride is that we do not see excellence and equity as mutually exclusive. It is the marriage of excellence and equity that is the hallmark of great schools.

It is relatively easy to be a “good” international school. You hire competent teachers, provide them with a coherent curriculum and exclude all students who do not fit the mental model you have created. The students must fit the curriculum and, if they don’t, it is acceptable to jettison some along the way. In this view, a certain level of attrition confirms academic rigor.

We don’t accept this vision. It is elitist, intolerant and ultimately inhumane. We would encourage international schools to move from merely being “good” to striving after true greatness. We would encourage international schools to marry equity and excellence, to take pride in our inclusiveness, to redefine success and to reaffirm our decision to teach all students.
16. References


17. Appendices

What follows are a series of sample documents, policies and forms. They are just that: samples. They were developed by the International School of Brussels, and we are grateful to them for allowing us to include them in this guide. We would NOT recommend that they be taken verbatim. Rather, schools need to consider their own specific circumstances and adapt and modify them accordingly.
Appendix A.

Checklist for Learning Support Admissions

What information do we need to make a good admissions decision for Learning Support/ Special Education students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From parents</th>
<th>From teacher or school</th>
<th>From file review/paperwork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Interests/ strengths  
• Languages spoken  
• Previous test results & reports  
• Social skills & behaviors  
• Emotional skills & behaviors  
• Adaptive/functional life skills  
• Parents' perceptions of child’s school experience  
• Parental goals  
• Student self-knowledge  
• Special transportation requirements  
• Assistive technology/equipment needed  
• Number of moves in this child's life  
• Relationship between child's difficulty and impact on home life; successful strategies used  
• Degree of success of current ILP/IEP program modifications  
• Parent follow-up, follow through on recommendations | • Current testing, ILP/IEP  
• Program modifications  
• Support provided  
• Student/teacher ratio  
• Socialization  
• Behavioral comments  
• Extra support outside of school  
• OT, PT, SLT, Psychologist, Counselor, Social work  
• Adaptive technologies  
• Successful strategies  
• Specific obstacles  
• Degree of parental support  
• Student self-knowledge/ advocacy | • Current Testing/IEP  
• Face-to-face interview whenever possible; otherwise, videos required for special education admissions  
• Report cards (3 years of school records)  
• Information/description of last school/program  
• Medical information  
• Learning Support report |
Appendix B:

Learning Support Entry & Exit Criteria

All students will need to meet eligibility requirements to receive formal learning support services at ISB. Eligibility would require formal identification/diagnosis of a learning, developmental, emotional, neurobiological disorder or diagnosis of “other health impairment” that impacts learning. Assessment for eligibility is typically done in the form of a full psycho-educational evaluation. Typically these evaluations are done outside of ISB. A range of assessments are accepted as students enter the school as long as they have stated norm references and are completed by qualified practitioners. These evaluations are interpreted by LS faculty and translated into our ILP format.

We identify students who are struggling with grade level benchmarks and then investigate and evaluate for possible learning disabilities, if the standard differentiation strategies of the regular classroom do not produce the desired results.

At the ECC students are referred and given support based on baseline data at grade level for initial small group intervention. Once an initial intervention has been tried a decision is made by the CST about further evaluation prior to the end of grade 2.

Decisions about learning support eligibility must be made by the team of professionals who work with student, facilitated by the case manager. The decision for placement is made in close consultation and with the verbal consent of the child’s parents.

- A decision about the level of support required is the responsibility of the team under the leadership of the case manager.
- Each student’s program is designed to meet his or her needs by emphasizing strengths, remediating weaknesses, and supporting curriculum access.
- Decisions about placements in broad bands of programming (mild, moderate, intensive) are based upon data collected on the student and discussions with the LS team.

Mild - Identified students who need some support which would not exceed an hour per day at the maximum. Typically these students have a range of achievement from on or above grade level to below grade level by about one year in any given area.

Moderate - The following factors are considered in determining a moderate level of support:
- Identified cognitive or learning disability with evidence of at least 2 grade levels behind peers.
• Borderline or very low average IQ
• Existing level of support in math and language work identified as insufficient
• Has possibly already repeated a year
• Amount of required teacher time in the homeroom classroom
• How much support is needed for social and emotional development
• MS - If they qualify for 3 of the 4 supported classes
• HS – More than 2 supported classes out of 8

A moderate level of Learning Support can be identified by the amount of time that the student requires support from the department, and can include, but is not limited to the following:
• Individual instruction
• Resource room support in varying amounts
• Co-taught classes
• Modified classes
• Social/ Emotional Skills Support (within context or separately depending on needs)
• Need for multiple support services including Occupational Therapy, PT, Speech Language Therapy, counseling, medical needs

**Intensive** – Identified students who have a cognitive or developmental disability that requires modified curricular expectation and functional life skills development. Typically these students require multiple therapies.

**Of course, students don’t always fit neatly into these categories and every effort is made to match student need to service.**

**Exiting students from LS:**
Students may be exited from LS services when they:
• are working to their potential on a grade level standard for a sustained period of time of at least half of a school year- based on standardized assessments
• understand their learning profile
• demonstrate the use of strategies to compensate effectively for their disability
• demonstrate effective self-advocacy skills

**There must be consensus from their ILP team members for exit including parents. Parents will be informed in writing of this change of programming. Students will continued to be case managed under monitor status until they leave ISB or the status of their disability changes.**
Appendix C:

Pre-Referral Checklist for Elementary School Learning Support

It is often the case that referrals start with an informal conversation about a student. These conversations should be encouraged, but with some structure attached so that LS can get to the possible cause of the issue. When a teacher approaches an LS team member about learning needs the following should happen before a formal referral is made:

**The classroom teacher will do:**

- A student file review should be done by the teacher to ascertain relevant information about educational history.
- Give specific information about the issues they are seeing (including the collection of work samples, or specific description of behavior observed.
- MAP and ISA data should be reviewed by the teacher to gain further insight into the achievement of the student.
- The English or French teacher should be consulted by the class teacher to determine whether s/he is seeing consistent trends in learning.

**The LS teacher will:**

- Do a classroom observation of when the learning needs could most easily be seen.
- Give the teacher some differentiation strategies to implement and then set a schedule for following up.
- Follow up with the classroom teacher after strategies have been tried. At this point either additional strategies should be tried or a referral should be made. By the time a referral is made there should be **significant** evidence that there is in fact a learning issue in need of remediation.

**IF** in the collaboration with the LS and classroom teacher, there appears to be the need for further intervention or strategies, parents should be notified by the classroom teacher and informed that the Child Study Team will convene to discuss the child’s specific needs. At this point the child will be tracked by the LS teacher until a learning disability is confirmed or ruled out. Support should continue on a consultative basis until this determination is made.
Appendix D:

ISB Student Study Team
Meeting Agenda & Minutes Template

Name: 
Date: 
Child Study team: 

Assign four roles – Facilitator, Note Taker, Time Keeper, Power School data entry
• Introductions of team present
• Confidentiality statement/ definition of consensus
• Introduction of student

1. Go over the data (facilitator) 
(2-5minutes)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOB - age</th>
<th>Languages – including ISB Language block</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How long at ISB?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years of edu. in English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Testing or Diagnosis</td>
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<td>Medical history</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have vision and hearing been screened?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family or Cultural Consideration?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What support previously or presently?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselor involvement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report card summary</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. **SST Summary of Strengths and Concerns** (not to exceed 15 mins): referee presents without interruptions, every person who works with the student directly has an opportunity to contribute.

### Strengths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strength</th>
<th>Data/ evidence</th>
<th>Strategies used and outcomes</th>
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Baseline data  (electronic link)

Lexia/ WADE?

SLT

OT

Other?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges/ Concerns</th>
<th>Data/ evidence</th>
<th>Strategies used and outcomes</th>
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Feedback from additional team members:

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<th>ELD/ Languages</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Art</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
3. **Questions/clarification/discussions recorded here:** (not to exceed 15 mins)

4. **Recommendations:** (not to exceed 15 mins)
   Reach a consensus on recommendations/actions:
   - Decision I understand
   - Decision I can live with
   - Decision I will defend in public

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In class:</th>
<th>Other:</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
5. Closing the Feedback Loop
Who will represent SST to pass recommendations to parents? What other follow up needs to happen and by whom?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Person responsible</th>
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</thead>
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</table>

*When will this child be revisited at SST?*

Outcomes of recommendation: Parent response to recommendations
### APPENDIX E: DIMENSIONS OF CO-TEACHING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVELS OF COLLABORATION</th>
<th>ROLES &amp; RELATIONSHIPS</th>
<th>ATTITUDES</th>
<th>PLANNING &amp; DEVELOPMENT</th>
<th>DELIVERY OF INSTRUCTION</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING</th>
<th>EVALUATION OF LESSON EFFECTIVENESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Co-equal partnerships, students perceive teachers as co-equal</strong></td>
<td><strong>Classroom space is perceived as shared</strong></td>
<td><strong>Co-equal contributions in development of lessons &amp; materials</strong></td>
<td><strong>Productive, integrated co-delivery from both partners</strong></td>
<td><strong>Partners both engage in clinical observation of student learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Atmosphere: regular &amp; joint reflection on content &amp; process of lesson</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Trust in relationship allows for self-criticism, good humor &amp; spontaneity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ownership of the lesson is valued &amp; celebrated</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lessons scripted with learning objectives in mind</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent, trust &amp; rehearsal of the script allows for spontaneity</strong></td>
<td><strong>Dynamical &amp; continuous assessment is aligned with instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuous, effort to improve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Inter SELF-action between planning partners energizes both, strengths are complimentary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Positive intentions are presumed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Think, time silence respected</strong></td>
<td><strong>Consistent evaluation of lesson effectiveness during delivery</strong></td>
<td><strong>Co-teachers moderate assessment of student learning, achieving high inter-rater reliability</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reflective self-criticism on both parts</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Guiding/coaching is evident</strong></td>
<td><strong>Trust is evident</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inquiry &amp; advocacy balanced</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effective &amp; reflective listening skills evident</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment informs future instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student feedback regularly sought &amp; considered</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ideas are shared openly</strong></td>
<td><strong>Partners disagree without being disagreeable</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Co-teacher roles clearly defined, following a pre-arranged script</strong></td>
<td><strong>Classroom space is shared when second teacher is present; second teacher feels welcome &amp; comfortable</strong></td>
<td><strong>One or other partner dominates in development of lessons &amp; materials</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructorly approach, one ‘on stage’, one ‘off duty’</strong></td>
<td><strong>Accountability: co-evaluates during instructional delivery; sometimes present</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent reflection on content &amp; process of lesson by individual teachers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Trust: the relationship, although spontaneity may be missing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lessons usually referenced to learning theory &amp; objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inquiry and advocacy usually balanced</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructor’s dual responsibility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment: student learning is aligned with instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent efforts to improve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Partners volunteer to do tasks, although most tasks are done individually</strong></td>
<td><strong>Inquiry &amp; advocacy usually balanced</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Assessment usually informs instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reflective self-criticism</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Coaching is evident</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Pausing &amp; reflective listening</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Assessment: usually informs instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Student feedback sought periodically</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Ideas are shared</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Co-teacher structure is hierarchical in the relationship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Classroom space is shared with second teacher</strong></td>
<td><strong>One partner usually dominates in development of lessons &amp; materials</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instruction delivered primarily by one teacher; others take on special topics or assigned to tutor special students</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment: usually aligned with instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Instructor: reflection of content &amp; process of lesson</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Trust &amp; spontaneity have not developed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Second teacher does not feel totally at ease</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lessons, at times referenced to learning theory &amp; objectives may be clear to one partner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Infrequent interaction between teachers during lesson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Co-teachers rarely moderate assessment of student learning; low level of inter-rater reliability</strong></td>
<td><strong>Efficacy: efforts to improve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Co-partner prepares material for approval &amp; use of the other</strong></td>
<td><strong>One-way coaching is evident</strong></td>
<td><strong>More advocacy than inquiry</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ideal: simultaneous assessment of lesson effectiveness</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment: does not always inform instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>One-way coaching rarely sought</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Co-teacher is directive towards the other</strong></td>
<td><strong>Classroom clearly belongs to one of the teachers with other teacher a temporary guest</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Frequent: no scope for trust or spontaneity in the relationship</strong></td>
<td><strong>Individual partner provides ideas to other</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Coaching is not shared</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent: activities or isolated topics rather than primary concepts; learning objectives unclear</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Co-teacher is directive towards the other</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent: teacher provides ideas to other</strong></td>
<td><strong>Infrequent: or no interaction of co-equal value between teachers during lesson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment is not aligned with instruction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assessment: effort to improve or not evident</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monitoring: efforts to improve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Co-coaching takes place</strong></td>
<td><strong>Frequent: tasks are not aligned</strong></td>
<td><strong>No co-partner may be physically present during the lesson</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Frequent: or no interaction of co-equal value between teachers during lesson</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F:

Criteria for Eligibility and Student Placement

All students will need to meet eligibility requirements to receive formal learning support services at ISB. Eligibility would require the formal identification/diagnosis of a learning, developmental, or neurobiological disorder or an “other health impairment” that impacts learning. An RTI based approach would have been attempted prior to suggesting an identification process in up to grade four.

Assessment for eligibility is typically done in the form of a full psychological educational evaluation. Typically these evaluations are done outside of ISB. Initial assessments that have come up through the referral process in house would be followed by our in house educational psychologist in most cases but external assessments are also an option given specific requests for alternative types of assessments. A range of assessments are accepted as students enter the school as long as they have stated norm references and are completed by qualified practitioners. These evaluations are interpreted by LS faculty and translated into our ILP format.

We identify students who are struggling with grade level benchmarks and then investigate and evaluate for possible learning disabilities, if the standard differentiation strategies of the regular classroom do not produce the desired results.

*At the ECC students are referred and given support based on base line data at the grade level for initial small group RTI based intervention.*

Decisions about learning support eligibility must be made by the team of professionals who work with student, facilitated by the case manager. The decision for placement is made in close consultation and with the verbal consent of the child’s parents.

*A decision about the level of support required is the responsibility of the team under the leadership of the case manager.*

*Each student’s program is designed to meet his or her needs by emphasizing strengths, remediating weaknesses, and supporting curriculum access.*

*Decisions about placements in broad bands of programming are based upon data collected on the student and discussions with the LS team.*

**Consultative Support** – Identified students who may need accommodations, but not direct LS intervention. This group could include students identified with emotional needs. Many of these students have had intervention and are accommodating and self-advocating effectively.
**Mild** - Identified students who need some support which would not exceed an hour per day at the maximum. Typically these students have a range of achievement from on or above grade level to below grade level by about one year.

**Moderate** -

The following factors are considered in determining a moderate level of support:

- Identified cognitive or learning disability with evidence of at least 2 grade levels behind peers
- Borderline or very low average IQ
- Existing level of support in math and language work identified as insufficient
- Has possibly repeated a year already
- The amount of required teacher time in the homeroom classroom
- How much support is needed for social and emotional development
- MS - If they qualify for 3 of the 4 supported classes.
- HS – More than 2 supported classes out of 8

A moderate level of Learning Support can be identified by the amount of time that the student requires support from the department, and can include, but is not limited to the following:

- Individual instruction
- Resource room support in varying amounts
- Co-taught classes
- Modified classes
- Social/ Emotional Skills Support (within context or separately depending on needs)
- Need for multiple support services including Occupational Therapy, PT, Speech Language Therapy, counseling, medical needs

**Intensive** – Identified students who have a cognitive or intellectual disability that requires modified curricular expectation and functional life skills development. Typically these students require multiple therapies.
## Appendix G

### Student Profile – Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Validity Dates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DOB:</td>
<td>Grade:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case manager:</td>
<td>Date of entry to ISB:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of last psycho educational testing:</td>
<td>Projected re-evaluation date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Language History

(please include any tested language levels and history of language support)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Experience</th>
<th>Speaking</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; language</td>
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<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; language</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; language</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ELD support:**

- [ ] Intensive
- [ ] Intermediate
- [ ] Advanced
- [ ] Released

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Support Programs:</th>
<th>Amount of time per week:</th>
<th>Medical needs: (allergies, medication etc…)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional services required:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Description of what service will target:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Speech Language Therapy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[ ] Occupational Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ ] Physical Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ ] Counselling</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ ] Tutoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ ] Summer Programming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Adaptive/ Assistive Technologies</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Name:**

**Validity Dates:**

**Case manager:**

### PRESENT LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE

A description of the student’s exceptionality and its impact on educational performance:

### Best match strategies and tools: *The required teaching strategies to target individual learning.*

### Student strengths:

*(consider academic, social/emotional, dispositional, interests, affinities, extracurricular)*

### Student challenges:
A modification is a change in the expectation of curricular standards.

If a modification is indicated, the report card will reflect a modified grade in one or more curriculum areas.

The following modifications will be made:

(Write in what standard will be used to assess progress – what evidence?)

In which curricular area?:

(name subject areas)

☐ Adjusted content expectations for assessments

☐ Curriculum adaptations

With explanation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Accommodations: Allow accommodations for:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Extra time</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Computer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Scribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Calculator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Language waiver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Assistive technology Explain __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Reduced work load Explain __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Exempt Explain alternative assessment________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Explain__________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>