**INCLUSION/SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS POLICY, 2018-2019**

**QUARTZ HILL HIGH SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAM**

**Sources and Contributors:**

IB Diploma Programme, “From Principles Into Practice,” (2015)

“The Diploma Programme, Program Standards and Practices,” Current at IBIS, MyIB

“Access and Inclusion Policy,” IBO; November 2018 at IBIS, MyIB

Antelope Valley Union High School District, Special Education Handbook, at <https://sites.google.com/a/avhsd.org/avhsd-special-education-handbook/home>

Antelope Valley Union High School District Official Policy Statement On Special Education; government sources relevant to development of the AVUHSD policy at <https://sites.ed.gov/idea/about-idea/> and at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/lr/ideareathztn.asp>;

Staff Contributors:

Ms. Debbie Weilbacher, Counselor

Mr. Larry Queen, Counselor

Ms. Jody Sharp, Program Specialist, Antelope Valley Union High School District

Mr. Jeffrey Cassady, IB Diploma Program Coordinator, Quartz Hill High School

Mission Statement: Quartz Hill High School is committed to ensuring free and open student access to all academic programs. The school also provides formal, systematic and ongoing support for all students so that each may benefit from a rigorous, relevant and meaningful educational experience.

**Section 1: Special Education Policy**

To support students with special needs, the AVUHSD abides by all policies mandated by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 (IDEA) which includes, but is not limited to, the Offer of a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to meet a special education student’s individual, unique needs. IDEA is the primary federal program that authorizes state and local aid for special education and related services for students with disabilities.

Table B and contents in the AVHSD Special Education Handbook provides legal definitions for specific disabilities (See above citation). It is the responsibility of District Office Administration, Site Administration, teaching staff and counseling staff to ensure that all students receive educational and affective services mandated by each IEP. The AVHSD Special Education Handbook is available to the public in digital form.

Instruction is provided through a variety of settings, allowing students to be educated and having access with their non-disabled peers throughout their school day to the extent possible and still support their academic goals and objectives. Quartz Hill High School offers settings to students found eligible with mild to moderate disabilities, as well as, moderate to severe disabilities. Specialized Academic Instruction is offered on a Watch and Consult basis, within the Resource setting, Special Day Class Academic, Special Day Class Behavioral, Pre-Vocational, and Severely Developmentally Delayed settings. Each student has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which is created by an IEP team. The team consists of the parents/legal guardian, the student, special education teacher, general education, guidance counselor, administrator, the school psychologist, and any other service providers that the student may have to support their individual needs.

As part of the high school student’s IEP, per IDEA, they have transitional goals and activities to support them with planning their transition from high school to higher education, employment, and quality adult life. Furthermore, the student’s IEP will describe the accommodations and modifications that the student may need to access the general education curriculum necessary for them to complete graduation or certificate of completion requirements.

Per IDEA, all state public schools, including Quartz Hill High School, are legally required to educate students with disabilities within the general education classrooms with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent possible. Quartz Hill High School offers all students the opportunity to be included in any program on campus. If the special education student meets the requirements for a program he or she cannot be denied access. The student would be afforded their accommodations and or modifications deemed appropriate by the IEP team within the context of the classroom. **To that end, the QHHS IB Diploma Program is open to any student who wishes to pursue it.** There are two IB-trained counselors on staff who counsel students in Grade 10 about the transition into the IB DP in Grade 11, and all counselors work closely with the DP Program Coordinator to see that students are academically suited for success in the DP Anticipated year. If there are academic deficiencies, usually in the case of Mathematics and Foreign Language, counselors and DP Coordinator can suggest “catch-up” options such as online classes, summer sessions or community college classes so that the student can benefit from a sound academic foundation for success in the DP.

As a matter of District and school policy, Special Education students have access to all extra-curricular activities, such as clubs, dances, assemblies, and sporting events offered to their non-disabled peers.

Additionally, to identify and accommodate changes in student needs, teachers, parents and administrators may convene a “Student Study Team,” comprised of the student, the student’s parents or legal guardian, teachers, administrators and counseling staff. The Student Study Team will then work to devise an academic plan to accommodate an individual student’s changing needs. This practice allows for adaptability in the academic planning process for each and every student on campus, not only for those students with formally identified special needs.

**Processes for Assuring Compliance:** As is evident, the school and the District are legally bound to comply with State and Federal mandates regarding the accommodation of special needs and the maintenance of open access to academic programs. Should issues arise, students with special needs and their parents may consult individual case carriers for resolution. In the event that issue resolution is not attained at this initial level, issues may then be taken to the special education Teacher on Special Assignment (TSA), and then taken if necessary to the Vice Principal supervising site Special Education staff. Of course, the site Principal will have final decision-making authority at the site.

It is the duty of site teachers, counselors and administration to ensure that students have open access to all academic programs. Through ongoing professional development and time dedicated to school-wide collaboration to support student critical thinking, inquiry and problem-solving. The school continues to operate with Expected School-wide Learning Outcomes in mind. The school expects graduates to become responsible, inquisitive, and caring life-long learners.

**Section II: Resources for Career, Academic and Affective Domains**

Quartz Hill High School maintains a well-qualified, accessible Counseling Department centrally located in the Main Office. Currently there are eight full-time counselors on staff to accommodate our student body. Each counselor is assigned an alpha, and students and their parents may make appointments to speak with counseling staff regarding the social and emotional well-being of the student. The current student/counselor ratio is 1/400, as QHHS has added one additional counselor to full-time staff.

In addition to the offices housing counselors who cover academic and affective domains, QHHS staffs a separate College and Career Department. One counselor is housed in this separate department, and this department is fully staffed with clerical personnel.

For students in the DP, the DP Program Coordinator serves in several capacities and holds twice-daily office hours, so students can get advice on all DP related matters. The DP Coordinator will also make inclusive assessment arrangements via IBIS whenever the need arises.

**Section III: Alignment with IBO Inclusive Access Arrangement Principles For the Diploma Program**

Quartz Hill High School understands that the IBO DP operates under fundamental principles regarding inclusive access arrangements. QHHS IB DP is committed to adhering to the following:

* **Maintaining Standards:** Students with special needs intending to pursue the full IB DP or to pursue course candidacy will receive inclusive access arrangements consistent with IDEA (described above), with a student’s IEP (described above), and especially with IBO policy described in “Access and Inclusion Policy” November 2018 (accessed from IBIS/MyIB); all IA assessment will adhere to the IBO-mandated assessment criteria; all students, including those with identified learning challenges, will be required to undertake study in two languages.
* **Reflecting Usual Ways of Working:** If a student is identified with specific learning challenges, and that student is capable and desirous of pursuing the IB Diploma or course candidacy, teachers, administrators and supporting staff will ensure that inclusive assessment arrangements are carefully planned and implemented throughout the student’s course of study, thereby establishing consistent processes by which the student will experience the IB curriculum. The inclusive course of study will adhere to the IBO’s eligibility criteria and any arrangements will be guided by the IBO Assessment and Inclusion Policy. Teachers, counselors and the DP Coordinator will continually monitor student progress through formative assessment and daily classroom contact. Any proposed inclusive access arrangements that may fall outside of the IBO’s Assessment and Inclusion Policy will not be implemented without express permission from the IBO; under no circumstances will the school request retroactive inclusive access arrangements for any student.
* **Maintaining Integrity of the Assessment:** QHHS continues to invigilate all examinations according to IBO regulations and will not communicate with an examiner any information regarding a student’s learning support requirements.

**Section IV: Planning Inclusive Access Arrangements:**  In accordance with Section 2.1 of the Access and Inclusion Policy, QHHS will ensure that any and all inclusive access arrangements provided for a student will be individualized with IDEA and IEP in mind, will be regularly observed and evaluated by teachers, administrators and counselors. Additionally, the DP Coordinator will monitor IBIS/MyIB for any changes in IBO published inclusive assessment arrangements, and this site-based policy will be modified as needed. Finally, in planning an inclusive access arrangement plan, every effort will be made to remove/reduce disadvantages to an individual student without creating undue or unfair advantages for that student.

**Section V: Requesting Inclusive Access Arrangements for Examinations:** The request for inclusive access arrangements to the IBO will be made by the IB DP Coordinator, with full support from the current Head of School and full consent from a candidate who has reached the age of 18 or in the case of minors from a parent/legal guardian. The completed form for such request will be accessed by the DP Coordinator. The DP Coordinator will also submit both a psychological/psycho-educational/medical report and any and all relevant educational evidence from the school. This supporting documentation will conform to the requirements of Section 2.5 of the IBO Access and Inclusion Policy. To the greatest extent possible, student confidentiality will be maintained. Any and all requests for inclusive access arrangements will be made by November 15, six months prior to the May examination session.

**Section VI: Administering Access Arrangements:** QHHS will make and/or provide any and all personnel, facilities and materials necessary to the student and fully-approved by the IBO, including appropriate assistive technologies and staff required to implement those technologies. Any and all requested access arrangements will be specified clearly and concisely as to the type of arrangement being requested. Those personnel, facilities and materials shall include special font/color for examination papers, granting additional time based upon a student’s observed usual ways of learning (see above) and standard scores from current psychological documentation, appropriate paper-based or electronic graphic organizers, professional scribes , readers, special communication software and word processing as allowed per student physical disabilities and second-language challenges.

**Staff Commitment and Concurrence:** This document was completed using the above-referenced sources and was circulated to IB Faculty, Site Administration and Counseling Staff responsible for the delivery of the IB curriculum, and will be reviewed annually to ensure alignment with the expectations of the IBO.

**Public Articulation of QHHS Inclusion/Special Needs Policy:** This policy statement will be posted onto the QHHS public website, where it will be available to students, parents, faculty, administration and all other public stakeholders. Additionally, this policy will be articulated in the Coordinator’s annual presentation to parents/families of incoming 9th Grade students to assist them in making appropriate program choices for their children.