



## **Special Educational Needs Policy**

At Lakewood Catholic Academy, we believe that each child is a unique and precious gift from God who is worthy of our love and respect and is highly capable of learning. We believe that in order to teach most effectively, **who** we teach is just as important as **what** we teach. Our faculty members are trained to differentiate their classroom instruction in order to address the needs of all learners. This will be accomplished through continual, effective formative assessments. Using the results of these assessments, teachers will modify the curriculum content, process, and/or product, as well as the learning environment so that each student reaches his or her maximum potential as a learner.

### **Inclusion**

Lakewood Catholic Academy admits students of any sex, race creed, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded to students at the school. This is inclusive of all MYP programming for students in grades six through eight.

In order to best serve all of our learners, we will provide a continuum of services, reasonable adjustments, and modifications ranging from informal to formal. These include:

### **Tier I**

#### **Regularly scheduled tutoring**

Each subject teacher in grades five through eight schedules weekly "office hours," whereby he/she is available for drop-in tutoring. This schedule is made available to students and parents at the beginning of each school year.

Occasionally, in response to data obtained from a formative assessment, students are *required* to attend tutoring sessions provided by their classroom teacher during office hours. This intervention is intended to be immediate, temporary, and targeted to the learning objectives.

### **Tier II**

#### **Intervention Services**

Students in need of mild to moderate intervention receive individual and/or small group instruction with an auxiliary tutor at least once per week. The goal of this program is to provide individualized instruction to help academically struggling

children gain the necessary skills to meet classroom benchmarks. Some students in need of intervention services are on a building accommodation plan. This plan is created cooperatively with input from classroom teachers, the school psychologist, parents, an intervention specialist, and the Dean of Academics.

Children qualify for the program based on the results of multiple criteria, including, standardized test scores, formative assessments, and input from the classroom teacher. Multi-criteria identification occurs at least once per year.

### **Tier III Intensive Remediation Services**

Students formally identified in need of intensive remediation receive individual and/or small group instruction with an intervention specialist weekly. Some students also receive weekly support from an auxiliary tutor. The goal of this program is to strengthen basic skills, support academic growth, and identify strategies to move towards academic independence.

Students in need of intensive remediation services are identified by the school psychologist, who administers or reviews academic, behavioral, and psychological assessments. Students in tier three have an individualized service plan tailored to their academic needs. This plan is reviewed and modified each year. Students are re-assessed for qualification every three years.

### **Other Services**

Students requiring services in the domain of speech and language work with our part-time speech pathologist. A part time school psychologist offers psychological counseling to students with mild to moderate social, emotional, or behavioral issues.

### **Whole School Collaboration**

Intervention specialists and auxiliary tutors work in collaboration with classroom teachers. In order to promote open communication around curriculum, MYP unit plans and assessment rubrics are to be shared with service providers.

### **Reasonable adjustments**

Students with learning support requirements may require reasonable adjustments to access the MYP curriculum framework, including assessments. A reasonable adjustment is an action taken to remove or decrease a disadvantage faced by students with learning support requirements. A reasonable adjustment could be unique to a specific student and may include changes in the presentation of a test or method of response. Where reasonable adjustments involve changes to specific aspects or specific criteria of the assessment, the overall learning outcome must remain the same.

Some students may require reasonable adjustments in the physical domain, such as access to an elevator or preferential seating in the classroom. Further physical

adjustments will be discussed collaboratively between the pedagogical leadership team and the student's parents.

### **Vertical promotional meetings**

Teams of teachers meet prior to each academic year in order to share approaches to teaching and/or modifications that have been particularly successful with the students being promoted. These meetings help ensure a smooth transition and allow new teachers to initiate positive practices as the new school year begins.

### **Parents as partners**

We recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children. With that in mind, we are committed to frequent communication through progress reports, report cards, emails, and conferences.

### **Confidentiality**

Psychological reports are not included in a student's permanent record. These reports are kept in a separate file in the school psychologist's office, which is locked when not in use. These reports are available to teachers and parents upon request. It is the teacher's responsibility to follow a student's accommodation plan. All information contained in a student's record is to be considered confidential. Teachers are expected to adhere to the confidentiality clause found in the faculty handbook.

### **Referrals**

If a greater level of assistance is required than is available at LCA, referrals to external agencies will be proposed to parents.

### **Summary**

Our aim is to foster an environment conducive to learning, and we encourage all of our students to approach each learning experience as an opportunity for growth. By fostering the attributes of the learner profile and building approaches to learning skills, we aim to move each student closer to becoming an independent, lifelong learner. In the spirit of continuous improvement, a team of teachers, administrators, and members of the community will review this policy yearly and make appropriate revisions.

### **Bibliography**

*MYP: From Principles into Practice*. Cardiff, Wales: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014. Print.

Primary Years Programme, Middle Years Programme And Diploma Programme. *Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate Programmes: Special Educational Needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes*: Web.

*Lakewood Catholic Academy Handbook, 2015-2016*