

Inclusion Policy

At Corrales International School (CIS), we serve grades K-12, following state and federal guidelines to provide an inclusive environment where all students gain the academic and social skills needed to be successful. This is maximized with parental support and working together as a team.

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) and Middle Years Program (IB MYP) not only acknowledge but deeply respect the fact that students come from a variety of cultures and backgrounds and have a range of academic, physical, and other needs.

At CIS, we are committed to the rigorous standards of the I.B. Program. We believe that all students, including those with special educational needs, have the potential to meet these standards. To ensure this, we utilize inclusive teaching techniques, serving students in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and including them in the general education setting as much as possible. Our teachers design learning experiences that meet these standards and are achieved through multi-modal instruction and differentiated teaching strategies. We are dedicated to maximizing students' potential and creating pathways for them to demonstrate their learning in different ways.

Purpose: The purpose of the Special Education program at Corrales International School, (CIS), is to provide an inclusive educational environment, supporting active, compassionate lifelong learners with a global understanding, and community leadership. Students are encouraged, challenged, and supported to maximize academic and social achievements.

Philosophy: Corrales International believes that students with disabilities and gifted and talented students have unique academic and social needs. Corrales International School supports a philosophy that emphasizes the need for a challenging learning environment that focuses on high achievement for every student. Programming must be responsive to individual needs and must recognize the multiple talents, challenges, and cultural diversity of the district's population.

Corrales International School supports research-based strategies that provide opportunities for optimal learning to ensure that students will perform at levels commensurate with their abilities. Students should be provided with diverse, dynamic, and challenging educational programming throughout their school career.

Providing appropriate programming for students is a responsibility shared by special education specialists, gifted specialists, educational assistants, classroom teachers,

electives teachers, administrators, and parents. Integration of differentiated curriculum and direct instruction across classroom settings is an important component to balancing diverse or advanced abilities with grade-level skill expectations.

Programming: Corrales International School nurtures a school culture of inquiry, independence, achievement, diversity, and awareness. The program serves to support students with inquiry-based learning opportunities to foster academic excellence, community-mindedness, and acceptance of diversity and awareness.

CIS's Special Education Director supervises and facilitates all aspects of the Special Education program in collaboration with Special Education Specialists, (Special Education & Gifted), Special Education Paraprofessionals, I.B. Coordinators, General Education Teachers, Licensed Related Service Providers, and Administration.

To meet the diverse needs of our students, CIS's Special Education Program of Academic Support and Enrichment utilizes inclusive teaching techniques, serving students primarily in the general education setting with individualized pull-outs, (depending on student need and content). Educational supports are provided through a combination of collaboration with general education teachers, related service providers, in-class support, pull-outs, co-teaching, 1:1, and small groups. Special education specialists, general education teachers, and educational assistants, collaboratively design learning experiences, carefully construct differentiated teaching techniques, provide direct instruction, (specialized instruction and academic remediation and assistance, as applicable, for all students in the special education program), and attend professional development opportunities, (highlighting and integrating research-based strategies and techniques for varying levels of need), throughout the school year. Differentiated teaching, along with support, attempts to maximize students' potential, allowing students to learn and demonstrate their learning in different ways. The implementation of balanced and successful programming fosters academic success and social development.

Belief Statements: Corrales International School recognizes a set of core beliefs regarding students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, and their education; established as part of the Special Education/Gifted Education requirements under New Mexico Special Education Law.

Students may have special needs or are gifted and talented in one area or multiple areas. While all students have academic strengths and needs, not all students have learning disabilities or exceptionalities. CIS believes that students with disabilities, gifted or talented, appear in all populations regardless of cognitive abilities, physical abilities, language proficiency, or cultural backgrounds.

All students should learn in an environment where their gifts and abilities are acknowledged, valued, and nurtured. Gifted and Talented students should be praised for who they are rather than for what they can do. Students with disabilities should be praised for who they are, and for their abilities. Corrales International School values the whole child. Students with diverse abilities and gifted services should reflect the complex nature of the individual. Successful programming balances strong academic rigor with social awareness, emotional support, and level of need.

All students require adequate support to maximize their academic potential. Ownership of their learning is essential for special needs students and gifted students to share responsibility for their academic outcomes and invest in a productive future.

Students with disabilities need opportunities and experiences to gain essential academic and social skills, supporting areas of interest, and post-secondary outcomes. Gifted and Talented students need opportunities for choice throughout their school career, in the form of assignment outcomes or study topics. Independent study should be student-driven but guided closely by teacher support.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law enacted in 1975 and reauthorized in 1997. It ensures that students with disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate public education. IDEA also strives to provide special education services and procedural safeguards tailored to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities and exceptionalities, **including individual** or small group instruction, curriculum modifications, and specialized physical, occupational, and speech therapy services. These services are provided by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). IDEA also encourages increased parental participation and protects students. At Corrales International School (CIS), students are provided with additional professional support from the PYP and MYP faculty. The school employs one full-time Special Education Teacher/Director, one full-time Special Education Teacher (Gifted), and two full-time Educational Assistants. Additionally, CIS contracts licensed professionals such as Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational therapists, Social Workers, Educational Diagnosticians, and School Psychologists to support the needs of their students.

As part of the NM Public Education Department statutes, New Mexico's MULTI-LAYERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (M.L.S.S.) <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/?s=Inclusion+act>

Our Mission- ALL Students Ready for Success: College, Career, Life, Secure in their Identity and Healthy

This is accomplished by:

- Aligning all interventions to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and student data;
- Our proactive and flexible approach to addressing student needs reassures educators, families, and health/wellness professionals that we are ready to adapt and respond to each student's unique needs. We instill confidence in the system's effectiveness and work with a variety of community, family, and health/wellness professionals to provide coordinated support that addresses a student's holistic success.

What is MLSS?

- MLSS is a holistic intervention framework that guides educators, those closest to the student, to intervene quickly when students need additional support. The M.L.S.S. framework reflects the support that the classroom teacher, school, family, health, and wellness staff offer toward readying students to experience academic and behavioral success in school, resulting in students being ready for success.

Why MLSS?

- The new M.L.S.S. model will provide support to ALL students, including students who are migrant, homeless, or in foster care. It will allow teachers and health and wellness staff to intervene quickly when students are struggling academically or behaviorally by providing immediate support to those students in an educational crisis.
- M.L.S.S. moves away from the "wait to fail" model. This empowers teachers to use their professional judgment and make data-informed decisions regarding the students in their classrooms.

Decisions regarding layered interventions are made by the classroom teachers and support personnel who are closest to the students. This streamlined approach not only significantly reduces the unnecessary burden of additional paperwork, forms, and meetings, but also provides a sense of relief and lessens the workload, enhancing overall efficiency.

The Special Education Policies and Procedures Inclusion Act can be found on our website corralesis.org.

- https://corralesis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/CIS-Special-Needs-Inclusion-Policy-IB-MYP_PYP.pdf
- <https://corralesis.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Provision-of-a-Free-and-Appropriate-Public-Education-for-all-Students-with-Disabilities.pdf>



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