***International Baccalaureate Programme
Hephzibah Middle School******Inclusion/Special***

***Education Policy***

**

**Definitions:**

**Child with a Disability- A** Child with a disability means a child evaluated as having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this part as ‘‘emotional disturbance’’), an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

**Autism-** Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

**Deaf-blindness-** means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

**Deafness-** means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

**Emotional disturbance-** means a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child’s educational performance:

* An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
* An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.
* Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
* A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
* A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

**Hearing impairment-** means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child’s educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section.

**Intellectual disability-** means significantly sub average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

**Multiple disabilities-** means concomitant impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness or intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities does not include deaf-blindness.

**Orthopedic impairment-** means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures).

**Other health impairment-** means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that—

* Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and
* Adversely affects a child’s educational performance.

A **504 plan-** is monitored by classroom teachers. A student with an IEP, as part of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), may receive different educational services in a special or regular educational setting, depending on the student's need.

**An IEP plan-** is more than just a written legal document (or “plan”). It’s a map that lays out the program of special education instruction, supports and services kids need to make progress and succeed in school.

**Richmond County Special Education and Support Service Mission**

Our mission is to provide support for Richmond County teachers and administrators in the areas of eligibility, assessment, educational program development, student placement and consultation; to render related support services to students with disabilities: to furnish relevant information to the parents of students with disabilities and to make the strengths of these students known to businesses and civic leaders in the community and in the state.

Richmond County Schools provide services to students with disabilities in a continuum of educational environments from resource class placement in students’ home schools to full day programs in specialized facilities. Students receive evaluations in all suspected areas of disability. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) determines the type and degree of required services. Students and parents are afforded all due process procedural safeguards as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

**Introduction**

As an International Baccalaureate Middle Years (IB MYP Candidate) school, we recognize and respect that our students come from a variety of backgrounds, cultures and levels of life experiences. The diversity of student backgrounds contributes to our school community and inspires teachers and students to be caring and open minded. Multiple teaching strategies along with multiple opportunities will be afforded to differentiate instruction so that all students have equal access to the curriculum.

**Services Provided by Richmond County School Systems**

**LEARNING DISABILITIES PROGRAM-** serves students who demonstrate a processing deficit that significantly affects academic performance when compared to learning potential, in areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing or calculating. Services focus on specialized instruction in identified areas of need. Students receive service through programs ranging from consultative, team teaching co-teaching, resource and self-contained.

**EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS PROGRAM-** serves students whose educational performance is impaired by an emotional condition that is manifested in one or more of the following areas: maintaining relationships; behaving appropriately, complaining of physical symptoms or fears related to personal or school problems; displaying moods of unhappiness or depression, and demonstrating problems in learning which cannot be adequately explained by other factors. Services may include academic instruction, behavior management, and/or affective and pro-social skills development.

**INTELLECTUALLY DISABILITY PROGRAMS-** are provided for students who learn at a significantly slower rate than their age peers, have significantly below average cognitive functioning and deficits in adaptive behavior.

**Students with mild intellectual disabilities-**demonstrate a potential for personal, social and emotional growth leading to independent, productive living.

**Students with moderate intellectual disabilities**- demonstrate an intellectual ability of approximately one-third to one-half that of the average of their age peers. Programs are designed to develop personal, social, and emotional growth leading toward productive, supervised living.

**Students with severe and profound intellectual disabilities**- demonstrate an intellectual capacity approximately two-thirds below the average of their age peers. Skills development in self-help, motor, social, communication, cognitive, and vocational areas is provided.

**AUTISM PROGRAM-** students with autism spectrum disorder are served through the full continuum of environments ranging from placement in resource settings to full day placement in special education. Placement may be provided in specific programs based on the IEP (i.e. SLD, EBD, etc.)

**SPEECH/LANGUAGE PROGRAM-** is available to students whose communication systems differ from peers to the extent that it disrupts communication, and affects the student’s social, emotional or academic growth. Specific areas include receptive and expressive language deficits, articulation errors, and fluency and voice disorders.

**VISUAL IMPAIRMENT PROGRAM-** is available for students with visual deficits resulting from congenital defects, eye diseases or injury that interfere with learning. In addition to academic instructions, services include securing appropriate educational media, teaching Braille, computer and typing skills. A mobility instructor provides orientation and mobility services for students who require this service.

**HEARING IMPAIRMENT PROGRAM-** serves students with mild to profound hearing losses. Services include academic instruction, auditory training, oral and total communication instruction, and hearing aid training.   Audiological services are provided by school district audiologists. Interpreters are on staff for students who require this service.

**ORTHOPEDICAL IMPAIRMENT and OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENT PROGRAMS**-serve students with orthopedic impairments and chronic health problems which adversely affect educational performance. The IEP determines the services which will be provided. Specialized equipment, physical care assistance, adaptations to the environment, and academic support are available when appropriate.

**TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY PROGRAM-** serves students who have acquired an injury to the brain from an external force that adversely affects educational performance. Impairments from the injury can be in one or more areas including cognition, language, memory, attention, problem solving, motor, psychosocial or speech. Depending on the type and degree of resulting impairment, appropriate services are provided according to the student’s IEP.

**SPECIAL NEEDS PRESCHOOL PROGRAM-**serves students 3-5. Evaluation of a child’s communication, cognitive, motor, self-help, and social-behavioral skills are provided by a team of psychologists, educators, and therapists. Disabled preschoolers may be served through a home-based, community-based, or facility-based model. Children become eligible for services on their third birthday.

 **COMMUNITY BASED INSTRUCTION PROGRAM-**are services provided to identified students with disabilities. The training is designed to supplement classroom activities and to provide opportunities and experiences which occur in the actual environment where skills will be ultimately performed. Training in the community ensures that students practice activities under conditions characteristic of the real world.

 **RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES-**are additional services which are required in order for identified students with disabilities to benefit from their special education program. Service include occupational therapy, physical therapy, adapted physical education, nursing, adaptive music, audiology, and social worker services.

**SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

* Adapted Music Eligibility
* Adapted Music Education
* Adapted Physical Education
* Community Based Instruction
* Occupational Therapy
* Physical Therapy
* Preschool Special Education Services
* Speech Language Services

Hephzibah Middle School recognizes its responsibility to follow all 504s and IEP plans for students as well as to follow guidelines outlined by IB.ORG and the Richmond County Board of Education to ensure that students’ needs are met. All students have the opportunity to participate in all aspects of the school community including the Middle Years Programme and extra­curricular activities. The extent to which students with special needs participate in the IB Programmes is defined in the following documents:

 ● Individualized Scheduling

 ●504 Plans

 ● Individual Education Plans