

# **Inclusion Policy**



**Tohoku International School**

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# Purpose and Guiding Principles

## Purpose

The primary purpose of the inclusion policy at Tohoku International School (TIS) is to establish a framework for creating a learning environment that continually supports the enhancement of student engagement and accessibility and the elimination of barriers to learning. TIS acknowledges the importance of understanding students' interests and social and emotional needs. We are committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to contribute fully.

This policy is aligned with the principles and practices of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Japan Council of International Schools (JCIS), as well as relevant international and local legislation on educational inclusion. It outlines how inclusion will be implemented at TIS.

## Guiding Principles

- Learning diversity is recognised as a valuable asset for fostering inclusive communities.
- Every educator is responsible for the education of all students.
- Education is enriched by creating positive, responsive environments that cultivate a sense of belonging, safety, self-worth, and holistic growth for every student.
- Learning is approached from a strengths-based perspective.
- All students are integral members of the learning community and are provided with equal opportunities to participate in and engage with high-quality education.
- Students' full potential is realised by building on their prior knowledge and experiences.
- Multilingualism is recognised as a reality, a fundamental right, and a valuable resource.
- Every student within the school community has a voice, and their perspectives are heard and considered.
- Success is acknowledged as a crucial element of the learning process for every student.

## JCIS Vision for Inclusivity

[JCIS](#) schools commit to:

### Knowing Diversity

We develop sensitivity to the diverse backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, identities, and needs of people in our communities.

## **Connecting Inclusively**

We create opportunities and spaces to actively engage with people in our communities in view of their diverse and intersecting backgrounds, perspectives, experiences, identities, and needs. We communicate openly and respond to multiple perspectives with consideration and empathy.

## **Engaging Equitably**

We challenge biases, prejudices, and discrimination in our communities, giving voice to multiple perspectives, particularly those underrepresented.

# **Definition of terms**

**ILP (Individual Learning Plan):** A document that outlines agreed supports for a student with additional needs. The ILP is developed collaboratively by Student Support, teachers, Leadership (as appropriate), parents/guardians, and the student when appropriate. It includes goals, accommodations/modifications if relevant, responsibilities, and a schedule for review (at least once per semester or more frequently if needed).

**Inclusion:** the practice of creating a learning environment where all students, regardless of their abilities, backgrounds, or personal circumstances, are welcomed, supported, and given equal opportunities to succeed. This means providing access to the curriculum, resources, and extracurricular activities in a way that removes barriers and promotes full participation for students with diverse needs, including those with disabilities, learning differences, and varying cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds. Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging and respects the individuality of each student.

**SEL:** Social Emotional Learning is the process through which individuals develop the skills to understand and manage their emotions, build positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. It encompasses five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. SEL is essential for fostering a positive learning environment and enhancing both academic performance and overall well-being.

## **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

At Tohoku International School, we cultivate, celebrate and embrace an inclusive community that honours and celebrates the diverse experiences of individuals across different faiths, races, ethnicities, nationalities, genders, gender identities, sexual orientations, family structures, economic backgrounds, physical abilities, and learning profiles. Tohoku International School is dedicated to the principle of equal opportunity in both education and employment.

Discrimination or harassment based on race, gender, religion, nationality, ability, sexual

orientation, or any other characteristic will not be tolerated. We have clear policies and procedures in place for addressing incidents of bullying, harassment, or discrimination, ensuring that students feel safe and supported at all times.

## **Admission to TIS**

TIS is committed to cultivating an inclusive environment that welcomes students with diverse needs. [TIS Admission Policy 2026](#) outlines the required steps and documentation for all applicants seeking enrollment. Students who require additional support will be assessed for admission based on the availability of resources necessary to meet their needs. Each applicant with differing or additional learning requirements is carefully considered, and admissions decisions are made by the Leadership Team in collaboration with Student Support, prioritising the best interests of the student.

While TIS strives to be as inclusive as possible, the school must also ensure that the learning environment is safe, supportive, and educationally appropriate for the student and the wider community. When a student requires significant additional support, TIS will conduct a documented feasibility review considering:

- Student learning and wellbeing needs
- Available staffing, expertise, and physical access resources
- Reasonable adjustments possible within the TIS program
- The support plan required (including frequency, intensity, and sustainability)

Admissions decisions are made by the Leadership Team in collaboration with Student Support, prioritising the best interests of the student. When TIS cannot meet a student's needs, the school will communicate this clearly and, where possible, provide signposting to alternative support pathways or services.

## **Additional Support**

### **Identifying Students Who Require Additional Support**

Every teacher is responsible for providing instruction and learning opportunities that are accessible and tailored to the needs of each learner.

TIS acknowledges that all students may encounter barriers or challenges accessing the curriculum. When considering the diversity of learners, TIS adopts a strengths-based approach and focuses on the specific challenges a student may face. Possible additional educational needs or areas of challenge can be classified into these development categories: cognition and learning, communication and reading, behaviour, social and emotional, and physical and sensory.

## **Collaboration and Responsibility**

### **Parents/Guardians**

TIS believes that inclusion is a shared responsibility and encourages active participation from parents and guardians. TIS regularly engages with families to understand their needs and perspectives, ensuring that they are partners in their child's education and well-being. Parents/guardians are responsible for disclosing any developmental, social or academic challenge their child may have during the admission process, even if an official diagnosis has not been sought. Professional assessment reports, including details of any additional support the student has received in the past, and information about what strategies may have been helpful in the past, must be submitted at the time of application. Parents/guardians will be sought for consultation when identifying additional support needs and determining a support plan.

### **Homeroom and Subject Area Teachers**

Homeroom teachers play a crucial role in monitoring student progress, academic performance, social interactions, and personal development. When concerns arise regarding a student's academic, social, emotional, or physical well-being, the homeroom teacher serves as the initial point of contact for parents/guardians, school staff, and community members. If a specialist or subject area teacher has concerns in these areas, they are responsible for communicating these issues to the homeroom teacher. The Student Support Lead conducts regular Kid Chat meetings with homeroom teachers to discuss each student and identify specific needs.

All teachers are responsible for implementing any supports in the classroom and adhering to ILPs, Behaviour Plans, and any other official documents. Teachers are also responsible for modifying and differentiating student work.

### **Leadership**

The Leadership Team is responsible for implementing processes that eliminate barriers to learning for all school community members. These barriers may arise from cultural and policy factors, teaching and learning approaches, school organisation, resource availability, and interactions among members of the learning community.

The Leadership Team must be aware of the diverse needs of enrolled students while ensuring that the confidentiality of all student information is maintained.

## **Student Support Lead**

The Student Support Lead assists teaching staff in addressing student concerns, developing resources, advising on differentiation strategies, assessing students, and delivering both direct and indirect learning interventions. Additionally, the Student Support Lead regularly reviews data to ensure that all students in need of extra support are identified and receive the necessary assistance.

## **Supporting Students Who Require Additional Support**

### **Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS)**

TIS uses the MTSS framework. MTSS is an educational framework designed to provide targeted and systematic assistance to students with varying levels of academic or behavioural needs. It is aimed at ensuring that *all* students receive the support they require to succeed in school. Further information can be found in Appendix I.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

Recognising the multilingual nature of our student body, we provide a comprehensive EAL support program to ensure that every student can thrive academically and socially. The EAL Policy aims to promote equality of opportunity for all learners for whom English is an additional language. The EAL department provides a broad, balanced support programme that reflects the needs of EAL students and enables strategies that enable them to successfully assimilate into the mainstream curriculum. EAL support is part of TIS's inclusion approach and may include classroom accommodations, targeted small-group instruction, and consultation with teachers. EAL support planning is coordinated with Student Support where needs overlap (for example, language acquisition and learning differences).

### **Differentiation, Modification and Accommodation**

TIS recognises that each student is unique, with strengths and areas for growth. As a school, it is our responsibility to identify these areas and support each individual student. This may mean modifying current practices to facilitate all students' academic success. This means that all curricula will be made accessible to all TIS students.

**Differentiation:** Instructional approaches that vary the method, materials, pacing, grouping, and supports so students can access learning. Learning goals remain the same, but the path to reach them can differ.

**Accommodation:** Adjustments that remove barriers and provide access to learning without changing the learning outcomes/standards. Examples may include extended time, visual supports, preferential seating, assistive technology, chunking tasks, or alternative ways to demonstrate understanding.

**Modification:** Adjustments that change the learning outcomes/standards or expectations. Modifications may be used when appropriate and are documented through a formal plan (e.g., an ILP) with clear review dates.

TIS aims to use accommodations and differentiation as the first approach. Modifications are used only when appropriate, agreed, and documented.

### **Inclusion in Practice: Identification and Support Pathway**

TIS uses a structured process to identify student needs early and provide timely support.

1. **Concern raised and documented (Tier 1):** Teacher identifies concern using classroom data and observations. Initial strategies are implemented in the classroom, and progress is monitored.
2. **Consultation (Tier 1 → Tier 2 decision point):** Teacher consults with Homeroom and Student Support Lead (e.g., Kid Chat / case consultation). Parents/guardians are informed when concerns persist or when additional support is being considered.
3. **Targeted support (Tier 2):** Student receives time-bound targeted support (typically 6–8 weeks) with a simple plan, progress monitoring, and a review date.
4. **Intensive support (Tier 3):** If the student requires ongoing intensive support, Student Support coordinates deeper assessment, a more formal plan, and regular review cycles.
5. **ILP development (when appropriate):** When needs are sustained and significant, an ILP is developed collaboratively with parents/guardians, student (as appropriate), teachers, and Leadership. The ILP includes goals, strategies, responsibilities, and review dates.

### **Safeguarding and Student Protection**

If concerns indicate risk of harm (for example, abuse, neglect, self-harm, suicidal ideation, or serious safety risks), TIS will follow the school's safeguarding/child protection procedures. These concerns are addressed as safeguarding matters first, alongside any learning support that may be needed.

TIS Inclusion Policy was reviewed by Student Support Lead and Senior Leadership, February 2026

# Appendix I

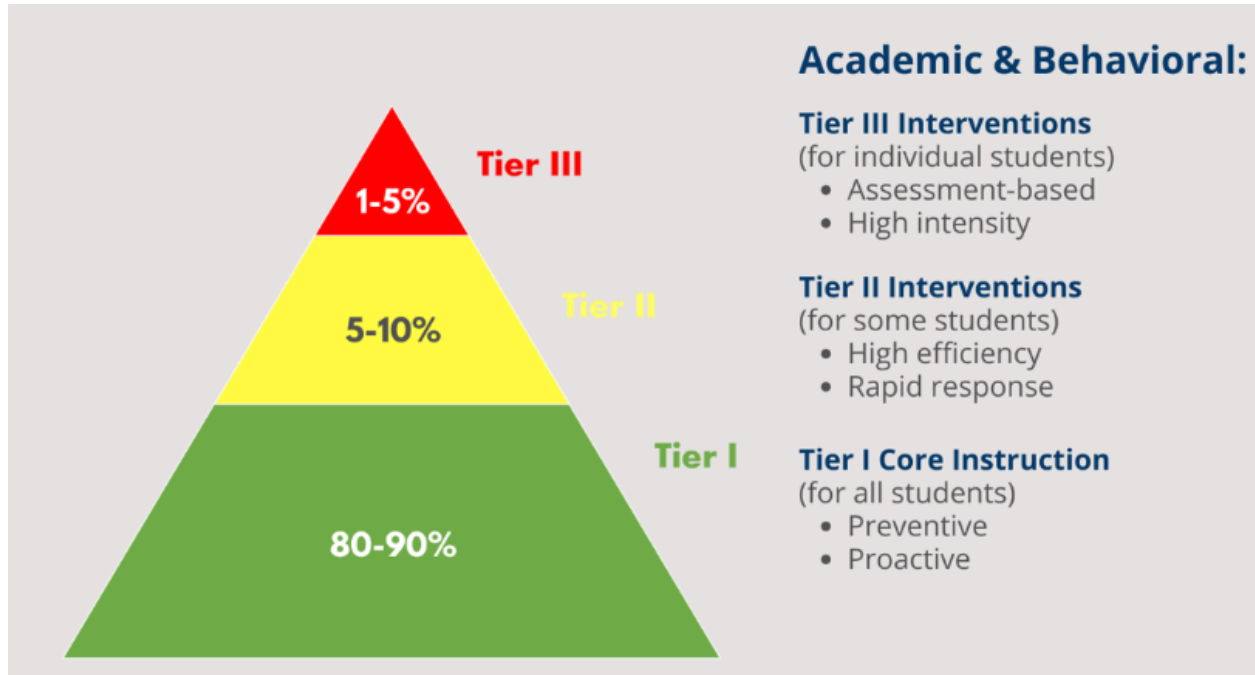


Image: [Bloom Township High School District](#)

## Tier 1- Classroom Support

- Tier 1 is the foundation of the MTSS Framework and is for all students. It is also called "core instruction"
- The primary goal of MTSS Tier 1 supports is to prevent the occurrence of learning and behavioural difficulties by providing high-quality instruction and support to all students. These interventions are designed to be proactive and inclusive, creating a solid foundation for the overall success of the students.
- All students are given the same access to academic, behavioural and social emotional supports
- Data from screening and progress monitoring is used to differentiate instruction within Tier 1
- All students must have equitable access to core instruction that addresses grade-level expectations for learning
- Strong universal support means fewer students will require the extra help
- Includes regular Social Emotional Learning (SEL) classes
- Tier 1 review trigger: If concerns persist after documented Tier 1 strategies over a reasonable period, consult Student Support and consider Tier 2.

## Tier 2- Specialised Instruction

- Tier 2 is for some students.
- It is short-term (typically 6-8 weeks), targeted intervention in addition to Tier 1 instruction. It is provided to individuals who are not responding to Tier 1 or who are not reaching specific benchmarks.
- It is important to note that once a student reaches Tier 2, parents are notified. The purpose of the intervention and the progress monitoring is shared with the parents.
- Examples could include small group or individual social skills pull-outs, extra learning time, increased pre-instruction, etc.
- Tier 2 review trigger: After 6–8 weeks, review data with parents/guardians. If limited progress, consider Tier 3 and/or further evaluation.

### Tier 3- Individualised Interventions

- Tier 3 is for a few students and is reserved for those who have the highest level of need.
- It is intensive and highly individualised. It is the last step in flexible intervention before a formal referral to a learning specialist or counselor or a request for an external evaluation is made. Students may receive Tier 3 intervention for a limited time and then are referred for evaluation or they may enter more formalised support after a round of Tier 3 intervention without a request for intervention.
- Students who already have an evaluation and identified need might receive Tier 3 intervention for an extended period of time as outlined in their ILP.
- Tier 3 review trigger: Establish review dates and clarify when external assessment or referrals are recommended.