I. Purpose, Mission and Vision

Purpose
The Cholla High Magnet School IB Diploma Programme Exceptional Education (Special Education Needs) Policy is written for teachers, parents, administrators and other stakeholders of the learning community. This policy is a fluid document that reflects our school’s special education needs developed by a committee of teachers and administrators. This policy applies to the Diploma Programme (DP) at Cholla High Magnet School. It is directly linked to the International Baccalaureate Organization’s (IBO) and to our vision and mission statement, as well as our assessment, academic honesty, and language policies.

Mission
Our Commitment as Cholla Chargers is to:
- Take risks in learning and respect the learning of others
- Practice persistence
- Demonstrate responsibility
- Embrace international-mindedness
- Build leadership in ourselves and others

Vision
Charging Fearlessly Toward Academic and Personal Excellence

PHILOSOPHY: What are our beliefs?
We believe that all students should be given an opportunity to participate in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme courses. To this extent, we provide an open access Diploma Programme.

We believe in providing the least restrictive environment possible to ensure equitable access to curriculum, while protecting their academic and social needs.

We focus on the whole child, regardless of exceptional education status, and as a result, we encourage our teachers to use classroom practices that meet the individual needs of the students. We believe that diversity is a positive resource with regard to what it means to be internationally-minded and interculturally aware. We practice being tolerant, open-minded, and empathetic by focusing on the strengths of our students.

We believe that examining factors that affect student learning play a crucial role in determining how to best respond to meet a student’s needs. We, therefore, do our best to match a student’s needs to certain teaching strategies (differentiation), and use a variety of technology/resources to assist students with their learning.
II. Exceptional Education (Special Education) Students
Our community of exceptional education students includes; but are not limited to:
- Exceptional education students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- English language learners who have a barrier in the language of instruction
- Student with medical or health issues which require a 504 plan

III. Program Goals
- To provide all students access to the curriculum
- To use creative, differentiated, student-centered teaching methods
- To cultivate a compassionate and caring community
- To create and maintain a safe learning environment
- To guide each student to reach their full potential
- To support our students in the IB learner profile traits
- To instill international mindedness
- To clearly communicate with parents/guardians/families about student progress
- To clearly communicate ongoing student needs with all service providers

IV. Inclusion
We believe in the least restrictive environment for all students. To support that belief, our IB Diploma Programme is a full inclusion model.

To support exceptional education students within their IB Diploma courses:
- Teachers and staff focus on the individual needs of the students
- Accommodations and/or modifications specified in the student’s IEP or 504 are followed
- Exceptional education students are enrolled in an Academic Core class for additional support in their academic courses
- Frequent communication between the student’s Case Manager (charged with maintaining all paperwork associated with IEP) and the IB Coordinator
- Frequent communication between the Exceptional Education Department Head and the IB Coordinator
- Frequent communication about student progress between IB Coordinator and IB teachers
- When appropriate and/or designated in the student’s IEP or 504, a Teaching Assistant assigned to help with the student’s needs
- All Diploma teachers offer tutoring support during office hours or by appointment
- Reference to and utilization of Candidates with Special Assessment Needs to provide support
- IB Coordinator will submit appropriate IB accommodations form and necessary documentation as needed and required
- Professional Development for all faculty and staff conducted by Exceptional Education Department Head and teachers regarding accommodations
V. Differentiation
Differentiating curriculum is beneficial to all students and the various learning styles within a classroom. Teachers differentiate through the following, but not limited to:

- Providing a variety of ways for students to learn
- Providing a variety of ways for students to demonstrate their knowledge
- Collaborating with other teachers (colleagues within the same content) in Professional Learning Communities to discuss and reflect on best practices
- Professional Development provided to develop student-centered learning through differentiation and choices, incorporating the Four Principles of Good Practice as detailed in the *Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes* publication

VI. Resources
IB Publication: *Special Educational Needs within the International Baccalaureate Programmes*. (August 2010)

IB Publication: *Candidates with Special Assessment Needs* (March 2007)

Student identification, IEP and 504 revision, and available student services are outlined in school wide and district Exceptional Education policies.