



School of the Nations  
Escola das Nações

# Inclusion Policy

## 1. Introduction

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*“Inclusion is an ongoing process that aims to increase access and engagement in learning for all students by identifying and removing barriers. This can only be successfully achieved in a culture of collaboration, mutual respect, support and problem solving. Inclusion is the learner profile in action, an outcome of dynamic learning communities.”*

*(The IB guide to inclusive education: a resource for whole school development)*

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School of the Nations is committed to fostering an inclusive, equitable, and diverse learning environment that respects the culture, backgrounds, and identities of all students, staff, and stakeholders.

We recognize the vital role inclusion plays in promoting intercultural understanding, inquiry, equality, diversity, social integration, and academic achievement. Our Inclusion Policy underscores our belief that inclusion is pivotal to the learning process, which is inherently social and embraces diverse cultural backgrounds, the co-creation of meaning, and communication through multiple means.

This policy is an integral part of a set of policies and is a living document reviewed annually.

This Inclusion Policy was developed with the collaboration of a steering committee composed of the section counselors, section learning support lead, academic and executive directors, the data coordinator, IB coordinators, section principals, and lead teachers.

## 2. Brazilian Law

School of the Nations complies with The Brazilian Inclusion Law (LBI), also called the Statute of Persons with Disabilities—[Law 13.146, of July 6, 2015](#)—instituted to ensure and promote, under equal conditions, the exercise of fundamental rights and freedoms of people with disabilities, aiming to safeguard and enrich their social inclusion and citizenship.

Our School also complies with the standards and criteria for promoting accessibility for people with disabilities or reduced mobility established by [Law 10.098 of December 19, 2000](#).

## 3. Vision and Mission

### 3.1 Vision

School of the Nations strives to be exemplary among Brazilian and international schools for its commitment to world citizenship and for helping young people develop outstanding academic, ethical, and spiritual qualities and a clear understanding of their roles in building a better world.

### 3.2 Mission

School of the Nations educates students to be world citizens based on standards of academic, bilingual, and ethical excellence to develop their capacities to know, love, and serve humankind.

## 4. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)

### 4.1 Unity in Diversity in the Pursuit of Justice

We educate world citizens to know, love, and serve humankind by making significant contributions to address the needs of the age in which we live to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. Understanding the principle of the oneness of humanity, we believe everyone must have the opportunity to develop their full potential and nourish a diverse community of courageous individuals that includes all in the journey toward a more just world. Seeking to understand and value the experiences and perspectives of all without distinction, we proactively model the intellectual, moral, and spiritual values that inspire our School.

### 4.2 Non-Discrimination Policy

At Nations, we commit to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment that values and respects the unique contributions of every individual. We promote equality of opportunity and strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and bias in our practices. This policy outlines our commitment to treating all fairly and serves as a guide for all community members.

#### 4.2.1 Commitment to Equal Treatment

We welcome everyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic characteristic, or any other characteristic protected by applicable laws.

All School decisions, including hiring, retention, and promotion, are based solely on an individual's qualifications, performance, skills, and merits relevant to the job requirements.

#### 4.2.2 Prohibition of Discrimination

We prohibit any form of discrimination, harassment, or victimization at school. This includes but is not limited to discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Discrimination can take many forms, such as unequal treatment, derogatory remarks, offensive jokes, exclusion from opportunities, or any action that creates a hostile or intimidating environment.

#### 4.2.3 Responsibility and Accountability

All staff members, including managers and supervisors, are responsible for upholding this policy and promoting a respectful, inclusive school environment.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment, depending on the severity and frequency of the offense.

## 5. Learning Support Services

School of the Nations has a Learning Support Counselor in each section to provide the pedagogical staff with strategies and support to address the needs of all students.

The School employs an inclusion model of education in which teachers (and assistants in Early Childhood and Elementary) provide all support in the classroom. We also use Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices and the Response to Intervention (RTI) approach to increase access and engagement and remove barriers to learning.

When a potential need for additional support is identified, the Learning Support Lead works with teachers to decide on the next steps. After consultations and, if needed, external evaluations, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is devised. The School provides students with tier one and tier two interventions. Students who require more intensive individualized support, such as tier three, must receive these support services from external professionals hired by the family outside school hours.

The Learning Support Lead collaborates with external professionals, families, and the educational team to support students. While the School values input from external experts, it preserves its autonomy to decide about classroom accommodations, in alignment with the Brazilian Law of Inclusion of Students with Disabilities.

## 6. Counselors

### 6.1 Social-Emotional Services

Our School's counselors are vital in supporting students and providing individual or group sessions to assess and advise on academic and social development. They collaborate with teachers, parents, and specialists to understand students' strengths, challenges, and needs.

Counselors focus on addressing students' social, emotional, and behavioral development to increase access and engagement and remove barriers to learning by teaching age-appropriate strategies and life

skills. They also help safeguard students' well-being by implementing and promoting child protection measures.

Collaboration is a fundamental aspect of their work. Counselors partner with parents, teachers, administrators, and medical professionals to create and implement strategies for student success. In the Early Childhood and Elementary Sections, they use Class meetings, while in Middle and High School, they employ the Advisory Program to discuss and apply social-emotional content. The Counseling team follows guidelines based on The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework and meets regularly to ensure consistent practices.

## 7. Inclusion Practices

Our inclusion practices aim to support the development of individuals in an environment where all feel safe, respected, and a sense of belonging. Our practices promote the appreciation of diverse cultures and contribute positively to an interconnected world.

### 7.1 New Student and New Family Inclusion Practices

Inclusion of new students and their families is crucial for a diverse and welcoming educational setting. Inclusion is about valuing every student and family and creating a supportive community. Effective inclusion leads to students thriving academically and socially and requires resources, empathy, and understanding. Our practices include orientation, mentorship, and diverse teaching methods. Successful inclusion benefits the entire educational community by encouraging diversity and fostering a sense of belonging.

Transitioning to a new educational setting is significant for students and their families. To ensure every new student feels welcome, we have a buddy system through which new students are paired with another student who acts as their friendly guide. This 'buddy' helps the new student connect with peers and teachers, making their introduction to the School easier and more enjoyable. Beyond this, we continually engage with new students and their families, addressing concerns and validating their experiences, ensuring they become integral parts of our school community.

Equally important is our dedication to ensuring the families of our new students feel a deep sense of belonging. Upon joining our community, new families are warmly welcomed by our administrative team, including the principal and counselors. We host a special breakfast for new families to meet school leadership and other parents. Moreover, parent collaborators are assigned to each class to help new families settle into our school community. Through consistent check-ins and our distinct Parent Academy and Parent Choir initiatives, we emphasize the importance of every family, ensuring they feel valued, supported, and deeply integrated.

### 7.3. New Staff Inclusion Practices

School of the Nations is dedicated to fostering a positive and inclusive work environment for all employees, including both national and international teachers and staff. As part of our commitment, we have established procedures and practices to welcome and integrate new hires into our school community

seamlessly. We provide orientation sessions, team-building activities, and regular check-ins with direct superiors and teammates to ensure every new hire feels supported and connected to Nations.

## 7.4 Inclusion in the Classroom

Our inclusion practices aim to support the development of all learners in an environment where they feel safe, respected, and have a sense of belonging by increasing access and engagement and removing barriers to learning. Through differentiation, we promote learning while developing an appreciation of diverse cultures and positively contributing to an interconnected world.

### 7.4.1 Differentiation

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*“Differentiated instruction is a method of designing and delivering instruction to best reach each student.”—Carol Tomlinson*

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Differentiation is an essential component of effective teaching and learning. By providing students with multiple ways to learn and demonstrate their understanding, teachers can help all students reach their full potential. It recognizes that students learn differently and have diverse needs, and it provides teachers with a variety of strategies to meet those needs.

At School of the Nations, teachers differentiate using UDL strategies by providing multiple means of engagement, representation, action, and expression. Common practices include scaffolding lessons and assessments for students when needed, providing extended time and more breaks, and assessing students through different means.

Teachers also take a student-centric approach by tailoring activities to meet individual needs, interests, strengths, and challenges. They may create more complex projects for some students while providing extra support or scaffolding exercises for others.

The School offers Achieve and Excel sessions, Study Halls, and After School enrichment programs to provide extra support or further challenge students in Early Childhood through High School. These clubs offer unique opportunities for students to explore their interests and talents beyond the classroom.

In High School, we offer a variety of advanced courses, including the Advanced Placement Program of the College Board, designed to challenge students with rigorous content. These courses are accessible to all high school students, regardless of prior performance, to allow them to experience a college preparatory curriculum.

As stated in the Assessment Policy, in cases involving students with diagnosed special education needs, our teachers collaborate closely with counselors, learning support specialists, and other professionals to determine the most effective strategies for the student. These strategies are described in the student's IEP.

In cases involving English or Portuguese language learners, the School offers programs designed specifically for students who need additional instructional support in acquiring basic language skills, as stated in the Language Policy.

## 8. Intercultural Understanding

At our School, we embrace the concept of “Unity in Diversity,” emphasizing the interconnectedness of humanity. Students are encouraged to practice respect, appreciation, and communication with peers from diverse cultural backgrounds daily, fostering a conducive and inclusive learning environment.

We are committed to combating prejudice and discrimination by teaching values, the importance of diversity, the positive impact diverse cultures have on society, and social-emotional classes that promote healthy relationships among our students. Members of our community can also reach out to the proper personnel—counselors, Learning Support Lead, or section principals—to receive adequate support regarding any issue related to human conflict or obstacles to social progress and peace.

Our dedication to celebrating our international community’s rich diversity is evident in our annual events. The Nations Festival engages students from Nursery to Grade 12, each grade representing a country. Through interdisciplinary studies, students learn about the culture, art, history, and unique aspects of the countries they represent. Beyond this, we celebrate diverse cultures with events such as the Festival of Lights, Meeting of Two Worlds, and *Festa Junina*, among others. These events emphasize and nurture understanding, unity, and the rich tapestry of diversity within our school community and beyond.

## 9. Professional Development for Teachers and Staff

By investing in our staff and promoting a culture of continuous development, diversity, and inclusion, we create a school community where all students understand the importance of continuous growth and where they can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

The School offers recurrent training opportunities for all staff members through two pedagogical weeks every school year, several half-days designated for professional development, and individual, customized professional development opportunities whenever possible. Members of the pedagogical team are also invited to share their knowledge and experience by offering lectures and workshops to parents and staff. Specific training is provided according to the needs of the staffing or section.

Teachers and support staff receive professional development workshops on strategies to meet special educational needs in the classroom provided by the learning support and counseling team or external consultants. All teachers meet regularly to collaborate on curriculum and assessment, to reflect on student learning, and to plan for differentiation.

## 10. Assessment

We assess and evaluate students through a variety of methods, including formative and summative assessments, observations, and student self-assessments. We use assessment data to inform instruction and evaluate our language programs. We also use assessment data to identify students who may need additional support.

## 10.1 Accommodations

Accommodations and inclusive access arrangements are introduced to teaching, learning, and assessment to remove or reduce barriers. They may be applied when certain conditions, such as long-term learning support requirements, temporary medical conditions, or additional language learning, may prevent students from demonstrating their level of attainment.

Accommodations are offered to students as part of everyday learning and teaching; this means they are used during classroom instruction, classwork, and related activities and tests. These arrangements are also continuously monitored to ensure they remain the optimal support for that student. Separate classrooms, adapted assessments, a reader in tests and assessments, extended time or deadlines, the use of technological aids (speech-to-text, text-to-speech), or the use of calculators are some examples of accommodations offered at our School.

To be eligible for accommodations, students must have at least one of the following documents: a psychological report, a psycho-educational report, a medical report, or educational evidence from the teacher or school. Educational evidence can include letters from teachers who taught the student, 360 review reports, samples of tests and assignments showing that the request is necessary, or an IEP.

Families are responsible for informing the School of medical evaluation reports, new documentation with suggested strategies for the school environment, or updated reports that affect the students' everyday learning. The documents must be signed and dated and provide the professional's credentials.

For students to receive the necessary accommodations in standardized tests, students and parents must follow the specific procedures of the organization responsible for the examinations (for example, those of the College Board). In cases where the School is responsible for requesting accommodation in the student's name, the parent must authorize such requests in writing and provide any additional documents, as necessary.

## 10.2 Access for IB Diploma Program Exams

The Diploma Programme (DP) has well-established support mechanisms for assessment access requirements, as outlined in the publication *Candidates with Assessment Access Requirements* (2014).

DP coordinators are responsible for submitting requests for inclusive access arrangements. All teachers must read and understand the IB's *Access and Inclusion Policy* to ensure they meet their students' access requirements from the beginning of their studies.

Students with inclusive access requirements for DP exams must have one of the documents specified in the previous item (9.1 – third paragraph) translated to English for the DP coordinator to request IB's authorization for the necessary arrangements.

## 11. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually. The next scheduled review will take place in **August 2024**. It will include the academic and executive directors, the data coordinator, IB coordinators, section principals, the admissions officer, and lead teachers. All School policies will be communicated to the school community through the School's website and the Student-Parent Handbook.