



**The Bay
Academy**

Policy No.: TBA017

LEARNER SUPPORT POLICY

1. Purpose

To ensure every learner has equitable access to quality teaching and assessment through early identification, coordinated support, and where necessary district-level intervention, as set out in SIAS (2014). The policy gives staff clear steps, forms, timelines, and review duties so support is consistent and auditable.

Aims:

- Implement SIAS as a whole-school process (screening → identification → assessment → support).
- Bring support to the learner rather than move the learner away from their school context.
- Coordinate internal support before external referral; escalate with evidence.
- Protect learner dignity, privacy, and rights across all decisions (POPIA, Children's Act).

2. Legislative & Policy Framework

- Constitution (1996); South African Schools Act (1996); Education White Paper 6 (2001)
- Children's Act (2005); POPIA (2013); PAIA (2000); Employment of Educators Act (1998)
- Integrated School Health Programme (ISHP); CSTL Framework
- SIAS (2014) — binding procedures and annexures.

3. Definitions

- Barriers to learning: Any factor (contextual, systemic, health, psycho-social, linguistic) that limits participation.
- SBST: In-school structure coordinating learner and teacher support.
- DBST: District multi-disciplinary team providing specialist/external support.
- SNA1–SNA3: Support Needs Assessment forms tracking learners through SIAS stages.
- ISP: Individual Support Plan (functions as an Individual Education & Development Plan — IEDP).

Note: The ISP fulfills the role of an Individual Education and Development Plan (IEDP) as required by UMALUSI, outlining learner-specific goals, strategies, accommodations, and review procedures.

4. Principles & Values

- Best interest of the learner; early identification; inclusion; collaboration; confidentiality; evidence & review.
- Teachers differentiate routinely; SBST reviews at least once per term; all actions documented and time-bound.

5. Levels & Nature of Support

Universal Supports (Whole-School Level)

Every learner benefits from inclusive teaching and universal design practices, including:

- Clear lesson objectives and success criteria.
- Visual organisers, bilingual/multilingual glossaries, and structured study-skills lessons.
- Access to digital learning platforms and assistive technologies.
- Predictable classroom routines, peer mentoring, and wellbeing initiatives.
- Regular formative feedback and teacher office hours for academic catch-up.

Level 1 – Classroom (Teacher-Led)

Differentiated goals, scaffolded language, visual aids, extra time, alternative response modes; short-term catch-up; positive behaviour supports; parent contact.

Level 2 – School-Based (SBST-Led)

SNA2 meeting; ISP/IEDP with measurable targets; small-group remediation; school counselling/mentoring; assistive tools available on site; termly review.

Level 3 – District/External (DBST-Led)

SNA3 referral for high-level support (specialist assessments, assistive devices, staff training, or placement/resource decisions).

Short-Cycle Progress Reviews

For targeted small-group or individualised interventions, progress is reviewed every two weeks through mini-assessments, teacher check-ins, or therapy notes. Where limited progress persists, the SBST may consider timetable adjustments, alternative pathways, or external referrals.

6. SBST Composition

- SBST Coordinator (Chair)
- Principal
- Academic Head
- Head: Student Affairs
- Head: Discipline
- Teachers (case managers)
- Ad-hoc: Parents, learner, DBST, therapists, NGOs.

7. Roles & Responsibilities

Teachers:

Screen, implement Level-1 supports, submit SNA1 within 10 school days.

SBST Coordinator:

Convene meetings (twice per term), guide SNA1/2/3, manage register, coordinate counselling, ensure secure records.

Principal/SMT:

Oversight, time allocation, policy enforcement, budget integration.

Parents/Caregivers:

Provide consent and collaborate on strategies.

Learners:

Participate in goal-setting and feedback.

DBST:

Review SNA3, allocate resources, mentor staff.

8. SBST Core Functions

1. Identification & screening.
2. Assessment coordination (SNA1→SNA2→SNA3).
3. Intervention planning and review.
4. Counselling coordination.
5. Teacher support and mentoring.
6. Records & POPIA compliance.
7. Monitoring and reporting.

9. The SIAS Process

Step 1: Screening – Learner Profile (Teacher)

Collect admission data, ISHP reports, parent input, and previous records.

Baseline & Admission Screening

At admission and during Term 1, learners complete literacy/numeracy baselines and a writing sample. Teachers track progress via formative assessments and class records. Persistent concerns trigger SNA1 with supporting evidence (work samples, observation notes, attendance data). Parental consent is obtained before any external referral. Reviews occur at least once per term.

Step 2: Identification – SNA1 (Teacher)

Record barrier(s), attempted supports, outcomes, parent contact. Submit to SBST.

Step 3: School-Based Support – SNA2 (SBST)

Meet with teacher, parent, and learner; review SNA1; create ISP/IEDP; set termly review date.

Step 4: District/External Support – SNA3 (DBST)

Used for specialist evaluations, high-level resources, or placements.

Timelines:

- SNA1 to SBST: within 10 school days of concern.
- SBST meeting: within 2 weeks of SNA1 receipt.
- Reviews: minimum once per term.

10. Counselling & Psychosocial Support

Intake via teacher/parent/self-referral; logged in SBST Register. External referrals require consent. Crisis cases trigger Child Protection Protocol.

11. Curriculum Access, Assessment & Concessions

Teachers provide curriculum differentiation, reasonable accommodations, and apply for formal concessions via DBST as per SIAS annexures.

12. Health, ISHP & Assistive Technology

Align health screenings to ISHP; manage assistive device assessments through DBE–DoH procedures; maintain inventory and training logs.

13. Collaboration & CSTL Partnerships

Maintain a database of DBST, DoH, DSD, NGOs, HEIs, and link learner needs to CSTL areas. Written consent required for all external participation.

14. Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation

SBST meets twice per term; keeps central register; submits term reports to SMT.

Programme Evaluation Indicators:

- Attendance and behavioural data
- Academic progress
- ISP/IEDP goal attainment
- Parent and learner engagement
- Uptake and impact of support services

Findings guide staffing, timetable, and resource decisions. An annual SBST Impact Summary is produced in Term 4.

15. Appeals

Parents may appeal SBST decisions to the Principal within 3 weeks. Principal reviews within 10 school days; unresolved cases escalate to DBST.

All SBST records are confidential, stored securely, and accessed only on a need-to-know basis. Files retained for 5 years post-exit.

16. Implementation, Induction & Review

Binding on all staff. Annual induction covers SIAS steps and consent processes. Reviewed annually and signed off by SMT.

17. Monitoring Effectiveness of Guidance on Subject Choices and Changes

SBST, Academic Head, and Student Affairs monitor subject guidance effectiveness.

Pre-Selection: Learners complete aptitude and interest activities.

Selection & Guidance: Sessions logged with recommendations and risks.

Post-Selection: Track subject changes and outcomes.

Evaluation: Annual Subject Choice Effectiveness Report analyses patterns, pass rates, and satisfaction feedback for SMT.

Required Evidence Table & Meeting Cadence

- Screening: Learner Profile with baseline and ISHP reports.
- Identification: SNA1 + evidence.
- School-Based Support: SNA2 + ISP/IEDP.
- District Support: SNA3.

Meetings: Week 3–4 (Review 1), Week 8–9 (Review 2 + SMT Report), and Term 4 (Annual Policy Review).

POLICY TRACKING AND REVIEW RECORD

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