



## **What is International Baccalaureate?**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a two year course of study in the junior and senior years of high school which prepares students for the demands of college. The program was founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1924 to establish a common curriculum for students attending international schools around the world. The vision at the time and today is that "a shared academic experience emphasizing critical thinking and exposure to a variety of points of view would encourage intercultural understanding." The International Baccalaureate Organization is a foundation supported in part by UNESCO, the Twentieth Century Fund, and the Ford Foundation. As of July 2010, the International Baccalaureate was established in 2,756 schools in 138 countries. Fourteen schools in Minnesota offer the IB courses.

## **What Courses are required in the IB program?**

Students in Grand Rapids High School may choose classes from six subject areas: English, Foreign Language, Individuals and Societies (social studies), Experimental Sciences, Mathematics, and Arts and Electives.

## **What courses are part of IB at Grand Rapids High School?**

IB English 11 and 12, Spanish, German, Economics, History, Chemistry, Physics, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Biology, Studio Art and Business & Management. These courses are clearly identified in the GRHS Curriculum Guide.

## **Is college credit given for IB classes?**

Depending upon the type of exam and the score, a student may receive credit at most colleges and universities not only in the United States but also internationally.

## **Are there courses to prepare for the IB curriculum for junior and senior years?**

Yes, Pre IB English 9 and 10 and Pre IB American History. Students must also be enrolled in a World Language and Geography in 9th grade.

## **When do students take exams?**

Exams are given in May of the senior year. Some students may be ready to test in a Foreign Language, Studio Art, Biology or Pre-Calculus in May of their junior year. Students are also required to complete essays, lab reports, portfolios, and oral exams as part of the course work. These varied assessments give students the opportunity to show their strengths over a period of time. Assessments are often graded by teachers who teach the IB program in other countries.

## **How much does it cost to take an exam?**

Exams are \$25, with a maximum payment of \$75. The cost is subsidized by School District 318 and the Minnesota Department of Education. Funds are available for students who do not have the financial resources. The fee is quite reasonable considering what a student may save in costs for college credits. In addition, Diploma Candidate exam fees are waived.

## **What is an IB Diploma?**

The heart of IB is the diploma program. Diploma students successfully complete exams in all six subject areas, enroll in Theory of Knowledge (a class which ties together all subject areas),

write an extended essay, and complete a Creativity, Action, and Service component (CAS). Diploma students meet monthly with the IB and CAS coordinators and work with a faculty member on an essay that is the result of a research project.

### **What are the advantages of the Diploma?**

Diploma candidates have distinguished themselves. The IB diploma opens doors to colleges and scholarship opportunities. Depending upon the college, students may accelerate to a higher level their freshman year. The diploma is also excellent preparation for college.

### **How should Middle School students prepare for the Diploma?**

Students at Grand Rapids Middle School should be enrolled in Algebra 1 in eighth grade and register for a first year language in ninth grade. In addition, graduation requirements such as Physical Education, Health, and Money Matters should be taken in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **How will a student know if a college accepts IB credits?**

IB Teachers all have a booklet of Minnesota schools' IB credit policies. A student may also check with the IB coordinator or a counselor and also log on to the IBO website at [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).