

IB FAQ's

Why should a student earn an IB Diploma?

An IB Diploma is an internationally recognized symbol of educational quality. Colleges and universities know that IB Diploma students have taken a balanced liberal arts curriculum and are fully prepared for the challenges of college life. The IB Diploma students are given extra support by the IB teachers and coordinator, work in a cohort in Theory of Knowledge, and write an extended essay. Hutch High diploma graduates frequently report that they felt more prepared for college than their peers.

What is the "Extended Essay"?

The Extended Essay is a 4,000 word piece of original research conducted by each IB Diploma candidate. It is completed between second trimester of junior year and second trimester of senior year. The student researches and writes on a topic of his/her choosing, and has an Extended Essay Advisor, as well as a Faculty Coach to help with the essay.

What is "Theory of Knowledge"?

Theory of Knowledge, or TOK, is a seminar-type course that explores the links between subject areas (courses). It is a critical thinking course that encourages students to examine their educational choices and training. It is taken the third trimester of the junior year and first trimester senior year. An essay is submitted to the IB as part of the core requirements.

What is "CAS"?

CAS stands for Creativity-Action-Service. In order to successfully complete the IB Diploma Program, each student must document extra-curricular activities that are evenly split among creative, action, and service oriented endeavors. Eight benchmarks must be met and reflections on each must be written.

What grade are IB students in?

The IB program is for juniors and seniors.

What are grades 9 and 10 doing to prepare students for the IB?

The district's 9-12 honors curriculum is good preparation for motivated, responsible students to participate in the IB Program. Some IB classes do have prerequisites. Check the student handbook or with the IB coordinator. Taking Spanish I and II is the best option to be successful in the world language component for the diploma.

What sort of student should be interested in IB? What skills are useful or necessary to an IB Diploma candidate?

Good attendance and work habits

A broad interest in all countries, cultures, beliefs and customs

A willingness to participate in discussion and to work responsibly with others

A broad range of interests beyond the classroom

Motivation and self-discipline

The ability to self-advocate

Will a candidate receive a Hutch High diploma as well as an IB Diploma if s/he earns it?

Yes. Students will receive a Hutchinson High diploma and an IB Diploma if successful with the exams.

What is the difference between AP and IB?

One big difference between AP & IB is the way students are assessed. AP tests are given in May and students are assigned a grade based on a single test performance. IB students must be enrolled in an IB course. Assessment is based on a combination of the teacher's assessment of in-class performance, tests given in May and, often, a student submitted portfolio/example of work.

I've heard of AP, but not IB. Why?

Advanced Placement was started in the United States in 1956 by the non-profit College Board. International Baccalaureate was founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968 as a non-profit educational foundation. As the world has become more global, International Baccalaureate's popularity has increased. Most colleges in the United States now recognize IB courses. If a college you are interested in attending does not have an IB credit policy, contact the HHS IB coordinator who will work with that school to see if a policy cannot be implemented.

I want to take advantage of an off-campus program the district offers. Will that fit with IB?

The IBO requires that students complete all of the coursework for their IB classes on campus, under the instruction and guidance of Hutchinson Public IB teachers who have been IB trained. The curriculum requirements for an IB Diploma usually mean students do not have enough time to participate in off-campus options such as co-op. Taking a class at HCC might also be out of possibility.

Which colleges and universities recognize IB, particularly here in Michigan?

IB recognition varies widely among universities. It is always best to talk with an admissions officer because most universities are constantly updating their credit recognition standards. IB maintains a website with links to some college policies. Find it at: <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/directory/index.cfm>

What are the due dates for the Extended Essay, the IB exams and completion of the CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) component of the Diploma Program?

Exact dates for the completion of these elements of the program vary from year to year. At HHS, CAS is begun in the summer following 10th grade and completed in April of the 12th grade. Students complete a first draft of the Extended Essay during the second trimester of the senior year and complete the essay by the end of the second trimester of 12th grade. IB exams are given in May of each year.

Who grades my student's exams and papers? How do I know that the IB graders are qualified to do so if they are not teachers I know personally?

A team of over 3000 IB examiners worldwide grade IB papers, assessments, and final exams. All of them are experienced IB instructors, trained in writing IB curriculum and assessments, and have ongoing training under the direction of a Chief Examiner for each subject area. In addition, our instructors grade some the papers and other internal assessments. These are then sent to IB Offices in Europe for feedback and a second evaluation by the IBO to verify that the instructor has adhered to IBO standards in grading the papers.

The IB Program sounds like a lot off extra work. What are the advantages of enrolling in the IB Program?

Students with IB Diplomas, who now attend universities, report that their involvement with IB has given them the tools needed to succeed at university and to make the most of their post-secondary education. In particular, students comment on their sense of preparedness, their self-confidence, their research skills, their ability to manage their time, and their willingness to be actively engaged in their own learning. Even more importantly, they have developed a sense of the world around them, the irresponsibility to it, and the skills with which to embrace the complexities of life. The IBO often employs a variety of phrases to describe these traits and abilities: "learning how to learn", "life-long learners", "critical and compassionate thinkers", and "informed participants in local and world affairs".

I have more questions about Hutch High's IB Program. Who can help me?

Contact Todd Ray, Hutch High's IB Coordinator at 620.615.4153 or by e-mail: rayt@usd308.com

IB Myths

Myth: *IB is only for students who have lived or plan to live in another country.*

Fact: **IB is for any student regardless of past cultural experiences or future plans.**

Myth: *IB is only for the very brightest of students who are in the top 10% of their class.*

Fact: **As stated above, any student who has the prerequisites and a desire to commit herself/himself to the program may pursue an IB Diploma or individual courses. Several HHS students who have earned the IB Diploma were not in the top of their class. While the IB Diploma Program is academically challenging, there is ample research to demonstrate that students with a wide range of ability can and do benefit.**

Myth: *The IB is an elite club that does not impact many students.*

Fact: **The IB is committed to making high quality education available to as many students as possible and aims to attract one million students by 2014.**

Myth: *Students who pursue an IB Diploma do so because they have plans to attend Ivy League or very competitive universities, or they wish to study abroad.*

Fact: **While some IB Diploma students do have these plans, most attend in-state public colleges or universities, and a few have begun their education at Hutchinson Community College or others.**

Myth: *IB does not help students earn as much college credit as AP (Advanced Placement).*

Fact: **While this may have been true in years past, it is no longer the case. As IB has grown in Kansas, so too has college recognition. We always recommend that students and parents consult a particular university's IB recognition policy and/or speak directly to an**

admissions representative. The HHS IB Coordinator is willing to help educate a university if it does not have an IB policy.

Myth: *There is no value in pursuing IB course certificates if the chosen college or university does not recognize them.*

Fact: **Even if no credit is given, there is always inherent value in taking IB courses and completing the required assessments. Universities are becoming increasingly aware of the knowledge and skills IB students bring with them to college classes. In addition, HHS has had students receive credit for SL (standard level) classes even though the published recognition policy was to recognize only HL (higher level) courses.**

Myth: *IB is a European program and does not emphasize the cultural history and values of the United States.*

Fact: **While IB began in Europe, it draws on many cultural traditions. All IB subjects allow for a high degree of teacher choice so as to ensure that materials are relevant to students. By examining a variety of world perspectives, students are better able to understand their country's place in it.**