



DOBBS FERRY HIGH SCHOOL



IB WORLD SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Dobbs Ferry High School IB Handbook

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A Message from the IB Head of School & the IB Coordinator

In 1998, Dobbs Ferry High School became the first “IB World School” in Westchester, a distinction that is officially authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). At the time, the IBO was still relatively unknown as an academic organization, yet its concept of a uniform international curriculum was far ahead of its time. Today, the IBO is internationally regarded as an academic model, firmly rooted in its commitment to providing students with opportunities to develop the skills necessary to succeed in a globally interdependent world. The IB Diploma Program’s interdisciplinary approach is one that is widely viewed by colleges and universities around the world as a comprehensive approach to higher education preparation. The curriculum, authentic assessments, promotion of international mindedness, and thorough teacher training are among the many reasons why the IBO has become a desirable pursuit, and why it has attracted media attention all over the world.

All Dobbs Ferry students are IB students and all staff and students strive to model the IB Learner Profile. While all 11th and 12th graders take, at a minimum, IB English and IB math course, many other courses are available to them and some opt to pursue the IB Diploma.

The IB Diploma is a comprehensive, two-year course of study beginning in eleventh grade. The coursework is intellectually stimulating and leads to examinations on which students must demonstrate critical understanding of subject matter. Classes in ninth and tenth grades follow the Middle Years Program (MYP) philosophy and are designed to prepare students for success in the IB Diploma Programme. The learning experiences and skills that are emphasized in the earlier, MYP grades are in line with the rigors of our IB courses and the IB Learner Profile.

IB courses are open to all students. Students should consult their teachers, guidance counselors, and the IB Coordinator in order to make informed decisions. Colleges and universities are eager to attract IB Diploma students because they are recognized as being prepared to participate in college-level work, they have proven that they can do independent research and study, they have cultivated sound thinking and communication skills, they have engaged in extracurricular activities in addition to academic studies, and they are globally minded.

Please contact Jessica Swart (IB Coordinator) at swartj@dfsd.org or Dr. John Falino (IB Head of School) at falinoj@dfsd.org should you have any questions.



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

Definition of Terms and Abbreviations in the IB Diploma Program

CAS - Creativity Activity Service: CAS involves those learning experiences beyond the classroom in three categories- Creativity, Activity, and Service- in extracurricular activities during the course of two years.

Diploma Candidate – Student who is taking the full IB Program in junior and senior years and is also completing the CAS, EE, and TOK components. Upon satisfactory completion of the IB Diploma Program, an IB Diploma will be issued by IBO.

Diploma Course Candidate – Student who is taking one or more IB courses in Junior and/or Senior years. Diploma Course Candidates earn certificates for each IB Course they complete.

EE - Extended Essay: A 4,000-word independent research paper submitted by full Diploma Candidates during the senior year. Students formulate an argument, use research to support that argument and reach a conclusion.

HL - Higher Level: Designates a course that is 240 hours or 2 years in length: taken junior and senior years.

SL - Standard Level: Designates a course that is no less than 150 hours in length. All SL courses are offered over two years except for IB science courses and a section IB Mathematics Applications and Interpretations since they include double period classes every other day.

IA - Internal Assessment: Evaluative work (presentations, oral interviews, papers, etc.) that is assigned and scored by the IB teachers using IBO's scoring criteria. The IA is then externally moderated (scored) by external examiners.

IBO - International Baccalaureate Organization: IB Organization as a whole, which includes offices in Geneva, Switzerland, Maryland, Vancouver, Cardiff, and various regional offices. Visit the web site for more information: www.ibo.org

External Assessment: Work sent to examiners and moderators of the IB Organization to be evaluated. Work is sent to examiners in over 100 different countries. IB exams (known as papers) are graded this way.

TOK - Theory of Knowledge: A required course for Diploma Candidates but open to all students. Students explore the basis for knowledge.

ManageBac – ManageBac is a management software program used by both students and teachers to create and monitor activities throughout the IB programs.

MYP – Middle Years Program is the IB Program in place in Grades 6 through 10.

How to Participate in the IB Program at DFHS

There are two ways to participate in the Diploma Program at Dobbs Ferry High School. Students may either opt for the full IB Diploma Program or for individual IB DP courses. Each pathway is described below and should be discussed with a student's guidance counselor during guidance and schedule planning sessions.

The Diploma Program

Students who opt for the full IB Diploma course of study will

- Participate in and complete six IB courses
 - Three (or not more than four) Higher Level courses
 - Three (or two) Standard Level courses
- Complete Theory of Knowledge
- Submit an original Extended Essay which is an in-depth study of a topic chosen by the student and begun in junior year and supervised by a teacher mentor. The EE must be
 - Within a subject offered at DFHS
 - No more than 4,000 words
 - Involve an approximately 40-hour time commitment
- Complete a Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) plan including
 - Varied experience over two years
 - Reflections on CAS activities

Diploma students are assessed both through Internal Assessments and External Assessments in each of their IB courses. Each course is graded based on all assessments on a scale of 1 – 7 (except TOK). To earn the IB Diploma, students must receive at least 24 points and the three HL courses must total 12 or more points. Students may earn up to three extra points for their EE and TOK marks. Failure to complete the EE or TOK requirements or elementary scores (see page 13) in either of these assessments will lead to failure to earn the diploma.

Individual IB DP Courses

Students who complete one or more IB courses, but who do not complete the EE, CAS and TOK requirements are IB Course Candidates. All students at DFHS enroll in at least two IB DP courses (English and math), and most opt to enroll in at least one more.

Planning an IB Diploma at DFHS

Students who pursue an IB Diploma must complete courses in the six subject areas or groups. Students take one course (3- 4 HL and 2- 3 SL) in each subject group in addition to the core requirements of TOK, EE, and CAS.

A MINIMUM OF 24 TOTAL DIPLOMA POINTS DERIVED FROM SCORES IN...

Group 1 - English

Group 2 - Spanish, French or Italian

Group 3 - History

Group 4 - Biology, Chemistry or Physics

Group 5 - Mathematics

Group 6 - Art, Film or Music (or a second Group 2 or Group 4 subject)

****Three of the above courses from the six groups must be Higher Level (HL).***

Additional Diploma Requirements

Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay (EE) and Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) will earn a letter grade on the student's report card in the 3rd and 4th marking periods of their junior year and the first 3 marking periods of their senior year as the student meets the quarterly requirements set by the school. Students completing the Extended Essay (EE) will be given a grade during the second semester of junior year and the first semester of senior year.

Theory of Knowledge

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is a unique course offered during junior and senior years. Students reflect critically and explore the ways in which different disciplines search for truth. TOK helps students to analyze and integrate knowledge they have already gained to new areas of interaction. The essential question that reflects the TOK course throughout the two years is "What do I mean when I say, 'I know'?" In TOK, students examine this question in the varying contexts of understanding areas of knowledge (e.g. the arts, science, history) through emotion, reason, perception, and language. TOK is externally assessed (one essay of 1200-1600 words written on a prescribed title). Students make individual oral presentations (internal assessment) and complete a self-evaluation report.

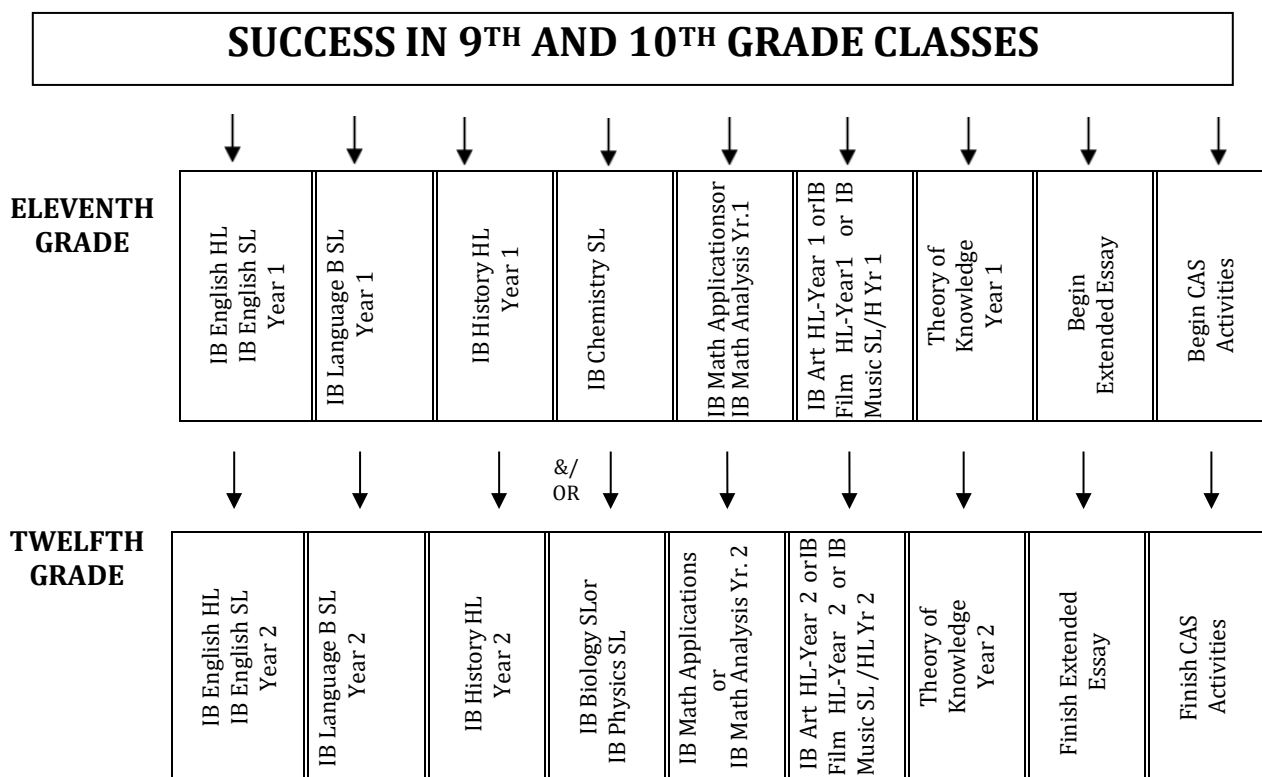
Extended Essay

The Extended Essay (EE) is an independent project begun in junior year. The work is supervised by a teacher-mentor and details and deadlines are provided by the EE Coordinator. An EE should be 4,000 words in length and require approximately 40 hours of independent research. It is externally assessed according to a set of general and specific criteria. The EE Coordinator will provide more detailed information and guidelines to students.

Creativity, Activity, Service

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) involves those learning experiences beyond the classroom under the general headings of Creativity (e.g. engagement in the arts, designing and implementing service projects, etc.), Activity (e.g. participation in athletics, dance, expeditions, etc.) and Service (community and social service). Students typically are involved in two hours of CAS activities per week for junior and senior years. The CAS Coordinator will work with students to understand and complete the reporting and self-evaluation of their CAS experiences.

Typical Course of Study for the IB Diploma Program



Dobbs Ferry High School International Baccalaureate Program Course Planning Worksheet

Three Higher Level Courses	Three Standard Level Courses

Group 1 – Language A1	
Group 2 – Language B	
Group 3 – History	
Group 4 – Sciences	
Group 5 – Mathematics	
Group 6 – Arts or Electives	

Group 1 – Language A: English

Literature SL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 35%

Paper 2- 35%

Internal Assessment

Individual Oral – 30%

Literature HL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 35%

Paper 2- 25%

HL Essay – 20%

Internal Assessment

Individual Oral – 20%

Group 3 - Individuals & Societies –

History SL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 30%

Paper 2- 45% (May 2026) 40% (May 2027)

Internal Assessment

Historical Investigation - 25% (May 2026)

30% (May 2027)

History HL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 20%

Paper 2- 25%

HL Paper 3- 35%

Internal Assessment

Historical Investigation - 20%

Group 5 Mathematics:

Applications & Interpretations SL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 40%

Paper 2- 40%

Internal Assessment

Mathematical Exploration - 20%

Mathematics:

Analysis & Approaches SL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 40%

Paper 2- 40%

Internal Assessment

Mathematical Exploration - 20%

Mathematics:

Analysis & Approaches HL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 30%

Paper 2- 30%

Paper 3- 20%

Internal Assessment

Mathematical Exploration – 20%



Group 2 Language B SL & Ab Initio

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 25%

Paper 2- 50%

Internal Assessment

Interactive Oral Assessment- 25%

Group 4: Sciences –

Biology, Chemistry, Physics SL

External Assessment

Paper 1 - 36%

Paper 2- 44%

Internal Assessment

Scientific Investigation - 20%

Group 6 - The Arts

Film, Visual Arts & Music

Film HL

External Assessment

Textual Analysis - 20%

Comparative Study - 20%

Collaborative Film Project - 35%

Internal Assessment

Film Portfolio - 25%

Visual Arts HL

External Assessment

Art Making Inquiries Portfolio - 30%

Artist Project – 30%

Internal Assessment

Exhibition (Resolved Artwork) – 40%

Music SL

External Assessment

Exploring Music in Context – 30%

Presenting Music – 40%

Internal Assessment

Experimenting with Music - 30%

Music HL

External Assessment

Exploring Music in Context – 20%

Presenting Music – 30%

Internal Assessment

Experimenting with Music - 20%

The Contemporary Music Maker – 30%

IB Scores and Awarding of the IB Diploma

Scores

Each course in the six subject groups is graded on the following scale:

- 7 = Excellent
- 6 = Very Good
- 5 = Good
- 4 = Satisfactory
- 3 = Mediocre
- 2 = Poor
- 1 = Very Poor

The IB Diploma is awarded to a student whose total score, including any bonus points (see EE and TOK below) reaches or exceeds 24 and satisfies the following:

- Obtains a grade of 4 or above in each HL course (however one grade of 3 but not 2 will be acceptable)
- Obtains a grade of 4 or above in each SL course (however one grade of 2 but not 1 will be acceptable)

The IB Diploma will not be awarded, regardless of a student's total score, if a student has

- Not been awarded grades D or better for both TOK and EE
- Not completed an approved program of CAS
- Received a score of 1 in any SL or HL subject
- Received a total of more than three scores of 3 or below

TOK and Extended Essay Scores

Using the performance levels obtained in TOK and EE, a maximum of three (3) diploma points can be awarded for a student's combined performance as follows:

ToK/EE	A	B	C	D	E
A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
B	3	2	2	1	
C	2	2	1	0	
D	2	1	0	0	
E	Failing condition				

From 2015 onwards an E grade in either the extended essay or theory of knowledge is a failing condition and the diploma will not be awarded.

TOK and EE Scores

- A = Excellent
- B = Good
- C = Satisfactory
- D = Mediocre
- E = Elementary

Overview of the Two-Year Calendar*

Junior Year

Senior Year

September	• Introduction to CAS	• EE Viva Voce & Final Reflections due • Introduce TOK prescribed titles • CAS - All Junior and summer experiences fully completed on Managebac • College Application Process (Common App, Essay, Letters of Recommendations, etc)
October	• Start logging CAS experiences and reflections on ManageBac every month • CAS Interview #1 with CAS coordinator	• EE Final Draft is due (final formal meeting with EE coordinator) • College Application Process (Early Decision & Early Action deadline)
November	• Introduction to EE	• Register for IB Exams • Group VI: Comparative Film Study due • College Application Process
December	• EE Subject Confirmation due • Group IV Collaborative Project	• Group IV Collaborative Project • Introduce IA for subject areas • CAS Showcase (share project with faculty and 11th grade) • College Application Process (Submit Regular Decision)
January	• DFHS Midterm Exams • EE Research due (sources)	• DFHS Midterm Exams • Group I: English Lit Individual Oral • Group III: Individual & Societies IA due • Group VI: Experimenting with Music due • Group VI: Film Portfolio due • College Application Process (Regular Decision deadline beginning of January)
February	• Group IV (Chemistry): IA due • EE Research due (1st reflection/formal meeting) • CAS Project Information Meeting	• Group II: Language B Individual Orals • Group IV: Science IA due • Group VI: Exploring Music due • Group VI: Visual Art Comparative Study due • TOK essay due
March	• EE Outline due • CAS Project Proposal due •	• Group V: Analysis SL & HL IA due; Applications IA due • Group VI: Collaborative Film due • Group VI: Presenting Music due • Group VI: HL Contemporary Music Maker due • Group VI: Visual Arts Exhibition

April	- Group IV (Chemistry): Internal Assessment and Sample Work sent to IB - Start planning for teacher recommendations for college	- Group VI: Visual Arts Process Portfolio due - All groups: Internal Assessment and sample work sent to IB - CAS: 100% of Experiences & Reflections due - CAS Final Interview #3 with CAS coordinator and Slideshow due
May	- TOK Exhibition due - EE First Draft due (2nd reflection/formal meeting) - IB Exams (Chemistry only) - Group I: Literature Essay due - CAS Project due - CAS Interview #2 with CAS coordinator	- IB Exams - Senior Internship
June	- Group VI: Film Textual Analysis due - DFHS Finals & NYS Regents exams	- Senior Internship - Graduation
July	- IB Scores Released - Continue logging CAS experiences and reflections on ManageBac during the summer	IB Scores Released

****This schedule is meant as an overview. Students must check with their IB teachers to confirm requirements and deadlines for each course.***

****Every month, log CAS experiences and reflections on ManageBac***

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are the other requirements for an IB Diploma besides taking IB courses?

At the core of the IB Program are three central elements called Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity-Activity-Service (CAS), and an Extended Essay (EE). Students who seek to earn an IB Diploma must complete the requirements of these three parts of the IB Program.

2. What is Theory of Knowledge (TOK)?

TOK is a course that is open to Juniors and Seniors. It is an interdisciplinary course designed to help students question and understand *how* they know what they know. Students study how individuals from various disciplines view the world to develop their own ways of thinking. By stimulating critical reflection and analysis of knowledge and experience across disciplines, TOK seeks to bridge and unify the academic subjects, in essence, to help students make sense of school and the world. Diploma Candidates must take TOK in both junior and senior years.

3. What is Creativity-Activity-Service (CAS)?

CAS is an experiential learning component of the IB. Students seeking to earn an IB Diploma must participate in CAS over their junior and senior years. A wide variety of activities fulfill this requirement including many extracurricular, community service, and athletic activities.

4. What is the Extended Essay (EE)?

The Extended Essay introduces students to the demands and rewards of independent work. Emphasis is placed on engaging in personal research and communicating ideas effectively in order to write a 4,000-word essay (about 18 pages) in an area of personal interest to the student within a subject taught at Dobbs Ferry High School. Each student seeking to earn an IB Diploma must write an extended essay over the course of his or her junior and senior years. A guide to the Extended Essay is available.

5. How do students get evaluated in the IB Program?

Students enrolled in IB courses still get grades from their classroom teachers, still take tests, do homework, complete projects, and take midterms—the same as any other student. In addition, students enrolled in IB courses take formal exams in May. Working in partnership with local teachers, the IB Organization works to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. The IB Organization compiles information about students from their teachers, from work students do throughout the course, and from the end-of-course exams given in May to determine a final score on a 1 to 7 scale. Diploma students need a total of at least 24 points to earn the full diploma.

6. What are the advantages of taking IB courses?

The major advantages include a challenging learning environment, excellent preparation for university-level studies, recognition of IB course work by college admissions officers, the possibility of earning college credit or advanced standing, and the benefit of receiving a well-rounded, world-class, liberal arts education.

7. What do students do if they find an IB class too challenging?

Numerous support services are offered to help students gain confidence and learn the required skills to manage their work and responsibilities. Support services include conferences with teachers, individual counseling and guidance, peer tutoring, and various levels of academic support. Although IB classes are more challenging than standard classes, colleges recognize IB course-work, admire the rigor and challenge of the IB Program, and regard successful completion of an IB course as a credential of exceptional merit. Also IB coursework can lead to college credit. Given the right support, students should consider the advantages of staying in an IB class.

8. What is the benefit of taking individual IB courses?

While the IB Organization suggests that students attempt a full diploma, not all students will take the full IB course load leading to an IB Diploma. Some students may choose selected courses where they have particular interests or strengths. Students who satisfactorily complete an IB course will earn a certificate from IB, and the course will be noted on their permanent transcript.

9. How widely accepted is the IB Diploma?

The IB Diploma is an internationally accepted standard of excellence, accepted by universities and other institutions in over eighty countries. Besides global recognition, most schools to which Dobbs Ferry graduates have been admitted recognize the IB Program. The IB website lists colleges and universities that grant credit, scholarships, and/or advanced standing for IB diplomas and certificates. When students are applying to universities, decisions about admissions will be partially based on their high school transcripts, not on whether they earn the Diploma. The most important factor in admissions will be the work in IB classes, not scores on the IB exams. However, IB exam scores will be important in decisions about placement and credit, so it is important to do well on IB exams, too.

10. Will students still have to take a Regents Exam in an IB course?

Yes. If a Regents Exam is normally given in the course related to the IB course, such as American History, then a student will also take the Regents Exam. To maximize student performance on both exams, teachers take into account Regents curriculum requirements as well as IB requirements when planning their courses.

11. Will students who take an IB course have to take the exam?

Yes. Students who are enrolled in an IB course will be expected to prepare for and take the exam at the end of the course or IB credit will not be granted. Additionally, students may be liable for course fees if an exam is not taken.

12. What happens if a student drops an IB course in the year of the May assessment after the initial registration deadline?

The student will be responsible for the registration fee, subject fee and any applicable late fees. There also fees for CAS, TOK, and Extended Essay. All fees are subject to change and students will be held accountable for paying them. Final transcript submissions to colleges may be held if fees are not paid.

13. What are Predicted Grades and why do they matter?

Toward the end of courses, IBO requires teachers to submit “Predicted Grades” for students which anticipate the final total scores students will receive. These predicted grades had traditionally not been of much value for students applying to American colleges, but as IB recognition at U.S. colleges has increased, more schools are requesting these scores and using them for admissions and scholarship decisions. These grades are extremely important for students applying to schools overseas. Students who are granted admission based on predicted grades may have offers revoked if they do not score as well as predicted when final scores are released in July. It is the policy of DFHS not to share predicted grades with students.

Resources for the IB Program

Dobbs Ferry High School's IB Webpage

<https://hs.dfsd.org/academics/international-baccalaureate-program-ib>

Dobbs Ferry High School's IB Policies

<https://hs.dfsd.org/academics/international-baccalaureate-program-ib/ib-policies>

The International Baccalaureate Organization

<http://www.ibo.org>

The International Baccalaureate Organization

University Admission Recognition

<https://recognition.ibo.org/en-US/>

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

