

Granite Bay High IB Parent Update

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October 2008

Parent Support Is Essential to Student Success in IB Program

What's the workload for a student pursuing the IB Diploma?

The workload for the diploma is demanding. Students learn to be increasingly efficient in their studying and allowing time for CAS hours. The reality is that these students work long hours both during the week and on weekends. They are essentially enrolled in six college-level classes.

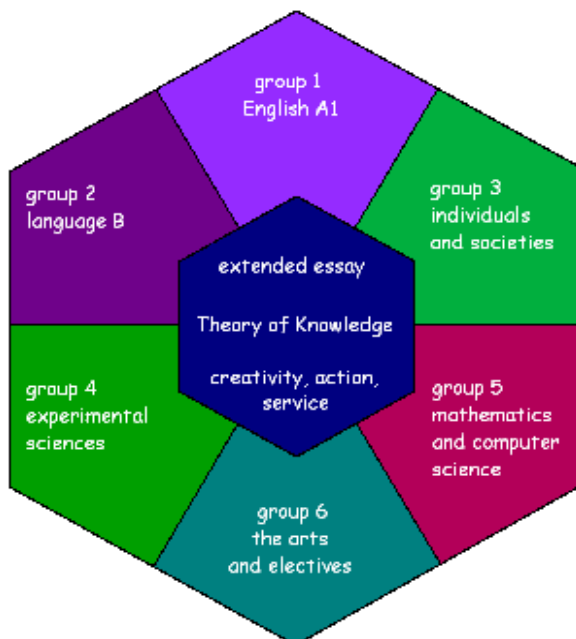
How can I help my child be successful in the IB Program?

Begin planning your child's high school courses in the 9th grade year—make sure they take the honors level courses that are recommended. Don't expect your child to combine employment with the IB program. Begin planning for the extended essay topic as early as the end of 10th grade. Try to help your child use summers to complete CAS requirements. Investigate purchasing IB review books. Always model good time management skills. Understand that your child may be working many late nights, and try to maintain a supportive attitude.

Is there a point in this program that seems the most difficult for students?

Mid-way through the first term of grade 11 is when research says that many students hit a low point with IB. They've taken the PSAT and may be worried about the upcoming SATs. The IB workload may seem punishing at that point. By second term students seem to begin acclimating to the pace of the work and become more efficient. By grade 12 many IB students may seem almost serene. Except for the weeks when CAS hours or extended essays are due, they will feel confident in their ability to do IB work and excited to be nearing the end of the pressure.

continued on page 2



IB and College Admission

What's your advice to parents who are considering their children's level of participation in the IB program?

Be aware that the college admissions game has changed at many universities in recent years. Fewer colleges use automatic grade point average cut-offs (commonly 3.7) that kept out of consideration students with lower grades in tougher courses. Students until recently often stood a better chance of college acceptance by taking easier courses to get higher grades. The most selective colleges are often rejecting the 4.0 students who take an easier course load, because they've seen these students flounder when confronted with the difficult of college classes.

In a recent year, Duke rejected 56% of the valedictorians who applied according to *Newsweek*. Make sure that your child's difficulty of high school curriculum matches the expectation of the colleges that interest you and your child. Community college classes may be less demanding than AP or IB. Talk to prospective colleges and to your counselor about this issue before junior year.

What if my child ends up with a 3.6 or 3.7 GPA because of taking rigorous courses, is college acceptance still possible?

Absolutely—although it is not guaranteed (even for the IB 4.0), it is absolutely possible. Colleges know that the a student who earns a B in IB Math or IB Chem is better prepared for a college workload than the student who got A's by being a T.A. or by taking lower-level classes. Top colleges want to admit students who have a record of challenging themselves. Because the IB teachers and students do become a family with more contact time than other courses, letters of recommendation can be more personal and revealing of the student's strengths. IB Diploma students have a higher chance of being accepted at the most competitive universities than students without the IB Diploma. Look for recent statistics on acceptance rates in the next IB Parent Update.

The full IB Diploma is the only high school diploma so respected and recognized all over the world. The IB diploma has established a track record of predicted success in college for 40 years. The Diploma demonstrates the student is well-rounded and has great breadth of knowledge about many subjects. The IB Diploma Program also builds character and exemplifies service to the community.

Many colleges offer credit for the IB Diploma that replaces the first year of college courses. This can save money and time if an IB student can enter college as a sophomore! More about all these stats in the next IB Parent Update.

How do I give my child a pep talk for IB, when the going gets rough?

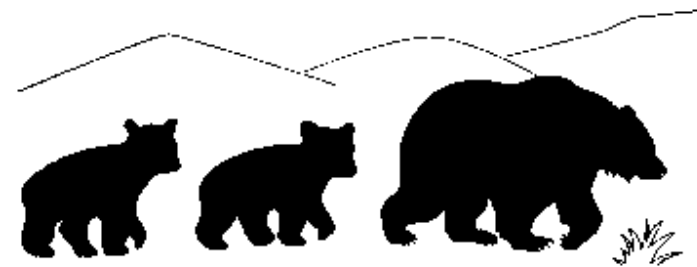
Tell your child that most students go away to college and experience a jolt at the increased amount and difficulty of the work. This jolt is made more difficult by supportive parents being perhaps many miles away. In choosing the IB program, you and your child have decided that his/her 'jolt' in grades 11 and 12 will come while he/she is still at home with immediate parental support. It is true that your child will have less time in high school for hanging out with friends, going to a movie, etc. But it's also true that IB will enable your child to have a better than average college experience, beginning with an increased chance of college acceptance. Academic work in college will seem easier, and his/her increased efficiency at that work will allow more time for the many more clubs, sports and organizations colleges offer. It's all about delayed gratification! As IB parents you should take pride in your children's maturity in tackling this program and be prepared to express that pride to your children frequently! You should also encourage them to develop friendships within the IB program, so that they can receive peer support as well. According to many IB Diploma graduates, these are bonds that last a lifetime.

How can IB parents stay informed and energized?

I am planning to publish this IB Parent Update every other month to address topics that are timely to you. I am also working with some 10th grade parents right now who have volunteered to help start our IB parent support group. You will be receiving email communications from this group soon. I know that several of you have told me over the last two years that you would be interested in volunteering also, so please email me if you would like to come in one hour per week to help us. **Email me at scolnar@rjuhsd.us**

Some of the areas where parents can help me are:

- ☺ Organizing rosters, records, forms, and flyers for over 150 pre-IB students;
- ☺ Marketing the IB program on and off campus;
- ☺ Fundraising for assisting in the payment of exam fees (these average about \$300 in October of 11th grade and \$650 in October of 12th grade);
- ☺ Building communications and planning events to create bonding between students, parents, and teachers; and
- ☺ Organizing treats and yummys for students, and more.



One Family — IB students, parents, teachers

International Baccalaureate as an Advanced Curricular Program

What is the difference between IB and AP?

GBHS currently offers 17 AP courses and has achieved outstanding success over the years with scores and numbers of exams taken. The IB program is another optional advanced pathway that students can follow, and is not intended to compete in any way with our AP program.

Each AP course is completely autonomous. Students can opt to take a single exam at the end of the class in hopes of receiving college credit in that subject. Students may also challenge the exams without taking the AP courses.

IB also allows non-IB-diploma students to enroll in IB courses *à la carte* and receive a certificate from each class after taking the May exam. IB students may actually take both the IB and AP tests.

How does the IB curriculum work?

The IB Diploma program ensures that students have completed an integrated program of higher level courses. The IB curriculum has a final May test for possible college credit, but there are other mandatory assessments along the way that teachers must administer.

Consider English. The IB English certificate has a final test (external assessment) in May of grade 12. But en route to that test, the IB student completes three internal assessments: a written assignment and two oral assignments (a one-on-one interview with the teacher in which the student discusses a work of literature for about 20 minutes; and a 15-minute oral presentation to the class on another work, without using notes).

The oral presentations are recorded, to be graded by the GBHS teacher as well as IB teachers elsewhere in the world. So for IB English, there are four mandatory assessments which are graded off-site to maintain international consistency in standards. All of the required assessments promote critical thinking skills and effective communication. It is the total of all of these that will comprise the final IB score in the course (from 1-7).

What do colleges say about IB ?

The descriptions of what most top colleges award for IB Diplomas and certificates are listed on the official IB website at <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/>. Also check our website at www.granitebayhigh.org/academics/ib/.