

**Schenectady High School's
International Baccalaureate Program
Student and Parent Information Guide**



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IBO Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization 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 IBO 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.

Schenectady High School IB Mission Statement (Draft)

Over the summer a group of IB teachers worked collaboratively to develop an IB mission statement for Schenectady High School's IB Program. Though it is a work in progress, the draft of that mission statement appears below

The mission of the IB Program at Schenectady High School, a diverse, urban, public high school which reflects a rich tradition of continuous innovation in our community, is to encourage the development of active lifelong learners who think and act as socially responsible citizens of a global community.

To that end, the IB Program at SHS will deliver a rigorous and challenging academic program, accessible to all students, based on international learning standards and assessments in a supportive environment.

The 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.

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Pursuing the IB Diploma

The IB Diploma Program encompasses six subject groups. A Diploma candidate is required to take one subject from each group (three subjects must be higher level and three must be standard level.)

Schenectady High School Group Offerings

Group 1: Language A1	Higher Level English
Group 2: Language B	Higher Level French or Higher Level Spanish
Group 3: Individuals and Societies	Higher Level History (History of the Americas and 20 th Century Topics)
Group 4: Experimental Sciences	Higher Level Biology or Higher Level Design Technology
Group 5: Mathematics	Standard Level Math Methods or Standard Level Math Studies
Group 6: Arts and Electives	Higher Level or Standard Level Music Higher Level or Standard Level Visual Arts Standard Level Economics Standard Level Psychology Standard Level Physics

Earning the IB Diploma

To be earn the IB Diploma candidates must

- earn a composite of 24 out of a possible 45 points
 - a composite score is determined by adding exam scores from all six subject exams to the Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay scores
 - the total number of points possible per exam is 7
 - a student must earn a total of 12 points in their higher level classes, with no score being lower then 3, to be eligible for the Diploma
 - the total number of points possible from Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay combined score is 3
- complete three Higher Level Courses
 - a higher level course is a two year course
 - students must
 - complete an Internal Assessment in each higher level course
 - earn a minimum score of 3 on the IB exam in each higher level course
- complete three Standard Level Courses
 - a standard level course is a one year course
 - students must
 - complete an Internal Assessment in each standard level course
 - complete the IB exam in each standard level course
- complete 150 hours of Creativity, Action and Service
- complete course work in Theory of Knowledge
- complete a 4000 word Extended Essay on a topic of the student's choosing

Creativity, Action and Service (CAS)

Creativity, action, service is the first of three essential components of the Diploma Program. CAS requires students to involve themselves in 150 hours of activities that

- are creative
- are physical
- provide service to others

These activities must

- be real, purposeful and have significant outcomes
- provide a personal challenge that extends the student
- require a thoughtful process such as planning, reviewing one's progress and reporting outcomes
- allow for reflection and personal growth

Theory of Knowledge

Theory of Knowledge is the second required component of the Diploma Program. Taken in both the junior and senior years, TOK aims to

- develop in students an interest in learning
- develop in students an understanding of how knowledge is constructed, critically examined and evaluated
- develop in students an understanding of the ways of thinking and living of others and an awareness of personal and ideological assumptions of others as well as themselves
- encourage students to reflect on their experiences as learners
- provide students with the ability to understand the relationship between subjects, as well as the relationship between thoughts, feelings and actions

Extended Essay

Begun in the junior year, the Extended Essay is the third required component of the Diploma Program. Working with an advisor, Diploma candidates conduct an in-depth study of a topic of their choosing and gain experience in

- developing research and communication skills
- developing the skills necessary for creative and critical thinking

The Extended Essay is

- the result of 40 hours of independent work
- 4000 words in length
- mailed to the IBO for external assessment
- combined with the Theory of Knowledge grade. The combined score of TOK and the Extended Essay can add up to 3 points to a candidates composite score.

IB Diploma Program Assessment Philosophy

The International Baccalaureate (IB) assesses student work as direct evidence of achievement against the stated goals of the Diploma Program courses.

The Diploma Program goals provide students with:

- a broad and balanced, yet academically demanding, program of study
- the development of critical-thinking and reflective skills
- the development of research skills
- the development of independent learning skills
- the development of intercultural understanding
- a globally recognized university entrance qualification.

Diploma Program assessment procedures measure the extent to which students have mastered advanced academic skills in fulfilling these goals. For example, a student's ability to :

- analyze and present information
- evaluate and construct arguments
- solve problems creatively.

Basic skills are also assessed, including:

- retaining knowledge
- understanding key concepts
- applying standard methods.

In addition to academic skills, Diploma Program assessment encourages an international outlook and intercultural skills where appropriate.

Assessment tasks are designed to support and encourage good classroom teaching and learning.

Student results are determined by performance against set standards, not by each student's position in the overall rank order.

<http://www.ibo.org/diploma/assessment/>

IB Diploma Program Grade Descriptors

Grade 7 Excellent performance

Demonstrates: conceptual awareness, insight, and knowledge and understanding which are evident in the skills of critical thinking; a high level of ability to provide answers which are fully developed, structured in a logical and coherent manner and illustrated with appropriate examples; a precise use of terminology which is specific to the subject; familiarity with the literature of the subject; the ability to analyse and evaluate evidence and to synthesize knowledge and concepts; awareness of alternative points of view and subjective and ideological biases, and the ability to come to reasonable, albeit tentative, conclusions; consistent evidence of critical reflective thinking; a high level of proficiency in analysing and evaluating data or problem solving.

Grade 6 Very good performance

Demonstrates: detailed knowledge and understanding; answers which are coherent, logically structured and well developed; consistent use of appropriate terminology; an ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesize knowledge and concepts; knowledge of relevant research, theories and issues, and awareness of different perspectives and contexts from which these have been developed; consistent evidence of critical thinking; an ability to analyse and evaluate data or to solve problems competently.

Grade 5 Good performance

Demonstrates: a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject using subject-specific terminology; answers which are logically structured and coherent but not fully developed; an ability to provide competent answers with some attempt to integrate knowledge and concepts; a tendency to be more descriptive than evaluative although some ability is demonstrated to present and develop contrasting points of view; some evidence of critical thinking; an ability to analyse and evaluate data or to solve problems.

Grade 4 Satisfactory performance

Demonstrates: a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject going beyond the mere citing of isolated, fragmentary, irrelevant or 'common sense' points; some ability to structure answers but with insufficient clarity and possibly some repetition; an ability to express knowledge and understanding in terminology specific to the subject; some understanding of the way facts or ideas may be related and embodied in principles and concepts; some ability to develop ideas and substantiate assertions; use of knowledge and understanding which is more descriptive than analytical; some ability to compensate for gaps in knowledge and understanding through rudimentary application or evaluation of that knowledge; an ability to interpret data or to solve problems and some ability to engage in analysis and evaluation.

Grade 3 Mediocre performance

Demonstrates: some knowledge and understanding of the subject; a basic sense of structure that is not sustained throughout the answers; a basic use of terminology appropriate to the subject; some ability to establish links between facts or ideas; some ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Grade 2 Poor performance

Demonstrates: a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject; some sense of structure in the answers; a limited use of terminology appropriate to the subject; a limited ability to establish links between facts or ideas; a basic ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Grade 1 Very poor performance

Demonstrates: very limited knowledge and understanding of the subject; almost no organizational structure in the answers; inappropriate or inadequate use of terminology; a limited ability to comprehend data or to solve problems.

Sample 2009 IB Exam Questions

(IB uses the term Papers when referring to exams.)

Group 1: Language A1 – Higher Level English

Higher Level English is taught over 2 years with the exam taken at the end of the senior year. Students take 2 papers. For both papers, students are given 2 hours to answer 1 question.

Paper 2 Sample Question: The Novel and Short Story

Authors use the portrayal of characters who are somehow trapped or imprisoned as a means to criticize society. Referring closely to at least two of the works in your study, show to what extent and in what ways this statement is true.

Group 2: Language B – Standard Level French or Spanish

Standard Level French or Spanish is taught over 2 years with the exam taken at the end of the senior year. Students take 2 papers. For both papers in both subjects students are given 1½ hours.

Paper 2 Sample Question – French

Lors d'un examen de fin d'année, vous voyez l'un(e) de vos camarades tricher ; il/elle obtient ensuite la meilleure note de la classe. Rédigez une page de votre journal intime dans laquelle vous exprimez vos sentiments sur ce comportement. Écrivez au moins 250 mots.

Translation

During a final exam you see one of your friends cheating; he/she obtains the best grade in the class. Write a page in your personal journal in which you express your feelings regarding this behavior. Write at least 250 words.

Paper 2 Sample Question – Spanish

En numerosos países se están tomando medidas para impedir el hábito de fumar. Usted escribe un artículo en el periódico de su escuela donde presenta su opinión sobre el consumo de tabaco y propone una serie de consejos para que los jóvenes de su edad no caigan en el vicio de fumar. Escriba 250 palabras como mínimo.

Translation

In numerous countries they are taking measures to impede the smoking habit. Write an article in your school newspaper where you present your opinions on smoking and propose several pieces of advice so that young people your age will not fall into the smoking habit. Write at least 250 words.

Group 3: Individuals and Societies – Higher Level History

Higher Level History is taught over 2 years with the exam taken at the end of the senior year. Students take 3 papers and are given 1 hour for 1 multi-part question on Paper 1, 1 ½ hours for 2 questions on Paper 2 and 2 ½ hours for 3 questions on Paper 3.

Paper 2 Sample Question: The Rise and Rule of Single-Party States

For what reasons, and with what success, did rulers of single-party states use foreign policy to maintain their power? At least two rulers should be considered.

Group 4: Experimental Sciences – Higher Level Biology or Design Technology

Higher Level Biology and Design Technology are taught over 2 years with the exam taken at the end of the senior year. Students take 3 papers.

Subject	Paper 1	Paper 2	Paper 3
Biology	1 Hour 40 multiple Choice	2 Hours 15 Minutes 5 Multi-part Questions	1 Hour 2 Multi-part Questions
Design Technology	1 Hour 40 Multiple Choice	1 Hour 45 Minutes 7 Multi-part Questions	1 Hour 1 Multi-part Question

Paper 2 Sample Question - Biology

- Outline how antibiotic resistance in bacteria can arise in response to environmental change.*
- Outline the principle of immunity.*
- Discuss the benefits and dangers of vaccination.*

Paper 2 Sample Question – Design Technology



Evaluate three aspects of the EcoHouse as a potentially cost-effective global innovation.

<http://www.offsite2007.com/page.jsp?id=11>

Group 5: Mathematics – Standard Level Math Methods or Math Studies

Standard Level Math Methods and Math Studies are 1 year courses. Students traditionally take Math Methods or Math Studies in their junior year. Students wishing to take the more rigorous Math Methods must first complete Pre Math Methods. For both courses, students take 2 papers and are given 1 ½ hours for each.

Paper 2 Sample Questions

See Appendix 1 and 2

Group 6: Arts and Electives

Higher Level or Standard Level Music

Higher Level Music is taught over 2 years. Standard Level Music is taught in 1 year. Students, regardless of level, take a 2 ½ hour Listening Paper.

Listening Paper Sample Question - Dido and Aeneas by H Purcell

Analyze in detail the musical features found in this overture which place this work in the baroque period. Support your arguments with clear reference to the score. These arguments may include (but are not limited to) comments on structure, harmony, melody, rhythm and orchestration.

Higher Level or Standard Level Visual Arts

Higher Level Visual Arts is taught over 2 years. Standard Level Visual Arts is taught in 1 year. Students, regardless of level, complete Research Workbooks and participate in an exhibit of their work. An IB approved examiner visits the school and conducts individual interviews with each student as they present their work.

Economics – Standard Level

Standard Level Economics is taught in 1 year. Students traditionally take Economics in their senior year. Students take 2 papers and are given 1 hour for 1 question on Paper 1 and 2 hours for 3 questions on Paper 2.

Paper 1 Sample Question

Evaluate the view that, in terms of achieving economic development in less developed countries, interventionist strategies, with a role for the government, are preferable to market-led strategies.

Psychology – Standard Level

Standard Level Psychology is taught in 1 year. Students take Psychology in either their junior or senior year. Students take 2 papers and are given 2 hours for 4 questions on Paper 1 and 1 hour for 1 question on Paper 2.

Paper 2 Sample Question – Cultural Psychology

Describe and evaluate two or more empirical studies related to cultural psychology.

Physics – Standard Level

Standard Level Physics is taught in 1 year. Students take Physics in either their junior or senior year. Students take 2 papers and are given 45 minutes for 30 multiple choice questions on Paper 1 and 1 hour and 15 minutes for Paper 2.

Paper 2 Sample Question

See Appendix 3