

# International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP) Parent Guide 2019 - 2020



**SMS**

AN INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE WORLD SCHOOL



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## Purpose

This guide is designed to help parents gain a better understanding of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB MYP) being implemented for students in Grades 6 through 8 at Sutton Middle School and Grades 9 and 10 at North Atlanta High School. It explains the philosophy, aims, and framework of the IB MYP.

## Mission Statements

### International Baccalaureate

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.

The 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.

### North Atlanta Cluster Mission and Vision

The North Atlanta Cluster will implement an IB program with depth and fidelity for all students in order to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who will graduate ready for college and career.

A high-performing cluster where students, educators, and families work together to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.



# International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme

## What is the IB Middle Years Programme?

The MYP is a challenging framework that encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world. The MYP is a five-year programme, which can be implemented in a partnership between schools, or in several abbreviated (two, three or four year) formats. North Atlanta High School and Sutton Middle School are partnership schools in a five-year format. Students who complete the MYP are well-prepared to undertake the IB Diploma Programme (DP) or Career-related Programme (CP). NAHS has an authorized Diploma Programme and Career-related Programme.

## Why the IB Middle Years Programme?

The MYP aims to develop active learners and internationally minded young people who can empathize with others and pursue lives of purpose and meaning. The programme empowers students to inquire into a wide range of issues and ideas of significance locally, nationally and globally. The result is young people who are creative, critical and reflective thinkers.

The IB MYP creates a student-focused curricular framework that works towards the following:

- addresses holistically students' intellectual, social, emotional and physical **well-being**
- provides students opportunities to develop the **knowledge, attitudes and skills** they need in order to manage complexity and take responsible action for the future
- ensures breadth and depth of understanding through study in **eight subject groups**
- requires the study of at least **two languages (language of instruction and additional language of choice-Spanish, French, Chinese or Arabic)** to support students in understanding their own cultures and those of others
- empowers students to participate in **service within the community**
- helps to prepare students for **further education**, and/or the **workplace**

## What makes IB different?

An IB classroom differs greatly in both appearance and function when compared to what we remember from our own school days. Students are not sitting rows, but in cooperative, constructivist groups. Collaborative learning is common, as it is in our own lives. After all, when was the last time you made an important decision in your life, personal or professional, without consulting with someone first? IB does not emphasize the use of textbooks, but fosters creation and innovation as well.

Traditional education primarily focuses on content (the memorization of facts and processes), develops some skills and uses direct teacher instruction. Keeping in mind the best practices of other successful national education systems, the IB uses inquiry to engage students in their learning. This method teaches your child how to ask questions that support their investigations and is taught in a student-centered manner. Content and the standards curriculum will always be an important factor; however, with IB we will see the blossoming of meaningful skills, such as the ability to reason deeply and with complexity (critical thinking), the ability to see more than one solution to a problem or to frame a question in more than one way (divergent thinking).

The IB emphasizes learning **concepts** rather than topics and aids the student in learning how they apply across all humanity in various ways. For example, with IB it is not enough to learn about “The Oregon Trail”, but even more important to explore the concepts of migration or oppression and its implications on humanity across history and today. Information and facts will always be readily available to those who need them. However, learning how to learn is a skill that requires nourishment.

### What is the IB Middle Years Programme Curriculum Framework?

The MYP curriculum framework comprises eight subject groups, providing a broad and balanced education for early adolescents. The MYP requires at least 50 hours of teaching time for each subject group, in each year of the programme. In the final two years of the programme, carefully-defined subject group flexibility allows students to meet local requirements and personal learning goals.

The IB MYP principles and philosophy align with Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) and Common Core standards and establish more rigorous expectations.

IB MYP is *not* a curriculum itself; instead, it provides a framework – a method of and for planning and organizing student-focused curriculums – that presents students with differentiated learning opportunities and that ensures congruency between learning and assessment and between practicing and preparation.

The 8 Subject Area Groups:

Arts	Language and Literature (English)	Individuals and Societies (Social Studies)	Mathematics
Design	Language Acquisition (World Languages)	Sciences	Physical and Health Education

## How does the MYP prepare my child for the IB Diploma Programme or IB Career Programme?

The MYP develops skills and knowledge necessary for success in the IB Diploma Program (DP) and the Career-related Programme (CP). By the end of the MYP, students should be able to plan, organize and complete their own learning activities with limited support. They should have strong communication skills using a variety of styles of communication, such as different languages and the specific styles of mathematics, sciences, arts, etc. Students should be able to identify and build on their strengths, as well as identify and accommodate their weaker areas. In addition to these academic skills, over the course of the MYP, students will develop a strong knowledge and skills base in the different subject areas. These knowledge and skills help to prepare students for the greater challenges of the DP and CP.

## How can I help my child be successful in their IB MYP classes?

Parents can have conversations about the Statement of Inquiry and inquiry questions at home. These discussions can increase the transfer of big concepts from the classroom into students' daily lives and promote enduring understanding. Encourage your children to “find out” rather than telling them answers. Conducting research online, in a newspaper, educational TV, at home experiments will not only reinforce the skills being developed at school, but also show children that “school skills” are really “world skills.” Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers if you have any questions about student’s learning experiences/ activities. Ask your child about the IB’s Learner Profile attributes – point them out in other people, in yourself, in your children’s actions and speech.

## What will my child be learning?

With the IB MYP, we are committed to structured inquiry as the vehicle for learning. Six global contexts and subcategories called explorations provide the framework for exploration and construction of knowledge. The global contexts are closely linked with the transdisciplinary themes of the IB PYP. Teachers and students are guided by these themes as they also explore overarching key concepts pertaining to each of the eight subject areas in the IB MYP. These in combination with subject specific related concepts provide the structure for students to develop an understanding of important ideas, acquire essential skills and knowledge, develop particular attitudes, and learn to take socially responsible actions. The concepts and contexts serve as a framework for teacher unit planning and student guidance based on a statement of inquiry.

# Glossary of Common Terms

## IB Continuum/ IB World School

The IB continuum includes the Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP), Diploma Programme (DP), and the Career- Related Programme (CP). PYP includes grades K-5, MYP includes grades 6-10, and the DP and CP includes grades 11 and 12. Once a school is authorized, the school is known as an IB World School.



## IB Units of Study

### Key concepts

Key concepts promote the development of a broad curriculum. They represent big ideas that are both relevant within and across disciplines and subjects. Inquiry into key concepts can facilitate connections between other subjects.

### Related concepts

Related concepts promote deep learning. They are grounded in specific disciplines and are useful for exploring key concepts in greater detail. Inquiry into related concepts helps students develop more complex and sophisticated conceptual understanding. Related concepts may arise from the subject matter of a unit or the craft of a subject—its features and processes.

### Global contexts for teaching and learning

Global contexts direct learning towards independent and shared inquiry into our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. Using the world as the broadest context for learning, the MYP can develop meaningful explorations of:

- identities and relationships
- orientation in space and time
- personal and cultural expression
- scientific and technical innovation
- globalization and sustainability
- fairness and development

### Statements of inquiry

The statement of inquiry is generated by synthesizing the key concept, the related concepts, and the global context of the unit. The concepts may be explicit or implicit in the statement but

the statement of inquiry should express the depth of conceptual understanding to be developed through the unit. By combining these elements, the conceptual understanding is contextualized and frames the unit. Statements of inquiry set conceptual understanding in a global context in order to frame classroom inquiry and direct purposeful learning.

### Inquiry questions

Teachers and students use statements of inquiry to help them identify factual, conceptual and debatable inquiry questions. Inquiry questions give direction to teaching and learning, and they help to organize and sequence learning experiences.

### Approaches to learning (ATL)

All MYP units of work offer opportunities for students to develop and practice ATL skills. ATL skills provide valuable support for students working to meet the subject group’s aims and objectives. ATL skills are grouped into five categories that span the IB continuum of international education. IB programs identify discrete skills in each category that can be introduced, practiced and consolidated in the classroom and beyond.

While ATL skills are relevant across all MYP subject groups, teachers may also identify ATL skill indicators especially relevant for, or unique to, a particular subject group or course.

**Assessments** can happen during and at the end of the unit. Assessments occurring during the unit are called formative assessments and assessments occurring at the end of the unit are called summative. These provide students with further opportunities to demonstrate their learning in an authentic situation. All IB MYP students are held to the same rigorous assessment standards throughout the world. Each criterion (A-D) has eight possible achievement levels (1-8). The subject area groups and criterion are listed below:

	Criteria A	Criteria B	Criteria C	Criteria D
<b>Language and Literature</b>	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
<b>Language Acquisition</b>	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
<b>Individuals and Societies</b>	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
<b>Sciences</b>	Knowing and Understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the aspects of science
<b>Mathematics</b>	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating Patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in the real-world contexts
<b>Arts</b>	Knowing and Understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
<b>Physical and Health Education</b>	Knowing and Understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
<b>Design</b>	Inquiring and analyzing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating

## IB Grades

During the five years of the programme, all schools offering the MYP are required to communicate student achievement in each subject group to parents. To determine the final achievement level in each of the criteria for each student, teachers must gather sufficient evidence from a range of assessment tasks to enable them to make a professional and informed judgment. Due to local requirements, achievement levels for each criteria can be converted to numerical grades.

In addition to communicating achievement levels in each of the criteria, students receive a final IB grade. To arrive at a criterion level total, teachers add together the student's final achievement levels in all criteria of the subject group. The table provides a means of converting the criterion levels total into a final grade based on a scale of 1–7. Currently, this final IB grade is for IB-reporting purposes only and will not affect a students' grade point average (GPA).

Grade	Boundary Guidelines	Descriptor
1	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6-9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10-14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15-18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19-23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations
6	24-27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real world situations, often with independence.
7	28-32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

## International Mindedness

All IB programs support international-mindedness and understanding of other cultures. Our teachers work to create learning experiences that open up the minds of our students to other cultures.

International mindedness can be expressed as the following:

- the ability to be better prepared for the 21st century global challenges
- understanding ourselves to connect with others
- awareness that the world is much larger than the community in which we live
- respect and understanding for other perspectives, cultures and languages
- the ability to see oneself as a responsible member of the community and a global citizen

International Mindedness is not about learning other cultures and languages. Rather, it is a way of thinking that allows people to understand and work with each other in a more humane way, without prejudice. It fosters the growth of traits critical to working in a global community, or even in a local one such as: empathy, stewardship, and genuine expressions of compassion for others. Students will learn that we can still work together to resolve and solve important issues in our community and beyond, regardless of our cultural backgrounds and ways of life... while still honoring our shared humanity.

## Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally-minded people who, recognizing our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet to help 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.

## Personal Project

The Personal Project is an individual project completed Spring Semester of Year 5 (Tenth Grade).

The Personal Project is an important part of the Middle Years Programme. The Personal Project represents a truly personal and creative piece of work that stands as a summative review of their ability to conduct independent work.

The personal project consists of three main components: a Process Journal, a Product, and a Report. The assessment of the Personal Project is based on the all three components. Successful completion of a Personal Project is a condition for acceptance to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme.

The Personal Project will be assessed using the following criteria:

Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Investigating	Planning	Taking Action	Reflecting
i. Define a clear goal and global context for the project, based on personal interests ii. Identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge relevant to the project iii. Demonstrate research skills	i. develop criteria for the product/outcome ii. plan and record the development process of the project iii. demonstrate self-management skills	i. create a product/outcome in response to the goal, global context and criteria ii. demonstrate thinking skills iii. demonstrate communication and social skills	i. evaluate the quality of the product/outcome against their criteria ii. reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of the topic and the global context iii. reflect on their development as IB learners through the project.

## Policies

IB requires all MYP schools to create, utilize, and reflect on four essential policies: Special Needs Learners, Assessment, Language and Academic Integrity/ Honesty Policy. The full document of the all four policies are accessible at [www.ibmypnorthatlanta.weebly.com](http://www.ibmypnorthatlanta.weebly.com) or <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/4389>.

## Subject Area Aims

### Arts

The aims of MYP arts are to encourage and enable students to:

- create and present art
- develop skills specific to the discipline
- engage in a process of creative exploration and (self-) discovery
- make purposeful connections between investigation and practice
- understand the relationship between art and its contexts
- respond to and reflect on art
- deepen their understanding of the world.

### Design

MYP design enables students to develop not only practical skills but also strategies for creative and critical thinking. The aims of MYP design are to encourage and enable students to:

- enjoy the design process, and develop an appreciation of its elegance and power
- develop knowledge, understanding and skills from different disciplines to design and create solutions to problems using the design cycle
- use and apply technology effectively as a means to access, process and communicate information, model and create solutions, and to solve problems
- develop an appreciation of the impact of design innovations for life, global society and environments
- appreciate past, present and emerging design within cultural, political, social, historical and environmental contexts
- develop respect for others' viewpoints and appreciate

alternative solutions to problems • act with integrity and honesty, and take responsibility for their own actions developing effective working practices.

### Health and Physical Education

The aims of MYP physical and health education are to encourage and enable students to: • use inquiry to explore physical and health education concepts • participate effectively in a variety of contexts • understand the value of physical activity • achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle • collaborate and communicate effectively • build positive relationships and demonstrate social responsibility • reflect on their learning experiences.

### Individuals and Societies

The aims of MYP individuals and societies are to encourage and enable students to: • appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity • understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies and the environment • understand how both environmental and human systems operate and evolve • identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the natural environment

### Language Acquisition

The aims of MYP language acquisition are to encourage and enable students to: • gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting maintenance of their mother tongue and cultural heritage • develop a respect for, and understanding of, diverse linguistic and cultural heritages • develop the communication skills necessary for further language learning, and for study, work and leisure in a range of contexts

### Language and Literature

The aims of MYP language and literature are to encourage and enable students to: • use language as a vehicle for thought, creativity, reflection, learning, self-expression, analysis and social interaction • develop the skills involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing

and presenting in a variety of contexts • develop critical, creative and personal approaches to studying and analyzing literary and non-literary texts

### Mathematics

The aims of MYP mathematics courses are to encourage and enable students to: • enjoy mathematics, develop curiosity and begin to appreciate its elegance and power • develop an understanding of the principles and nature of mathematics • communicate clearly and confidently in a variety of contexts • develop logical, critical and creative thinking • develop confidence, perseverance and independence in mathematical thinking and problem-solving • develop powers of generalization and abstraction • apply and transfer skills to a wide range of real-life situations, other areas of knowledge and future developments • appreciate how developments in technology and mathematics have influenced each other; the moral, social and ethical implications arising from the work of mathematicians and the applications of mathematics; the international dimension in mathematics; and the contribution of mathematics to other areas of knowledge • develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to pursue further studies in mathematics • develop the ability to reflect critically upon their own work and the work of others.



## Science

The MYP sciences group aims to encourage and enable students to:

- understand and appreciate science and its implications
- consider science as a human endeavour with benefits and limitations
- cultivate analytical, inquiring and flexible minds that pose questions, solve problems, construct explanations and judge arguments
- develop skills to design and perform investigations, evaluate evidence and reach conclusions
- build an awareness of the need to effectively collaborate and communicate
- apply language skills and knowledge in a variety of real-life contexts
- develop sensitivity towards the living and non-living environments
- reflect on learning experiences and make informed choices