

# International Baccalaureate

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is International Baccalaureate (IB)?

Founded in 1968, the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) offers a K-12 continuum of international education that emphasizes second language learning beginning at age 7. The programs encourage both personal and academic achievement, challenging students to become critical and engaged thinkers who are well prepared for the workplaces of the 21<sup>st</sup> century global economy. IB offers four programs including the Primary Years Program (K-5), Middle Years Program (6-10), Diploma Program (11-12) and Career-Related Program (11-12). Please see [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org) for more information.

### 2. How many IB programs are there in Atlanta Public Schools?

There are currently 13 authorized IB programs in APS, more than any other school district in Georgia. Of these, 11 are housed at traditional schools and 2 programs are located at Wesley International Academy (charter school):

- Primary Years Program (PYP): 9 elementary schools
- Middle Years Program (MYP): 2 middle schools and 1 high school\*
- Diploma Program (DP): 2 high schools

As part of the cluster planning process (still in draft), three high school clusters (Jackson, Mays, and North Atlanta) have chosen IB as their signature program. If cluster plans are approved, the number of authorized IB schools in APS may increase to 27 by FY19-20. APS current and prospective IB high schools are investigating adding the new IB Career-Related Program (CP).

\*Sutton Middle School and North Atlanta High School partner to jointly offer MYP across grades 6-10.

### 3. How are IB programs different at elementary, middle, and high schools?

Each of the four IB programs offers globally relevant, age-appropriate rigorous instruction and assessment with a whole-child focus.

PYP and MYP are whole school programs—EVERY student K-10 is an IB student. There is not an IB curriculum K-10. Instead, IB standards and practices require PYP and MYP teaching staffs to plan extensive IB units and assessments around the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) while embedding IB program aims and objectives, inquiry-based learning, global relevance, student action, community service, and the IB Learner Profile: <http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/flyers-and-artworks/learner-profile-en.pdf>.

DP and the new Career-Related Program (CP) are optional programs for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. These programs provide a clearly defined curriculum and a blend of rigorous internally and externally assessed culminating examinations and projects for each IB course.

The DP provides exceptional university preparation and encourages students to take advanced coursework in Math, English, Social Studies, Science, World Language, Arts, and Theory of Knowledge over the junior and senior years. IB exam scores can be sent to universities for credit and advanced placement.

Students who take the full range of examinations have the opportunity to earn the IB Diploma as an additional credential beyond the Georgia High School Diploma.

The CP is intended for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who are interested in both university and career preparation in high school. The program offers students the opportunity to take between two and four DP courses and to complete an approved career pathway.

Program	Grades	Format	Instructional Model	Curriculum
CP	11-12	Student Choice	Disciplinary	Prescribed Topics and Assessments
DP	11-12	Student Choice	Disciplinary	Prescribed Topics and Assessments
MYP	6-10	Whole School	Interdisciplinary	Teaching and Learning Framework
PYP	K-5	Whole School	Trans-disciplinary	Teaching and Learning Framework

#### **4. Is the IB appropriate for academically average students?**

IB programs are whole school in grades K-10. Every student in the PYP and MYP is an IB student and participates in the full program of instruction, assessment, and culminating projects. Accommodations are made as necessary for English Language Learners, Special Education students, Gifted students, etc.

IB DP and CP are options for students in grades 11-12. Both programs are intended for students with average or better academic records and may be better suited for students with above average drive and organizational/time management skills. As with PYP and MYP, accommodations are offered to students with identified special needs.

The IBO does not set any admissions criteria for these programs, but instead defers to IB schools to set policy. For example, DP admissions guidelines at North Atlanta admit students with a B average in core courses who also complete the MYP Personal Project in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. As of March 2015, 71% of current 10<sup>th</sup> grade students at North Atlanta meet the grade guideline for enrollment in DP next year.

#### **5. Why should a school consider becoming an IB World School?**

School communities should consider whether or not they are interested in offering rigorous, age-appropriate programs in international education that connect students to global contexts. They should review the IB mission statement: <http://www.ibo.org/en/about-the-ib/mission/> and Learner Profile (see the link in question 3 above) to see if these high-level guidelines fit well with local community needs and interests. As a minimum, the Principal should attend level 1 IB training and share key program elements with the entire school community prior to contacting IB to start the authorization process. Please see question 6 below for additional information.

#### **6. What are the criteria to become an IB school?**

Schools interested in becoming IB World Schools must successfully complete the authorization process. During this process, the IB supports the candidate school in building the programmatic understanding and organizational structures it will need to implement IB's internationally minded programs.

The authorization process varies by school and IB program, but typically takes between three and five years. It includes the following phases:

- Consideration Phase
- Request for Candidacy/Decision on Candidacy
- Candidate Phase
- Request for Authorization/Decision on Authorization

Please visit: <http://www.ibo.org/en/become-an-ib-school/how-to-become-an-ib-school/> for more details.

## 7. How much do IB programs cost?

Minimum IB program costs include payment of annual program fees after authorization, startup and ongoing teacher training, release time for IB Coordinators, additional World Language teachers beyond current APS average allocations, and DP and CP exam shipping. Additional recommended expenses include exam fees for students, materials and supplies budgets, subscription to the Managebac IB data system, and teacher release time and substitute teachers for training and curriculum planning.

The following table shows sample annual expected costs if all 9 schools (10 IB programs) in the Maynard Jackson cluster became authorized IB World Schools by FY19-20:

<b>Authorized Cluster</b>			
<b>Description</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Each</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Program Costs</b>			
Annual/Eval Fees (Authorized Programs)	10	12,000	120,000
Annual Candidate Fees (Prospective Programs)	0	10,000	0
Authorization Visit (One time cost)	0	5,000	0
Local IB Training Current Schools (8 per program per year)	90	950	85,500
Travel IB Training Current Schools (2 per program per year)	20	2,200	44,000
Local IB Training Prospective Schools (12 per program per year)	0	950	0
Travel IB Training Prospective Schools (4 per program per year)	0	2,200	0
Diploma Program Exam Fees (Per DP Senior)	100	960	96,000
Diploma Program Exam Shipping Fees	1	7,000	7,000
IB Publications/Student Course Companions	10	10,000	100,000
Managebac IB Data System Subscription	5,000	20	100,000
<b>Staffing</b>			
IB Coordinator Positions (Released Teacher Position)	10	82,697	826,970
Additional World Language Teachers	7	82,697	578,879
Theory of Knowledge Teachers (DP)	1	82,697	82,697
Approaches to Learning Teachers (CP)	1	82,697	82,697
Stipends for IB Teacher Planning Sessions (Daily Rate)	400	150	60,000
Substitute Teachers for Teacher Release Time (Daily Rate)	100	110	11,000
			<b>Total</b>
			<b>\$2,194,743</b>

## 8. What are the requirements of the IB Diploma?

In order to earn the IB Diploma, students must take DP classes and examinations in six or more subject groups and complete the DP core elements.

Exams are scored on a 7 point scale. To achieve the IB Diploma, students must average a 4+ across all exams (24 out of 45 possible points). Bonus points are available from DP core elements including:

- Theory of Knowledge course: students reflect on the nature of knowledge and on how we know what we claim to know
- Extended Essay: independent, self-directed research, culminating in a 4,000-word, college-level paper
- Creativity, Action, Service: students complete a 150-hour project related to those three concepts

The six DP subject groups include coursework in Math, English, Social Studies, Science, World Language, and the Arts. There are multiple options available for each of these subjects (i.e., Math Studies, Math Higher Level, Math Standard Level, and Further Mathematics). Normally students take three DP courses at the higher level and three at standard level.

## 9. What if my student takes IB Diploma classes but does not earn the IB Diploma?

Similar to students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams, DP and CP students receive a transcript of their examination scores that may be presented to universities for credit and placement decisions. This transcript is available whether or not the IB Diploma is earned.

Each university sets their own recognition policies. Some universities accept IB scores of 4 or better for credit or placement, while other institutions only accept higher scores in higher level exams. A spreadsheet showing current university recognition of IB coursework is available at: <http://www.ibo.org/en/university-admission/recognition-of-the-ib-diploma-by-countries-and-universities/>.

## 10. How do IB Diploma courses compare with AP courses?

AP and IB Diploma courses are both excellent options for APS students seeking greater academic challenge in high school. The following table summarizes some of the similarities and differences:

	<b>Advanced Placement</b>	<b>International Baccalaureate Diploma Program</b>
Course Length	1 year	2 years*
Exam Scale	5 Points	7 Points
Georgia CCRPI Measure of Success	3+ out of 5	4+ out of 7
Multiple Choice Exams	Yes	No
Essay/Constructed Response Exams	Yes	Yes
University Recognition	Yes	Yes
Offered at Grades	9-12	11-12
*A few IB courses, such as Math Studies, are only 1 year long		