

## **Why stay in the Hillsboro Cluster through to High School?**

Snap shot of the IB (International Baccalaureate) program at Hillsboro.

A PowerPoint with an overview of IB was filled with lots of information! To follow are some highlights from the PowerPoint presentation:

- Diploma program (DP) is very academic/content oriented as opposed to the Primary Years Program/Middle Years Program (PYP/MYP) program being a way to teach the existing curriculum.
- DP is college prep.
- PYP/MYP, although used to teach existing curriculum, help tie subjects together for students to relate them together for better learning. Teachers teach differently.
- PYP/MYP are school based. All student work is graded at the school level.
- DP tests are mailed out of the school to places like Chili, Iran and Atlanta for grading. An example was given of a class that 20% of the grade is computed at the school level and 80% by the test that is mailed elsewhere.
- MYP has a personal project.
- IB puts together the best practices from all over the world.
- IB changes the way we do business; we talk to each other more. IB provides a framework. Teachers plan more together. Students have input into how a subject is learned. There is more communication between students/teachers.
- North America and China are the two fastest growing areas for IB.
- IB provides multiple opportunities to make choices; can be flexible.
- IB promotes a community of learners with teachers and students and staff. There will be IB training for guidance counselors at West End and JT Moore soon.

## **Specifics about the 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> grade Diploma Program:**

- Students do a 4000 word research paper (term paper). Since the faculty is well versed in enough subjects, it can be about any subject in which a teacher can be the mentor.
- Students are required to do 150 hours of community service of which 50 involve creativity, 50 action and 50 service. Students are more reflective about what they do to satisfy this requirement.
- HL means higher level and is 240 hours of instruction over two years. Each student takes 3 HL courses and is allowed to choose the 3<sup>rd</sup> one.
- SL means standard level and is 150 hours of instruction over two years.
- SL language is available now for French and Spanish. Eventually will have HL Spanish.
- DP keeps student focused/motivated thru the end of the senior year (instead of coasting at end of school year after receiving college acceptance letters). DP tests are not taken until May and results are not received until summer. Mary Catherine gave example of a student accepted to UVA whose acceptance was rescinded due to student "taking off" the last of senior year; was able to write letter and get back in

## **Other Hillsboro info:**

- Next school year, will go to an AB Modified Block schedule with 8 periods. There will still be some classes taken daily.
- The new block schedule will allow students to take Geometry and Algebra II at the same time.
- Guidance counselor mentioned that colleges like to see how many AP and IB classes are offered at a high school.
- The variety in course offerings is extensive to fit the needs of many students.

**AP versus IB comparison:**

- AP classes mostly in English, History and Latin and rarely in Science or French
- IB is more inclusive. Example: IB History of the Americas includes Latin America and Canada whereas AP History is less inclusive.

**Student related comments:**

- Yes, you can have a life and still do IB.
- One student in attendance works part-time.
- Two football players are currently in DP.
- College interviews focus on the IB aspect.
- Three recent DP graduates are on full scholarship at Tulane University.
- Yousef (graduated last school year) is on partial scholarship at Vanderbilt. He is former JTM student.

Although West End Middle has IB in grades 5-8 and JT Moore has IB in grades 6-8, there is no MYP IB in 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grades at Hillsboro. Hopefully, funds will be raised soon so that MYP can be added for 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grades. A “pre IB DP” curriculum was discussed. Those students who plan to do the DP in 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> grades, take “pre IB” classes. English Honors is offered in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. AP World History and AP Human Geography are two other “pre IB DP” classes.

Finally, it is hoped that the Hillsboro Cluster will be the first K-12 IB program. In addition to filling the gap for 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> grade IB at Hillsboro, several elementary schools in the cluster (Percy Priest and Julia Green) are pursuing PYP status at this time. JT Moore plans to expand to include 5<sup>th</sup> grade MYP. At some point, Chinese might be offered as a foreign language option as Julia Green and Eakin both offer Mandarin.