

## **Desert Mountain High School IB Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is IB?**

IB is the abbreviation for International Baccalaureate, an educational program, founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968. IB offers a variety internationally minded, education programs, including the Primary Years Program, Middle Years Program, Diploma Program and Career-Related Program. IB programs exist in over 140 countries in both public and private schools. SUSD is proud to now offer three IB programs (Primary Years, Middle Years and Diploma).

### **What is the difference between PYP, MYP and DP?**

They are all under the umbrella of International Baccalaureate (IB). The Primary Years Program is offered for students in grades kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade. The Middle Years Program (MYP) is offered for students in grades 6-10. The Diploma Program (DP) is offered in grades 11-12.

### **What is the main difference between AP and IB classes?**

Advanced Placement courses (AP) are single courses that prepare students for the AP test at the end of the course. IB is a holistic education program. The IB Middle Years Program focuses on skill development and global context of learning. The Diploma Program has a specific scope and sequence of coursework while AP you can pick and choose classes without committing to an entire AP schedule. The IB exams, unlike AP, rarely have multiple choice questions. The only subject area that has a portion of their test in multiple choice form are the sciences. Students must answer in essay form and their answers are evaluated by graders. AP has one day of testing, while the IB assessments take place in class over one or two years and has in class exams. AP tests are more content based, what students know. IB are more performance based, applying what students know. ***There is no right or wrong option, it just depends on the student, what path is best for them.***

### **Can I play sports and be involved in extra-curricular activities and participate in the IB Programs?**

Yes. Many students participate and compete in high level theater, dance and music programs. We also have most sports represented amongst our students, along with a variety of club participants who balance school, activities and even part-time jobs. IB encourages well-rounded learners with interests outside of the classroom.

### **Why are there some classes that have IB MYP and non IB MYP students mixed together?**

Not all courses are designated as IB only. Some classes are based more on ability level. This is common in the math and sciences. There is no disadvantage for students to have IB and non IB students together. In fact, most students enjoy seeing peers that are not in the IB program in those classes. The designated IB MYP classes are in English and History freshman and sophomore years and select Spanish classes. If there are IB students included, the teacher has had some IB training and understands the IB learning philosophy. There is no disadvantage for non IB students to be placed with IB students. In fact, IB encourages best practices in teaching, which is beneficial to all students.

## **What are the benefits of participating in the IB Programs and receiving an IB Diploma?**

One of the many benefits of the Diploma Program is that it offers HL level coursework, which require a two year study in a subject area. Many universities respect the depth of knowledge IB student's experience. International Baccalaureate is recognized world-wide for its rigor, inquiry based, collaborative environment with a global minded emphasis. We recommend you consult university admissions of schools in consideration to see how an IB Diploma would benefit your student. About 85% of DMHS students who complete the Diploma Program earn their IB diploma.

## **Will my child be prepared for AP testing if they are taking IB courses?**

There are opportunities to sit for an Advanced Placement test after completing some IB courses. Teachers will suggest appropriate review materials. However, the course will not be taught with the primary purpose of preparing for the AP exam. The course will honor the intended IB educational philosophy.

## **What are the requirements to participate in the IB MYP Program?**

We are looking for highly motivated students. Students who enjoy a collaborative, inquiry based learning environment. Students must study a second language that is new to them (French, Spanish or Mandarin). Students also complete a personal exploration project during their sophomore year of study. The students work with a mentor teacher and present their work in the spring of their sophomore year. Students must complete the personal project to be considered for the IB Diploma Program in their junior year.

## **What are the requirements to participate in and receive an IB Diploma?**

Students must complete an application, submit transcripts and standardized test scores, along with two teacher evaluations. We are looking for highly motivated students. Students who enjoy a collaborative, inquiry based learning environment. Students must complete their 4 years of study in (French, Spanish and Mandarin). Each year students also complete CAS hours (volunteer hours in creativity, activity and service). Junior and senior years, students work with a mentor teacher on an extended essay topic of interest to the student.

## **If I join the IB MYP Program freshman year am I committed to all four years?**

No. You can decide each year whether or not you want to continue. 92% of students continue on from freshman to sophomore year. There is an application to enter the Diploma Program junior year.

## **How does the homework load compare to non IB students?**

This varies from student to student. We often see some challenges in transitioning from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to freshman year. This is true of many freshman students, whether they are in the IB MYP program or taking other rigorous courses. Students learn time management skills among other important skills freshman year that help them succeed.