# Table of Contents

3  The IB MYP Program at MMS

4  MMS Parents' Role in the MYP

7  Exploring the IB MYP:
   MYP Program Model
   MYP Subject Areas

10 Elements of the IB Middle Years Program:
   Learner Profile
   Approaches to Learning (ATLs)
   Global Contexts

11  Assessment and Grading

12  Community Engagement and Service Action

13  Policies of IB MYP and MMS

14  Glossary
In a world more connected than ever, your child’s education should be, too.

It’s impossible to say just what job your middle schooler will hold when they go out into the workforce—they may have a position that is yet to be imagined. That’s why an IB education is even more valuable now than ever before.

The IB MYP framework is designed to develop and hone skills that your child will continually use over their lifetime, such as information literacy, self-management, and collaboration. Regardless of where your student’s academic journey may lead, they will always need to be an effective communicator and critical thinker.

IB is focused on educating the whole person. During your student’s time in the MYP they will not only be growing their intellect, but also their character. Your student will focus on skills such as reflective thinking and setting meaningful goals. They will be encouraged to be active members of their community, to find a need and meet it. They will be pushed to develop empathy, to understand what it means to be open-minded, and to feel comfortable taking appropriate risks.

When your child signs up for an IB education, they are not getting disjointed puzzle pieces without a clear picture of how to assemble them. They are receiving a thoughtfully designed puzzle and all the tools to put it together.

It’s time to be IB MYP.

MMS Mission Statement
Mountainside Middle School provides diverse educational opportunities that foster academic, social and emotional growth, inspiring students to create their future in a global community.
A Parent's Role
In the Middle Years Program

1. Use the lingo.
Staff and students are familiar with much of the terminology that goes along with IB MYP. We encourage you to learn some of these buzz words to connect with both your student and the teachers on campus.

Check out the Glossary on page 14!

2. Ask questions.
IB learning is inquiry based. It is all about the questions! We know middle schoolers may not love to chat about their school lives, but asking what they are studying in each subject area is a great place to start.

Many MMS students love to debate, so posing an open ended or opinion-based question about something academic may spark a lively discussion.

3. Visit Us.
The MMS Staff welcomes parents and community members to take an active role in educating students about the world beyond middle school. We love to bring guests into our classrooms and allow our students to learn first hand about job experiences, life experiences, and real-world skills that may help them be successful in the future. Please consider sharing your talents with our campus!

4. Model behavior.
As much as students may learn from teachers and textbooks they learn even more from their home environment! When your student sees you reading, researching, volunteering, being an active global citizen, and a life-long learner it does them a world of good.

We know that members of the greater MMS community are always displaying the MYP Learner Profile characteristics.
Students are the heart of the IB MYP framework. Working from the student center out, IB focuses on the Learner Profile, Approaches to Learning skills, service learning, including the community project completed in eighth grade, and the eight subject areas, all viewed through the lens of international-mindedness.
Exploring the IB MYP

**Subject Areas**

**Language and Literature:**
- Honors Language and Literature 6th, 7th, 8th
- Language and Literature 6th, 7th, 8th

**Visual and Performing Arts**
- Band
- Sculpture/3D Design
- Speech and Debate
- Strings
- Theatre
- Visual Arts
- Vocal Music

**Mathematics**
- Accelerated Mathematics 6th, 7th, 8th
- Algebra 1
- Mathematics 6th, 7th, 8th

**Sciences**
- Science 6th, 7th, 8th

**Physical and Health Education**
- Physical and Health Education 6, 7, 8
- Total Fitness 7, 8

**Individuals and Society**
- Individuals and Society 6th, 7th, 8th

**World Language Acquisition**
- World Language Exploratory 6th
  - French 1A, 1B
  - Mandarin 1A, 1B
  - Spanish 1A, 1B

**Design**
- Advanced Computers
- Applied Computer Concepts
- Applied Engineering
- Design My Future 6th
- Discovering STEM
- Exploring Computer Science
- Media Production
- STEM Applications
- Gifted Investigations
Elements of the IB Middle Years Program: 

**The Learner Profile**

At Mountainside, we encourage our students to be:

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Thinkers:** We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze 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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

We hope that you continue to promote the growth of these attributes in your student beyond the walls of school.
Elements of the IB Middle Years Program: Approaches to Learning

We want students to be successful, not only during their time at Mountainside or in the MYP program, but well beyond middle school. Therefore all of our teachers instruct students in Approaches to Learning skills (ATLs) that will help them be successful regardless of what kind of challenges they may face, academic or otherwise.

ATLs may be general or subject specific skills that students develop over the course of their time in the IB MYP program. ATL skills are explicitly taught and reflected upon in all classrooms. These are valuable tools to make learners more aware and successful throughout their lives.

ATL Skills are broken up into the categories below.
The IB MYP framework identifies six Global Contexts, or lenses, through which teachers and students can research, question, and learn. Every unit of study is focused through one global context to help strengthen students' ability to think like global citizens.

**Global Contexts**

- **Identities & Relationships**
  - Students may explore: beliefs and values, health, human relationships, cultures

- **Personal & Cultural Expression**
  - Students may explore: the expression of ideas, feelings, and beliefs, creativity, the appreciation of aesthetic

- **Orientation in Space and Time**
  - Students may explore: personal histories, migrations of humankind, interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations

- **Scientific & Technical Innovation**
  - Students may explore: the natural world and its laws, scientific principles, scientific and technological advances and their impacts

- **Fairness & Development**
  - Students may explore: rights and responsibilities of citizens, relationships between communities, peace and conflict resolution

- **Globalization & Sustainability**
  - Students may explore: the structure and function of organizations, societal decision-making, economic activities and their impact

Global contexts do not just provide a meaningful context for learning, they also move students in the direction of social emotional growth and learning. The affective ATL skills, which are both explicitly and implicitly taught, are embedded within global contexts and promote the holistic development of each student.
How do our classroom lessons change when we change the global context?

The Topic: Chinese New Year

- Students will explore Chinese New Year’s values, customs and beliefs.
- Students will explore creative techniques used in Chinese New Year ad campaigns.
- Students will explore Chinese New Year cultural and heritage celebration around the world.
- Students will investigate how technology is changing the Chinese New Year.
- Students will explore ways to reduce carbon footprint for an eco-friendly Chinese New Year.
- Students will explore ways to share Chinese New Year celebrations with underprivileged and homeless.

Vantage points for IB learning are chosen from six global contexts to encourage international mindedness and global engagement within the MYP. The IB encourages teachers to design units around a range of ideas and issues that are personally, locally, nationally, internationally and globally significant.
Assessment and Grading

The IB philosophy does not promote traditional grading, rather it asks that teachers provide meaningful feedback to students to help them continually improve their skills and understanding.

Given that our SUSD community uses traditional grades as a tool for communication among parents, students, and teachers, Mountainside uses both IB and traditional grades in order to give students what they need to succeed and parents what they need to feel part of SUSD.

Teachers use MYP rubrics to assess student products and performances. These rubrics provide students with information about areas of strength and areas needing development.

MYP rubrics are an eight point scale, with a score of eight meaning a student has gone above and beyond performing the assigned task or skill in innovative and novel ways. It is for this reason that eights are a rare occurrence during a students' time in the Middle Years Program.

Please refer to Mountainside's full Assessment and Grading Policy HERE.

Conventional Grading Says:  
A+  
A = 100% - 90%  
Advanced 7-8  
B = less than 90% - 80%  
Proficient 5-6  
C = less than 80% - 70%  
3-4  
D = less than 70% - 60%  
Limited 1-2  
F = below 60%  
Keep Learning!

IB MYP Says:  
7  
Basic

Please refer to Mountainside's full Assessment and Grading Policy HERE.
Mountainside Middle School is grateful to be situated in an active and supportive community. Students at MMS should have an awareness of happenings around them and feel empowered to create change. It is our goal to instill in students the desire to not only be an active part of their community, but also to recognize needs and give back to local and global communities.

Community project and service learning are integral parts of the IB MYP curriculum. Students at MMS will expand their experiences as agents of change through community action. There will be quarterly lessons for students to investigate and learn about the challenges that people face. Learners will have the opportunity to take action and make a positive difference in peoples' lives by participating in service learning. Each Mountainside project will be designed to move our world forward in a beneficial way.

In the third year at MMS, students will apply and evaluate the skills and knowledge they have acquired by engaging with our community to make it a better place. Eighth graders will complete an in-depth investigation and action plan to gain a deeper understanding of service learning and present their findings and reflections to the MMS community. The 8th Grade Community Project is a year-long undertaking, beginning in August and culminating with a presentation in May.

Be Involved!

The MMS Staff welcomes parents and community members to take an active role in educating students about the world beyond middle school. We love to bring guests into our classrooms and allow our students to learn first hand about job experiences, life experiences, and real-world skills that may help them be successful in the future. Please consider sharing your talents with our campus!
IB MYP and MMS Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

MMS has high expectations for students regarding academic integrity. **Parents should** speak to their children about the need to be honest and why it is important in the context of academics. **Parents should** also read the assignments their students are turning in to see the quality of work their student is creating.

Students shall:
- Not engage in any form of academic dishonesty at any time; including collusion, copying, plagiarism, or any other forms of cheating.
- Learn and practice correct methods of citing sources, and ask teachers for guidance when they are not sure.
- Ensure that all of the work they submit is their own.
- Inform a staff member when they are aware that another student or students have demonstrated academic dishonesty.
- Work collaboratively only in appropriate circumstances and when their teachers have explicitly stated they may do so.

Inclusion Policy

At Mountainside, the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme is for every student. To ensure that all students are able to achieve academic success and reach their fullest potential, students will be provided support when needed in the form of accommodations through Special Education, 504 plans and Gifted Services.

Mountainside Special Education seeks to help students become independent learners, to teach learning strategies to prepare them to be successful in their general education classes, and to prepare them for post-secondary experiences. These goals will be achieved through a partnership among student, home, and school. Additionally, all students will be part of and exposed to the IB MYP philosophy and framework through all classes and coursework.

Language Policy

At Mountainside, we believe that communication and proper use of language is central to learning in every curricular area and is critical to ensuring that our students become independent, critical thinkers; lifelong learners and responsible citizens. Because different languages are spoken throughout the MMS extended community our students are encouraged to understand each other’s language and culture. We at Mountainside understand the power of language and realize that what we say and how we say it directly affects our perceptions of one another.

Our goal is to help every student begin to become proficient in at least two languages. All students will use at least two languages, but not all of them to the same extent. Students vary in their ability to learn a second language; some achieve limited proficiency in their second language while others will become truly bilingual or multilingual.

Please click below to view the full policies.
Approaches to Learning (ATL or ATL Skills) - These may be general or subject specific skills that students develop over the course of their time in the IB MYP program. Students receive explicit instruction on the use of these skills during their time in the classroom. It is our hope that these will be valuable tools to make them more aware of their learning and become better problem solvers for life.

Community Project - An in-depth, student led and designed project completed in 8th grade that demonstrates an awareness of meeting local and global needs.

Community Action/Service Learning - Is an integral part of the IB program. Students will be given opportunities to recognize and meet needs of the community during their time in school. It is highly encouraged that they are also exposed to community action beyond school.

Global Contexts - The lens through which a unit of instruction is taught. There are six global contexts which foster learners' awareness beyond our local communities.

Grading - The IB philosophy does not promote traditional grading. Instead, it asks that teachers provide meaningful feedback to students to help them improve their skills and understanding. Mountainside uses a mix of both IB and traditional grades in order to give students what they need to succeed and parents a common language for communication.

GRASPS - Many teachers assess student learning through an assessment activity called GRASPS. It is an acronym which stands for Goal, Role, Audience, Situation, Product/Performance, and Standards. Following this format ensures that students participate in relevant and meaningful tasks to demonstrate skills they developed during an MYP unit of instruction.

Inquiry-Based Learning - This is learning through asking and answering questions. Rather than receiving information, instruction begins with a question and students are guided to find answers and make meaning from them.
International Baccalaureate (IB) - “Imagine a worldwide community of schools, educators and students with a shared mission to empower young people with the values, knowledge and skills to create a better and more peaceful world. This is the International Baccalaureate (IB). IB programmes aim to provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complexities of the world around them, as well as equipping them with the skills and dispositions needed for taking responsible action for the future. They provide an education that crosses disciplinary, cultural, national and geographical boundaries, and that champions critical engagement, stimulating ideas and meaningful relationships.”
Taken from: https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/what-is-an-ib-education-en.pdf

Learner Profile - The learner profile is a set of ten characteristics that IB has identified as foundational for students to grow and develop into successful global citizens.

Middle Years Programme (MYP) - “The MYP is a challenging, inquiry-based framework that encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world. The MYP curriculum framework includes eight subject groups, providing a broad and balanced education for early adolescents.”
Taken from: https://www.ibo.org/programmes/middle-years-programme/

Mountainside Middle School (MMS) - The amazing school where it all happens! Students learn, grow, and thrive. Home of the Mountainside Cougars.

Rubric (MYP Rubric) - A tool used by educators to evaluate students areas of strength and areas where growth is needed. The MYP rubric is set on an eight point scale, with a score of eight meaning a student has completed or performed the assigned task or skill consistently beyond the standards. It is rare to see eights earned during a students time in the Middle Years Programme.

Statement of Inquiry (SOI) - The statement that drives the inquiry process during a unit of instruction. Students should be aware of the SOI in all of their subject areas and have some thoughts and/or feelings relating to it.

Subject Area - The eight content areas that students study during their time in the Middle Years Programme are: Arts (Visual and Performing), Design, Individuals and Society, Language Acquisition, Language and Literature, Mathematics, Physical and Health Education, and Sciences.

Summative Assessment - An assessment of students' skills and knowledge acquired during a unit of instruction. Summative assessments come in many forms, some are performance based, some project based, and some may be exam style.