

November 2007 IB Information Night Questions and Answers

Q. What do students need to prepare for taking IB Courses?

A. IB Program Coordinator, Laura Robb, indicated that students in Middle School should begin a world language. IB languages offered at Sealth include Spanish, and Japanese. Chinese is also offered at Sealth, but is not yet an IB course. She also indicated that students strive to take the most challenging math courses they can. Once at Chief Sealth, the 9th and 10th grade curriculum is aligned with the IB curriculum to prepare students for their 11th and 12th grade studies.

Q. Is IB a curriculum for gifted students?

A. Dr. Vaughan, the director of Advanced Learning from the Seattle Public Schools, said that the IB curriculum would be an excellent choice for gifted students, but that students did not need to be gifted to succeed in and benefit from the IB program. He mentioned that in-depth, critical thinking aspects of IB worked well for a wide variety of students. IB courses provide more opportunities for in-depth understanding and inquiry than the more survey oriented Advanced Placement courses—and offer students more opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, which benefits many types of learners.

Q. How much college credit can students earn with the IB Program?

A. It depends on several factors. The University of Washington, for example, grants students who obtain an IB Diploma automatic sophomore standing when they enter as freshman. Depending on the scores earned on individual IB exams, and the policy of the college, students can earn college credit for their IB classes. For more details check out: <http://www.ibo.org/country/US/index.cfm>.

Q. In addition to the curriculum and diverse student body, what hands-on international opportunities are available for students at Chief Sealth?

A. There is an ongoing exchange program with China, and the Global Visionaries program that takes students to Guatemala each spring and summer.

Q. Do students have to take honors courses to be eligible to take IB courses in 11th and 12th grade?

A. No, all students are encouraged to take at least one or more IB courses in the junior and senior years, but do not have to take honors classes in order to do so.

Q. What has been the experience of Ingraham High School in terms of program sustainability?

A. IB Diploma Coordinator for Ingraham, Guy Thomas, reported that their program has transitioned from its start up status with district funding to independent sustainability. He was very heartened by the interest in, and support of IB education expressed by the district superintendant in the programs at both Ingraham and Chief Sealth. Chief Sealth will continue to receive direct district start-up support for 2 ½ more years.