

February 23, 2010

Dear Students and Parents:

We are all very excited about the opportunity that is now officially available to our students starting next year due to our recent authorization by the International Baccalaureate Organization. We have had several meetings with students and parents over the past two years to review the attributes and potential advantages of pursuing the IB Diploma. Now that Saint Andrew's School has secured the necessary approval, we encourage you to consider:

- Admission is open to all students who meet the basic prerequisites for their classes. This is a wonderful opportunity for students looking to demonstrate a breadth of abilities (e.g., science, math, humanities, and service) to college admissions committees. This is also an opportunity for students seeking to "prove themselves" in 11th and 12th Grade.
- IB students have stronger than average acceptance rates at colleges and universities. What the IB possesses is course content geared to college course expectations and external exams. The advantage for admissions officers is that these exams provide an externally referenced judgment of academic performance independent of GPA.

These comments from two high profile Admission Deans demonstrate the high regard for the International Baccalaureate:

"IB is well known to us for excellent preparation. Success in an IB program correlates well with success at Harvard. We are always pleased to see the credentials of the IB Diploma Program on the transcript."

Marilyn McGrath Lewis,
Director of Undergraduate Admission
Harvard University

"One of the advantages of an IB curriculum is its structure and quality. It is a coordinated program, well established, well known and well respected. We know the quality of IB courses, and we think the IB curriculum is terrific."

Christoph Guttentag,
Director of Undergraduate Admission
Duke University

- IB students receive a significant number of transfer credits (30-45 credits at Florida's public colleges and universities and sophomore standing at many others).
- IB students attain higher than average post-secondary GPA's, the key to anyone's success in graduate school admission upon college graduation.
- Contrary to what many believe, music students have a place in the IB program. In response to concerns from musically active students, we will offer IB Music as one of the course options, so students can remain in band or chorus and complete the full IB diploma. Our Performing Arts Department, as well as our Visual Arts Department, is very excited about the opportunities this program offers to differentiate our students in the college application process and enhance their experiences in the arts. The Friends of the Arts has asked how they might help facilitate this wonderful enhancement to our arts programming.

- While foreign language is an important aspect of the IB Diploma Program students can still earn the diploma by starting a foreign language new to them, referred to as “Ab Initio” language. We have also engaged an instructor to work with current 10th grade students who might need some supplemental work in order to achieve the level of proficiency needed to enter and be successful in IB Spanish SL. This extra help will be offered this Spring, during the school day if possible, at no cost to the student.
- The Upper Division Theology credit required for graduation can be earned by taking the IB Philosophy course for the first cohort of IB students and, in the following year, by taking either IB World Religions or IB Philosophy, so students do not need additional non-IB classes in this area to graduate. Any student in the Class of 2011 may take the IB Philosophy course as a History or Theology elective.

We realize that the IB Diploma is not for every student but, at the same time, we hope that students and parents carefully consider this educational opportunity now available to them. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 561-210-2410 if you have questions about the program.

Sincerely,

Dr. Robert J. Bouressa
Director of College Guidance
& International Academic Programs