Frequently Asked Questions

What is the International Baccalaureate?

The International Baccalaureate diploma program is a comprehensive and rigorous college-preparatory program designed to meet the needs of academically talented and highly motivated high school students. Only schools authorized by the International Baccalaureate Organization in Geneva, Switzerland may offer the IB curriculum and allow their students to sit for IB examinations in hopes of earning an IB diploma. IB diploma students follow a prescribed course of study in six disciplines, sit for examinations in each discipline, and fulfill additional requirements of the program.

Internationally recognized as one of the most challenging college-preparatory curricula available, this prestigious program is offered in over 1,400 schools in 130 countries. IB students are assured that their courses of study conform to world standards, not merely local, state, or national standards. The student who fulfills IB’s expectations demonstrates a strong commitment to learning, in terms of both the mastery of subject content and the development of the skills and discipline necessary for success in a competitive world. Students who successfully complete the program and pass their IB examinations earn the IB diploma and may earn college credit and advanced standing at colleges and universities around the world. To learn more about IBO, visit its Web site, www.ibo.org.

When does a student enter IB?

Students normally enter the International Baccalaureate program as freshmen and enroll in a pre-IB program of studies for the ninth and tenth grades. The pre-IB program is designed to prepare students for the rigors of the formal IB diploma program during the eleventh and twelfth grades. Under exceptional circumstances, students completing ninth grade elsewhere can be admitted into the pre-IB program as sophomores. We do not consider admittance for juniors and seniors unless they have been pursuing an IB diploma at another IB school.

What is a Diploma Candidate?

A Diploma Candidate is a student in grade eleven or twelve who is pursuing all the requirements of the IB Diploma Program. All juniors and seniors in the Wichita High School East IB program are Diploma Candidates. Freshmen and sophomores are considered pre-IB students, and become IB Diploma Candidates when they begin their junior year.

What are the requirements for an IB diploma?

Students earning the IB diploma must enroll in and complete IB courses in six disciplines: **Language A** (the student’s best language), **Language B** (a foreign language), **Mathematics**, **Physics**, **Chemistry**, and **History**.
**Individuals and Societies** (the social studies), **Experimental Science** (including Computer Science), and an **Elective** (Music, Theater, Art). Students may choose to pursue a second science, foreign language or social studies field in lieu of the IB elective. Students must test in all six disciplines, three at a higher level (HL), which assumes two years of study during the junior and senior years, and three at the Standard Level (SL), two of which will occur over one year of study during either the junior or senior year and the 3rd SL subject will be taught throughout the junior and senior year. (Students may test in four disciplines at the HL level if they so choose.) For Diploma purposes, students may not test at the SL level until their junior year and may not test at the HL level until their senior year. During a semester each of their junior and senior year, students complete the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course. Students also fulfill the 7 learner outcomes specific to Creativity-Activity-Service (CAS) during the course of their junior and senior years, and they submit an Extended Essay, a 4,000-word research paper on a topic of their choice.

SL and HL tests are evaluated externally by examiners contracted by the IB Curriculum and Assessment office in Cardiff, Wales. These examiners are usually university professors who are experts in their fields. Tests and other required components of SL and HL courses are evaluated on a point scale of 1 (the lowest) to 7 (the highest). Students must receive a minimum of twenty-four points on their six tests (including 12 points on their HL tests) and complete Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay and CAS in order to earn an IB diploma.

**May students be enrolled in a partial IB program?**

No. When students enroll as ninth graders in the pre-IB program, it is assumed that they are preparing to earn the **full IB diploma**. Students may not enroll only in IB courses of their choice.

**May students retest?**

Yes, students may “re-sit” for SL and HL examinations the following year. They may register for them through their original IB school, or, if they have moved, through an IB school close to them.

**May students take IB exams without taking IB courses?**

No, the International Baccalaureate requires that a student enroll in the prescribed IB curriculum in order to be eligible for IB testing and diploma candidacy.

**Are students required to do school work during the summer?**

The summer before 9th grade, students will be expected to gain strong working knowledge of basic elements of fiction and some figurative language, specific information to be studied will be provided. The remaining 3 summers, students can expect to be assigned the reading of two or three texts (depending on their grade level).

Upon returning to school in the fall, students will be expected to participate in class discussions and complete written assignments in their English classes based on the assigned reading. Students will be provided with specific information on the reading required for their grade level at the end of each spring semester.
Do IB students earn regular USD 259 diplomas?

Yes, the IB program is designed so that students meet all the requirements for a Wichita Public Schools diploma. Students should work closely with the IB counselor and coordinator to ensure that they enroll in courses required for a USD 259 diploma. These requirements include but are not limited to one year of Physical Education Foundations, one year of fine arts, one semester of CTE, one semester of financial literacy, and one semester of U.S. Government. **Students who take Pre-IB A.P. U.S. History but leave the IB program prior to graduation are responsible for taking a second year of U.S. History in order to meet USD 259 graduation requirements.**

How can students earn college credit for IB work?

Most colleges and universities in the United States have published policies regarding college credit for IB work. Some schools automatically award sophomore status to students entering with an IB diploma. Most schools, however, examine students' test results individually to grant credit or advanced standing in particular disciplines. Students should contact college admissions offices to determine IB credit policies or visit the IBO Web site, [www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition](http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition). IB students may also earn college credit and advanced standing by taking Advanced Placement and CLEP examinations. There are no prerequisites for taking AP exams, and IB students have historically performed exceedingly well on AP exams.

May IB students enroll in regular East High courses?

Yes, IB students are expected to enroll in elective courses offered at East High as well as East courses required for a Wichita Public Schools diploma. These courses are described in detail in the *Wichita Public Schools High School Program of Studies*. However, IB students and parents should keep in mind that one of the characteristics of IB that makes it so appealing to colleges and universities is the fact that IB is a prescriptive program. Because it is prescriptive, it does not allow for many electives. Students wishing to pursue three electives each year will not be able to do so within the IB program.

May IB students participate in East High sports and activities?

Absolutely! As soon as students become part of IB, they become eligible for all sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities offered at East. Historically, IB students are among the most active students in East High, participating on every sports team, as well as in drama, debate, Scholars' Bowl, student government, vocal and instrumental music, pompon, cheerleading, etc.

What is CAS?

CAS is an acronym for Creativity-Activity-Service. The International Baccalaureate Organization firmly believes that students must be more than academicians; they must grow outside the classroom as well as in it. Consequently, all IB Diploma Candidates need to focus upon the seven CAS learner outcomes during the junior and senior years pursuing activities that develop their creativity (e.g., music lessons, ballet, poetry writing), involve action (e.g., football, managing the swim team), and provide a community service (e.g., tutoring elementary students, building shelters
for the homeless). CAS activities contributing to the IB diploma may begin immediately upon the conclusion of the sophomore year. Students must fulfill all 7 CAS learner outcomes while participating in activities from all 3 strands during the 18 months of their junior and senior year.

**East High pre-IB freshman and sophomore** must participate in three activities each year, representing a different CAS strand and objective each time. Freshmen may begin CAS activities during the summer, prior to their freshman year, but may only one activity earned over the summer toward the annual requirement. Details about PIB CAS requirements and opportunities are outlined in the *PIB CAS Handbook*, which is distributed to students at the beginning of the school year. The official Creativity, Activity, Service guide for IB Diploma Candidates is available on the East High, IB website.

**What is TOK?**

Theory of Knowledge (ToK) is a junior/senior, two-semester course required of all IB students. The course is depicted in the 4-year plan to be scheduled during the second semester of the junior year and first semester of the senior year. It is in one sense a course in epistemology, which is the investigation of how we know what we profess to know and how we arrive at knowledge in the various disciplines. The course investigates language as it affects perception, and it introduces students to aesthetics, logic, and ethics. ToK also serves to tie the various IB curricula together to allow students to reflect upon the knowledge they gain from science, literature, language, mathematics, and social studies.

**What is the Extended Essay?**

The extended essay (EE) is a 4,000-word research project required of all IB Diploma Candidates. Students choose a research question during the second semester of their junior year and complete an in-depth investigation on that topic. Guidance is provided through an extended essay advisor, and the extended essay is submitted early in the senior year. Details on the extended essay and its requirements are outlined in *The Complete Guide to Extended Essays* issued to IB juniors.

**How is a student accepted to IB?**

Admission into the Wichita IB program is by application only. Any 8th or 9th grader in the area is eligible to apply to the Program. Transportation will only be available for those students who live within the USD 259 boundaries & live more than 2.5 miles from East High School. The selection committee evaluates six criteria: middle school transcripts, teacher references, attendance history, a writing sample, the results of a critical thinking test, and an interview with a member of the IB staff. Students not selected may be put on a waiting list at the parent’s request.

**Once students are accepted into IB, can they be removed from the program?**

Yes, the IB staff has the right and the responsibility to remove students from IB if their academic performance is inadequate to enable them to be successful in the program, if they violate the IB Academic Honesty Policy, or if their behavior is such that it interferes with students' opportunities
to learn or teachers' opportunities to teach. All students are subject to the IB Probation and Exit Policy, which states that students must maintain a 3.0 grade average in order to remain in IB. Students not maintaining a 3.0 may be put on a semester's probation and will be given the academic help and counseling necessary to help them achieve the 3.0 average. If at the end of the probationary semester a student has not earned a 3.0, the student may be removed from the program.

People to Know in IB

Students and parents should maintain close contact with teachers in order to be aware of course requirements and class policies. If parents have concerns or questions about a particular class, they should contact the teacher of the class. Below is a listing of other IB staff members and their responsibilities.

**IB Coordinator**

Responsible to the International Baccalaureate Organization to ensure that the program meets IBO standards and requirements, the coordinator is also responsible for the overall direction of the program, for recruitment of students and staff, for registering students in their IB exams, for budgeting, and for communications between IB and East High, the BOE, students, parents, and the community at large. In addition, the coordinator sets policies for IB, handles discipline, and works with individual students and families in regard to academic progress and counseling.

**IB Counselor**

The IB counselor works with students to help them develop their four-year plans of study, completes course enrollment, makes schedule changes, and conducts the IB exams. Individually and as a member of the Student Support Team (SST), the IB counselor monitors students' progress in the program and counsels students on personal and academic issues. The IB counselor also provides college information to students and parents, including information about admissions, financial aid, scholarships, completing college applications, preparing for and taking the SAT and ACT, writing college essays, preparing a resume, and conducting college visits and interviews. The IB counselor also administers the PSAT and processes National Merit applications.

**CAS Coordinator**

The CAS (Creativity-Activity-Service) coordinator is responsible for the dissemination of CAS opportunity information to students, for monitoring students' progress in CAS activities, and for sending samples of students' CAS logs to IB for assessment.

**Student Support Team**

The Student Support Team (SST) is a group of IB staff responsible for identifying IB students who are experiencing academic difficulty and providing them with the appropriate assistance to help improve their performance.
IB Secretary

The IB secretary serves as receptionist for the IB program, handles all bookkeeping tasks and correspondence, maintains files on all IB students, coordinates the IB shadow program, and directs IB student assistants.

East High Attendance Clerk

If a student is absent from school, a parent should call the attendance clerk at 973-7207 as soon as possible on the day of the absence. If a student is absent three or more days, a parent may request to pick-up missed school work by contacting the IB secretary at 973-7289. Generally, twenty-four hours notice is required.

Students who are absent during all or a major part of the day are not permitted to participate in the interscholastic and extra-curricular activities scheduled for that date.

USD 259 policy states that absences are excused only for the following reasons: 1) personal illness, 2) family bereavement, 3) religious holidays, 4) court appearance, or 5) school-related activities. **Family vacations and visits are not considered excused absences.** Upon application to IB, students and parents sign an agreement that they will not schedule vacations or other recreational trips while school is in session. **All anticipated absences, including college visits, must be authorized in advance** with a *Request To Be Absent* form, which may be picked up from the IB secretary or the East High attendance clerk. The student must have the form signed by a parent and by all teachers and must then submit it to the IB coordinator for approval. *Teachers’ signatures indicate only whether a student’s work is in such a condition that he or she may afford to be absent* (i.e. they do not excuse the absence). The IB coordinator will indicate whether each absence is excused or unexcused based on USD 259 policies.

IB Parents Association

The purpose of the IB Parents Association is to promote the welfare and interests of the IB program and of the students enrolled in it by remaining informed about IB goals and policies and to support it with their time and service and by securing financial support for the program. Members include all parents/guardians of IB students. Tax-deductible contributions may be made to the IB Parents Association at any time. Elected parent representatives from each class serve as liaisons between each class and the Executive Board of Directors.

**Parents are encouraged to contact teachers or call the IB coordinator or counselor directly with any question or concern.**

The IB Parents Association regularly conducts informational meetings throughout the school year to address issues of interest to IB parents and students.

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