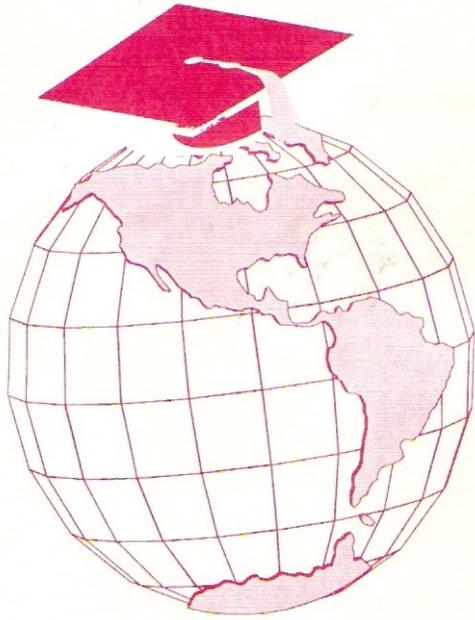


Mission Viejo High School

International Baccalaureate Program



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International Baccalaureate

In the spring of 1985 Mission Viejo High School became the first Orange County school to be accepted into the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma program. This program, based in Geneva, Switzerland, with North American Headquarters in New York City, allows students to earn an internationally recognized diploma. Students participating in this “school within a school” must complete an intense course of study, including a special course in “Theory of Knowledge,” which requires a 4,000 word thesis on a subject of each student’s special interest, and culminates in six internationally graded exams. Additionally, students must create reflective journals for their required creative, athletic, and social service activity.

For their efforts, students in the program may receive college credit for each exam passed. Additionally, because the students must become proficient in six academically demanding areas, including a foreign language, they also hold a distinct advantage in gaining admission to the college of their choice.

The program was originally begun in 1962 to unify the educational demands on all European students, and to recognize academic scholars. Canada soon followed Europe’s lead, and by 1974, the Ford Foundation had introduced the program to the United States.

In 1987 Mission Viejo High School became the first Orange County school to have a student earn the IB Full Diploma, the highest award available in the high school academic world. All indications from the universities in the United States now suggest the IB program sets the bar for academic excellence.

Why enter the IB?

- IB presents students with a challenging and stimulating program.
- IB emphasizes the philosophy of applied knowledge rather than mere book learning.
- IB involves students in an interdisciplinary education with “global” perspective.
- IB rewards students for being well-rounded and civically responsible.
- IB enhances the students’ chances for admittance to the universities of their choice as well as earns advanced placement credit, (including up to 30 units in the U.C. system.)

Who is eligible for IB?

Although academic excellence is certainly an essential criteria, success in the program also depends to a great degree on motivation and character. Therefore, students applying to the program should possess the dedication required to complete a rigorous, four-year program marked by conceptual thinking, creative expression, and writing across the curriculum.

For More Information

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Requirements

The IB curriculum is divided into Higher level courses (2 years of study) and Standard level courses (1 year of study), taken during grades 11 and 12. Honors classes required during grades 9 and 10 will effectively prepare students for the IB courses. In order to achieve the Full IB Diploma, students must pass exams in 3 Higher and 3 Standard level subjects. Students choose their own program of Higher and Standard level subjects from the following list:

1. English: (*Higher only*)
2. Foreign Language: French or Spanish (*Higher or Standard*)
3. History: (*Higher only*)
4. Science: Biology or Physics (*Higher or Standard*)
5. Mathematics: (*Higher or Standard*)
6. Option: an additional Science, Music, Psychology, Visual Arts, or Theater Arts

Additional requirements for the Full Diploma:

- An Extended Essay of approximately 4,000 words in one of the six subjects.
- A unique course entitled “Theory of Knowledge.” This course explores the essence of truth and the ways we know.
- Creative, Athletic, and Social Service activity during grades 11 and 12 that demonstrate evidence of eight IB learning outcomes.

Options at Mission Viejo High School

Full Diploma: student meets all the requirements – the ultimate goal of International Baccalaureate. (*Awarded from IB Geneva. University credits awarded*)

Certificates: for each Higher or Standard exam passed. (*University credits awarded for Higher Level exams*)

What should Intermediate School students do to prepare for IB?

In addition to taking honors level courses in the intermediate school, students must complete Algebra I. A student must enter 9th grade ready for Geometry to be on track to complete Calculus or Math SL in grade 12. Additionally, a student who enters grade 9 ready for the Language II, will reach Language IV in grade 11 and thus not be required to take Language in grade 12.

