



City High Middle School

The Diploma Programme HANDBOOK

Information for scholars, parents, and guardians
entering and continuing the Diploma Programme (DP)

2026-2027



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SECTION 1 | Entering the Diploma Programme



The first section of this living document presents a broad, comprehensive overview of the Diploma Programme for scholars and parents/guardians entering the programme in 11th grade. The remainder of this DP Handbook provides in-depth information for review for both new and returning scholars to DP.

This document focuses on the DP teaching and learning. It should be used in conjunction with the [2026-2027 Scholar & Parent Handbook](#) for scholar success and wellbeing.

Introduction Letter

Dear City Scholars and Families,

You are receiving this document because either you or your scholar is entering the Diploma Programme (DP) next year as a Junior at City High Middle School! Whether you or your scholar are joining the City community for the first time or have just completed the Middle Years Programme (MYP), you are all entering a new, challenging, and exciting chapter of your life. This document is meant to serve as a guide and reference point for you in entering the DP. Additional resources and information regarding school contacts, communication and learning platforms, and scholar emotional and mental support resources are also provided.

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) and the Diploma Programme (DP) are designed to develop critical-thinking, well-rounded, and globally-minded members of society, built upon the 10 IB Learner Profile attributes noted on page five of this document. While scholars develop as individuals with a sense of confidence, compassion, and capacity tempered by the requirements of the programme, scholars with the greatest success invest in the collaboration of their peers and encourage each other. This is truly a unique community that learns and grows together, and we are so excited to welcome you and to watch you grow.

Please remember to reach out to any of your school administrators, teachers, counselors, and support staff at any time for help, answers, and support.

We care about you. We're here for you. You belong here. Go City!

Sincerely,

City High Middle School Administration

Diploma Programme Overview

- [DP Overview Video](#) [23:39] by IB Coordinator, Jesse Antuma
- IB Video: [The IB Diploma Programme: A broad and balanced education](#)
- IB website: [What is the DP?](#)

IB Terminology

- IB has many acronyms and interesting titles. It may take a while to learn them all, but here are key terms that all scholars, parents, and guardians should know:
 - [ID Diploma Programme: Key Terms Explained For Parents](#)

IB Diploma

Perspective

- Achieving the IB Diploma is a major accomplishment, and it should be greatly celebrated if achieved. However, it is the experience of IB learning--the holistic development, the rigor, the higher-level thinking, the international-mindedness--that is the real reward. If a scholar does not achieve the IB Diploma, the scholar is still a successful, compassionate, and effective member of society locally and globally. To use a metaphor, the IB Diploma is the “cherry on top” of an already delicious and thoughtfully made dessert.

Requirements for Candidacy

- To obtain your IB diploma:
 - All CAS requirements met.
 - Receive passing grades for TOK and EE.
 - Do not receive more than three grades of a “3” or below in DP exams.
 - Take three (max. four) HL and three (min. two) SL classes.
 - At least 24 points must be earned between the 6 classes.
 - 12 pts minimum must come from HL courses, 9 pts minimum from SL
 - Consistent academic integrity.

Post-secondary Outcomes & College and University Accreditation

- [Post-Secondary Outcomes of IB DP Candidates in the US \(2024\)](#)
- Colleges and Universities can offer accreditation for IB scores in the same way they do AP scores. While recognition of IB--and the high-quality of its graduates--is growing among colleges and universities
 - [IB recognition database: Colleges and Universities](#)
 - This website provides examples of accreditation opportunities at numerous colleges and universities. Accreditation policies can be found on the college or university websites.

Our Goal and Your Partnership

Our goal at City is to help our scholars develop the tools, skills, and habits of mind to thrive as adults, build flourishing communities, and create a more sustainable future for all the world's inhabitants.

Our students are growing up in a rapidly changing, increasingly interconnected, and interdependent world.

We ask that our families become active participants in their student's education and to support the work we do with the International Baccalaureate Organization.

SECTION 2 | In-depth Information

THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME

What is the Diploma Programme?

The Diploma Programme is a challenging two-year program that uses an internationally recognized curriculum, allowing 11th and 12th grade scholars an opportunity to earn the IB diploma. The program prepares scholars for their next academic step and encourages them to:

- Ask challenging questions
- Learn how to learn
- Develop a strong sense of their own identity and culture
- Develop the ability to communicate with and understand people from other countries and cultures



What is the Learner Profile?

The Learner Profile is found at the heart of all levels of the IB Continuum and is positioned at the center of the programme model. The Learner Profile attributes display a variety of characteristics that surpass learning and scholastics. The descriptors of the Learner Profile can be found in **Appendix A**.



IB COURSES AND LEARNING

What courses will a scholar take in the Diploma Programme?

- DP courses are selected at the end of the scholar's 10th grade year.
- DP courses are two-year courses. The classes a scholar takes in Junior year will be the same classes the scholar takes in Senior year.
 - IB exams for each subject cover content and learned skills over the two-year period.
 - The two-year courses allow for greater depth and breadth of learning.
- DP courses are offered at varying levels of difficulty and engagement. Scholars have the opportunity to select the level they want to engage with the course towards the beginning of the first semester in the Senior year.
 - Scholars must pick three HL and three SL courses:
 - Higher Level (HL): Covers a broader range of content, requires more independent student learning, different requirements for Internal Assessments, may require sitting for an additional exam at the end of Senior year for the selected subject.
 - Standard level (SL)
 - Ab initio: *ONLY for Language B courses*
 - This level is reserved only for scholars who are beginning a new language at the start of the DP.
- DP courses can be previewed on our school's IB website: www.chmsib.com → DP Course Options

IB Course Group	DP Courses Offered at City 2026-2027
Group 1: Language A	Language A: Language and Literature (SL, HL)
Group 2: Language B	Mandarin Chinese (Ab initio, SL, HL) Spanish (Ab initio, SL, HL) French (Ab initio, SL, HL)

Group 3: Individuals and Societies	History of the Americas (SL, HL) Global Politics (SL, HL)
Group 4: Sciences	Biology (SL, HL) Chemistry (SL, HL) Physics (SL, HL) Environmental Systems and Societies (SL)
Group 5: Mathematics	Analysis and Approaches (SL, HL) Applications and Interpretations (SL)
Group 6: Arts & Electives	Visual Art (SL, HL) Music (SL, HL) Film (SL, HL) *Psychology (SL, HL) (Group 3)

** an elective course that cannot be taken as a stand-alone course for that group*

Are IB courses weighted?

A weighted GPA is based on the idea that some high school classes are much harder than others and that these rigorous classes should carry more weight. As a way to acknowledge the effort that goes into challenging courses, many high schools weight grades.

IB DP courses at City High Middle are weighted with a value of 1.25. This is done to recognize the rigorous course load City scholars take throughout their time in the Diploma Programme. Not all colleges will look at GPA in the same way. Some colleges will take the weighting into consideration, and some will not. The weighting is in place for the colleges and universities that take the GPA directly from the high school without recalculation, so that our scholars' transcripts will depict the value earned by our scholars in comparison to scholars from other districts.

IB Learning

Approaches to Learning (ATL)

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

How can I be an effective learner?

COMMUNICATION



INTERACTION

I can exchange thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction.



LANGUAGE

I can read, write and use languages to communicate information effectively.

SOCIAL



COLLABORATION

I can work effectively with others.

RESEARCH



INFORMATION LITERACY

I can find, interpret, judge and create information.



MEDIA LITERACY

I can interact with media to use and create ideas and information.

SELF-MANAGEMENT



AFFECTIVE SKILLS

I can manage my own state of mind, concentrate and be focused. I can learn from mistakes and problems.



ORGANIZATION SKILLS

I can manage my time and tasks effectively. I use technology well.



REFLECTION

I can (re)consider the process of learning. I can choose and use effective ATL skills.



CRITICAL THINKING

I can analyse and evaluate issues and ideas.

THINKING



CREATIVE THINKING

I can generate new ideas and perspectives.



TRANSFER

I can use knowledge and skills in new contexts.

ATL Skill clusters from MYP:FPiP (2014) @sjtylr [icons by Freepik on Flaticon]

- The Approaches to Learning are an integral component of the MYP, and they continue to be so in the DP. The main difference is that during the MYP, scholars are learning what the ATLs are, and in the DP, the focus shifts to an intentional application of the ATLs for success in completing IB requirements and deliverables for each subject and core components.
- Below you will find hyperlinks to IB-published documents explaining the ATLs in general and each of the five specific ATLs.
 - [Introduction to ATLs](#)
 - [Thinking skills](#)
 - [Communication skills](#)
 - [Social skills](#)
 - Self-management skills
 - [Organizational skills](#)
 - [Affective skills](#)
 - [Research skills](#)
- ATLs are addressed in each subject class as well as in the Core Advisory course.

IB CORE COMPONENTS

What are the other requirements of the Diploma Programme?

Scholars will also have three core requirements integrated throughout their two-year program:

Theory of Knowledge | Extended Essay | Creativity, Action, Service

PURPOSE of the IB Core:

- **BALANCE** academic rigor
- **ENCOURAGE** scholars to pursue passions, explore, be curious
- **DEVELOP** well-rounded individuals
- **ENGAGE** with their communities

Middle Years Programme	Diploma Programme
- Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) - Personal Project (PP)	- Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) - Theory of Knowledge (TOK) - Extended Essay (EE)

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

This course is the key element in the educational philosophy of IB. The purpose of this course is to stimulate critical reflection on the knowledge and experiences acquired both inside and outside the classroom. This course challenges scholars to question the basis of knowledge, be aware of subjectivity and ideological biases, and develop a personal mode of thought based on critical examination of the evidence expressed in rational argument. Unlike other subjects, Theory of Knowledge is not assessed by an external examination, but rather by the submission of an essay written during the course and the internally assessed exhibition. The essay will be submitted to and evaluated by IB examiners.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE | OVERVIEW

(Source: [IB What is TOK](#))

“Theory of knowledge (TOK) plays a special role in the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), by providing an opportunity for scholars to reflect on the nature of knowledge and on

how we know what we claim to know.

It is one of the components of the DP core and is mandatory for all scholars. The TOK requirement is central to the educational philosophy of the DP.

How is TOK structured?

As a thoughtful and purposeful inquiry into different ways of knowing, and into different kinds of knowledge, TOK is composed almost entirely of questions.

The most central of these is "How do we know?", while other questions include:

- *What counts as evidence for X?*
- *How do we judge which is the best model of Y?*
- *What does theory Z mean in the real world?*

Through discussions of these and other questions, scholars gain greater awareness of their personal and ideological assumptions, as well as developing an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives.

Assessment of TOK

The TOK course is assessed through an oral presentation and a 1,600-word essay.

The presentation assesses the ability of the student to apply TOK thinking to a real-life situation, while the essay takes a more conceptual starting point.

For example, the essay may ask scholars to discuss the claim that the methodologies used to produce knowledge depend on the use to which that knowledge will be used.

What is the significance of TOK?

TOK aims to make scholars aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal ideological biases – whether these biases are retained, revised or rejected.

It offers scholars and their teachers the opportunity to:

- *reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge*
- *consider the role and nature of knowledge in their own culture, in the cultures of others and in the wider world.*

In addition, TOK prompts scholars to:

- *be aware of themselves as thinkers, encouraging them to become more acquainted with the complexity of knowledge*

- recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world.

TOK also provides coherence for the student by linking academic subject areas as well as transcending them. It therefore demonstrates the ways in which the student can apply their knowledge with greater awareness and credibility.”

LOGISTICS and PROCESS

- Scholars are automatically enrolled in the TOK course their Junior year as it is a programme requirement.
- TOK is a scheduled class that meets four days a week according to each scholar’s personal class schedule.
- Scholars take TOK for both semesters of Junior year and the first semester of Senior year.
 - Scholars take a Government course the second semester of Senior year to fulfill a graduation requirement for the state of Michigan.

COURSE DELIVERABLES and IB ASSESSMENTS

- Scholars participate in a TOK Exhibition at the end of their Junior year.
 - Video: [What is the TOK Exhibition? | TOK explainer videos](#)
- Scholars write the TOK Essay in the first semester of their Senior year. This essay is submitted to IB for scoring.
 - Video: [What is the TOK Essay? | TOK explainer videos](#)
- Successful completion of the TOK course (completing the Exhibition and receiving a passing grade for the TOK Essay) is required in order to achieve the IB Diploma.
- “The theory of knowledge (TOK) and extended essay (EE) components are awarded individual grades and, collectively, can contribute up to 3 additional points towards the overall diploma score.” (Source: [Understanding DP Assessment](#))

Extended Essay (EE)

The extended essay is an original and independent piece of research and writing done by the student. The student will work directly with an assigned staff member to assist him/her beginning in their junior year and well into their senior year. The essay is limited to 4,000 words and gives the student an opportunity to investigate a topic of individual interest and acquaints scholars with the independent research and writing skills needed and expected at universities. Scholars must earn at least a ‘D’ on their extended essays to be eligible for the full IB diploma.

EE OVERVIEW

(Source: [IB What is the Extended Essay](#))

“The extended essay is a required component of the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme (DP). It is an independent piece of research, culminating in a 4,000-word paper.

What is the significance of the extended essay?

The extended essay provides:

- *practical preparation for undergraduate research*
- *an opportunity for scholars to investigate a topic of personal interest to them, which relates to one of the student's six DP subjects, or takes the interdisciplinary approach of a World Studies extended essay.*

Through the research process for the extended essay, scholars develop skills in:

- *formulating an appropriate research question*
- *engaging in a personal exploration of the topic*
- *communicating ideas*
- *developing an argument.*

Participation in this process develops the capacity to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge.

How is study of the extended essay structured?

Scholars are supported throughout the process of researching and writing the extended essay, with advice and guidance from a supervisor who is usually a teacher at the school.

Scholars are required to have three mandatory reflection sessions with their supervisors. The final session, a concluding interview, is also known as viva voce.

The extended essay and reflection sessions can be a valuable stimulus for discussion in countries where interviews are required prior to acceptance for employment or for a place at university.

How is the extended essay assessed?

All extended essays are externally assessed by examiners appointed by the IB. They are marked on a scale from 0 to 34.

The score a student receives relates to a band. The bands are:

- *A – work of an excellent standard.*
- *B – work of a good standard.*
- *C –work of a satisfactory standard.*
- *D – work of a mediocre standard*
- *E – work of an elementary standard.”*

LOGISTICS and PROCESS

- *Scholars begin working on their Extended Essay in the second semester of their Junior year, grade 11. The essay is completed and submitted to IB around January of their Senior year.*

- Scholars select a subject area in which they are going to write their EE and are then paired with an EE mentor--a City staff member--who is prepared to mentor in the chosen subject.
- The EE writing process is broken down into a series of internal checkpoints as articulated in the EE Student Handbook that is tailored for each cohort. To view an example of the EE schedule and procedural breakdown, please reference the [EE Student Handbook for the Class of 2026](#). This document will be adjusted to fit the calendar and include any additional updates or resources gathered for your cohort.
- Scholars are encouraged to work on their essays over the summer before Senior year. Scholars are also encouraged to communicate with their mentors throughout the writing and research process.
 - Communications sent during the summer are not guaranteed a timely response by mentors.
- Specific days of the school year are set aside for focused EE work:
 - Essay outline organization (Junior year)
 - Rough draft writing (Senior year)
 - Final essay tailoring and polishing (Senior year)
- Successful completion of the EE (receiving a passing grade) is required in order to achieve the IB Diploma.
- “The theory of knowledge (TOK) and extended essay (EE) components are awarded individual grades and, collectively, can contribute up to 3 additional points towards the overall diploma score.” (Source: [Understanding DP Assessment](#))

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

The CAS requirement is met by participating in planned and supervised extracurricular activities related to the local community. These activities are meant to encourage the appreciation of attitudes and values other than one's own and to enable the student to communicate readily on both a philosophical and practical level. Theater productions, sports, musical performances, and community service are just a few examples of activities that fall under CAS. CAS is an opportunity for scholars to develop an awareness and appreciation for life outside of the academic arena. The student will need to complete 8-10 hours of community service projects and extracurricular activities per month throughout their junior and senior years. Scholars will also be responsible for completing a CAS project. More information can be found in the [DP CAS handbook](#).

CAS | OVERVIEW

(Source: [IB Creativity, Action, Service](#))

“Creativity, activity, service (CAS) is one of the three essential elements that every student must complete as part of the Diploma Programme (DP).”

Studied throughout the Diploma Programme, CAS involves scholars in a range of activities alongside their academic studies.

It is not formally assessed. However, scholars reflect on their CAS experiences as part of the DP, and provide evidence of achieving the seven learning outcomes for CAS.

How is CAS structured?

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

- **Creativity** – arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.
- **Action** – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the DP.
- **Service** – an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

In order to demonstrate these concepts, scholars are required to undertake a CAS project. The project challenges scholars to:

- *show initiative*
- *demonstrate perseverance*
- *develop skills such as collaboration, problem-solving and decision-making.*

What is the significance of CAS?

CAS enables scholars to enhance their personal and interpersonal development by learning through experience.

It provides opportunities for self-determination and collaboration with others, fostering a sense of accomplishment and enjoyment from their work.

At the same time, CAS is an important counterbalance to the academic pressures of the DP.

IB guidance on CAS

A good CAS programme should be both challenging and enjoyable – a personal journey of self-discovery.

Each student has a different starting point, and therefore different goals and needs, but for many their CAS activities include experiences that are profound and life-changing.

CAS is a component of the DP core.”

LOGISTICS and PROCESS

- CAS informational video:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UAKBi9hpClv7zfJCLo5UxziRwXHryeJo/view>
- CAS submissions will be turned in monthly using a Google Form. After submitting the form, the student will receive a digital receipt in their email for their records.
 - The Google Form is located on the school website (Tab: DP CAS): www.chmsib.com
- CAS communications and updates will be delivered by DP CAS coordinators.

- Reminders for submission of monthly CAS reflections will occur during the scholar's 8th period class. Details of this process will be shared with all Juniors during the first few weeks of the first semester.
 - The monthly submissions for DP is a distinct difference from MYP where submissions are required only three times a year.
- ~8-10 hours are encouraged for submission each month. IB does not have a minimum hour requirement for completion of CAS. The goal is to have a roughly balanced number of hours or experiences between the three strands (C, A, S).

MAIN DELIVERABLES

- Monthly submission of CAS hours and reflections is expected.
 - These submissions--Complete or Incomplete--are scored as part of the student's TOK and 8th period grades.
- Scholars submit their CAS project and portfolio at the end of their Senior year.
- Scholars conduct a low-pressure interview with CAS coordinators at the end of their senior year to verify and celebrate the scholar's work, experiences, and successful completion of all CAS requirements.
- All CAS requirements set by IB must be met in order to achieve the IB diploma.

IB ASSESSMENTS

What are the goals of IB assessments?

The goals of IB assessments are to provide scholars with:

- a broad and balanced, yet academically demanding program of study
- development of critical-thinking and reflective skills
- development of research skills
- development of independent learning skills
- development of intercultural understanding
- globally recognized university entrance qualification

What type of assessments will be given during the program?

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) assesses student work as direct evidence of achievement towards stated goals of the Diploma Programme courses. Scholars will be given both internal and external assessments for their courses.

General Information for Internal and External Assessments

Scholars can earn a score between 1-7 in each subject area (1 being the lowest, 7 being the highest). A score of 4 is generally considered passing. Subject area scores are determined by the scores scholars earn on their internal and external assessments and the weight they are given. For subject weights and distributions, reference Appendix D. Overall subject area scores are released to the scholars in July. Scholars can review their scores online and have transcripts sent to their universities. Scholars will receive their login information during their senior year, in order to access scores that are released during the summer months.

External Assessments (EAs)

External assessments are examinations taken at the end of most courses and are graded by trained IB examiners. These assessments could include:

- essays
- structured problems
- short response questions
- data response questions
- text response questions
- case study questions

- multiple choice questions (limited use of these)

Most external assessments are given to the scholars in May except for Visual Arts. English, World Language and Music courses have an additional external assessment that is given during the senior year. The scores on external assessments are then factored in with the scores of internal assessments to determine the student's final score out of 7 for the subject.

- Additional EAs include:
 - HL Essay (English / Language A: Language and Literature)
 - TOK Essay
 - Extended Essay
 - Senior-year exams in May

Internal Assessments (IAs)

In nearly all subjects, at least some of the assessment is carried out internally by the teacher. The teacher marks individual pieces of work produced as part of a course of study. These assessments could include:

- oral work in languages
- fieldwork
- laboratory work
- investigations
- artistic performances/works

A sample of these assessments is sent out to be reviewed by an external examiner. The external examiner will determine if scores are accurate based on the sample of work they receive from the school. External examiners have the ability to adjust the scores of the entire class, based on their own judgments.

DP assessment schedules

City High Middle School DP Assessment Calendar

- At the beginning of each academic year, the DP teachers and IB Coordinator organize and agree upon a DP Assessment Calendar. The purpose of the calendar is to spread out IB assignments between the two years in an effort to protect student well-being, for planning purposes, and for collective understanding.
- This document is made available to the school community for the same reasons as those stated above. It can be found on www.chmsib.com
- Please see the [2026-2027 DP Assessment Calendar](#) for your reference.

DP Exam Schedule

- The DP exam schedule is set by IB, and it is strictly enforced. Candidates must sit for their registered course exams according to the schedule. Vacations or other outside-of-school obligations must not overlap with the scheduled exams.
- The 2026-2027 IB exam schedule can be found [HERE](#).

THE IB DIPLOMA

How do scholars earn the IB diploma?

Scholars must complete and test in six IB subjects, write an extended essay based on independent research, participate in Theory of Knowledge (TOK), and complete required CAS hours. In order to receive the IB diploma, a total of 24 points must be earned on the six IB examinations with a grade no lower than a D in TOK and the extended essay. Additional points can be earned toward the IB diploma; see Appendix B for the current TOK/EE matrix. The specific requirements as to how the IB diploma can be earned are described in the *General Regulations: Diploma Programme* document, more specifically Article 13 (See Appendix C).

- To obtain your IB diploma:
 - All CAS requirements met.
 - Receive passing grades (D or higher) for TOK and EE.
 - Do not receive more than three grades of a “3” or below in DP exams.
 - Take three (max. four) HL and three (min. two) SL classes.
 - At least 24 points must be earned between the 6 classes.
 - 12 pts minimum must come from HL courses, 9pts from SL
 - Consistent academic integrity.
- The overall IB score that is awarded to the candidate for each subject matter is determined by a combination of the scholar’s work: IA score, the exam sessions score, and the teacher’s predicted grade for the scholar. These scores hold different percentage weights as determined by IB.

TO CONSIDER

Achieving the diploma is a challenge, and it is not awarded to all scholars. While the achievement of the diploma is a reason for celebration and affirmation, the achievement of the diploma does not determine a student’s success or capacity after graduating, nor should it invalidate one’s growth and achievements through the DP journey. The rigors and quality of experiences, both academic and personal, that IB scholars undergo through the IB programme(s) hold the greatest importance and are not elevated or diminished by whether a student achieves or does not achieve the IB diploma. Student success in post-secondary education or in the career field is not contingent upon the earning of the diploma. IB diploma awarding occurs in the month of July after graduation, which is well after scholars have already been accepted to colleges or universities if they applied.

QUALITIES OF AN IB EDUCATION

What are the differences between AP and IB courses?

Both courses are academically challenging and require motivation and commitment by the student. IB and AP both allow scholars to learn the factual material, but IB tends to have a more cross-curricular focus and includes analysis of the content and information.

Some notable differences between IB and AP include the following:

- IB subjects are cross-curricular, and teachers must plan collaboratively. AP courses are standalone courses that focus directly on one subject.
- Most IB courses are two-year courses with an exam taken at the end of the 2nd year. AP courses are single-year classes.
- IB allows scholars to have two levels of mastery in their courses and examinations (HL and SL), while AP offers one level (except with AP Calculus, which offers AB and BC).
- The content of some courses can differ, reflecting the international nature of IB and the US-based approach of AP.
- IB examinations have more of an emphasis on critical thinking and analysis (using essays, investigations, lab work, oral work, and projects), while AP tests have more knowledge-based, multiple-choice questions.
- IB teachers have some input into the students' test scores through the internal assessment. The teacher's input is moderated to ensure that the same standards are applied worldwide. AP scholars' test scores are determined by the AP exam alone.

How will the IB Program benefit each scholar?

The IB program allows scholars to develop critical thinking skills, foster an understanding of how they can have an impact on their community and the world, and promote analytical thinking. Since the program has a strong writing emphasis, it also allows scholars to develop the strong writing skills necessary for critical writing, papers, and essays. These skills provide a very strong foundation for college work. Below are the top 10 reasons why the Diploma Programme is ideal preparation for college.

- Offers academic depth and breadth
- Graduates care about more than just results
- It creates independent learners who feel prepared
- It's a genuinely international qualification
- Universities recognize it and give credit for it
- The IB encourages critical thinking
- You'll gain executive functioning skills, such as time management

- It assesses more than examination techniques
- Subjects are taught in isolation
- Personal development with the 10 attributes of the Learner Profile

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ACCREDITATION

Do universities recognize the IB diploma?

The IB diploma is widely recognized by the world's leading universities. The IBO works closely with universities in all regions of the world to gain recognition for the IB diploma. Scholars may earn credit for college courses based on their performance in a given subject area or in the Diploma Programme as a whole. Each college or university is responsible for setting its own policies regarding recognition of IB scores. There is a wide spectrum of differences among higher educational institutions as to what is recognized. Some schools will use IB scores as a basis for a student's placement into a higher-level class. Other schools will recognize individual scores in subject areas and provide credit for lower-level general education classes. There is a growing population that is recognizing the full IB diploma and admitting scholars as sophomores in colleges or accrediting scholars at the discretion of the institution.

To assist IB diploma scholars in making appropriate choices, the organization has a database containing contact details of universities around the world. The database also includes up-to-date information about requirements for admissions.

To research specific colleges and universities, please check:

ibo.org→University Admission→Who Recognizes the IB?

- Colleges and Universities can offer accreditation for IB scores in the same way they do AP scores. While recognition of IB--and the high-quality of its graduates--is growing among colleges and universities
 - [Getting IB diploma credit at US colleges and universities](#)
 - This website provides examples of accreditation opportunities at numerous colleges and universities. Accreditation policies can be found on the college or university websites.

A TWO-YEAR VIEW*

What will my scholar's two years in the Diploma Programme at City look like?

**This sequence is subject to change depending on yearly review of the [DP Assessment Calendar](#).*

10th Grade: 2nd Semester

Before entering the Diploma Programme at City, scholars must make some choices regarding the courses they will be taking in 11th and 12th grade. These choices will be in the areas of Math, Individuals & Societies, Science, and Arts. Our teaching and counseling staff speak with scholars weeks prior to their decisions being made, so that scholars are well informed on all class options.

11th Grade: 1st Semester

Scholars will begin their first semester of the Diploma Programme. Teachers will be sampling both Higher Level and Standard Level topics, so that scholars may get a sample of both. During this time, scholars are also focused on preparing for the SAT, which is taken in April.

Scholars will be completing their written assignments (external assessment) for English toward the end of the first semester. Scholars will revisit these assignments during their senior year.

Scholars will be introduced to the Extended Essay. After the introduction, scholars will be expected to begin brainstorming possible topics so that they may go into the mentor selection process taking into account our teacher's common interests and areas of expertise.

Throughout the semester, scholars will be expected to*:

- Identify a topic, subject area, and a possible research question (October/November)
- Begin meeting with their mentor (November)
- Create an annotated bibliography (December/January).

11th Grade: 2nd Semester

Scholars will continue working on their Extended Essays*.

- Create an outline for their paper, including a working thesis (February)

- Write a rough draft of their paper and get general feedback from mentors (April/May)

Scholars will be completing their Individual Oral Presentations and Commentary in English. These serve as one-half of the internal assessment for English.

Scholars in Psychology will select whether they are taking the class at Higher or Standard Level; this determination will allow scholars to complete their internal assessment for this class.

Scholars will begin preliminary work on their Internal Assessments for their DP Science classes.

Summer between 11th and 12th Grade

Scholars will be encouraged to continue working on their Extended Essay throughout the summer, as well as develop college application essays.

12th Grade: 1st Semester

Scholars will need to make decisions regarding their classes being taken and Higher Level or Standard Level within the first month of school. These decisions will affect the depth and breadth of the topics studied in the classrooms, as well as how their internal assessments are completed. The bulk of internal assessments are completed during this semester.

Internal and External Assessment Schedule (subject to change)

October

- History

November

- *General work on IAs*
- Completed rough draft of Extended Essay due**

December

- Editing EE
- Visual Art IAs work

Scholars will be turning in the rough draft of their Extended Essay (October**). Teachers will give them general feedback so that they may improve their essays before uploading them to IB at the beginning of February. The feedback received in November is the only thorough feedback regarding structure and content that the scholars are able to receive from their mentors.

12th Grade: 2nd Semester

Scholars will also be finishing up their internal assessments at the beginning of the semester. Once the assessments have been completed, scholars will begin to work with their instructors and the curriculum to prepare for the exams/external assessments that take place in May.

Internal and External Assessment Schedule (subject to change)-

January

- English HL Essay
- Visual Arts Comparative Study
- Extended Essay final

February

- World Language Orals
- Theory of Knowledge essay
- Visual Arts work pages due
- Historical Investigations
- Science IAs
- Math (Math AA, AI (SL & HL))
- Music

The following external assessments are completed in an exam format.

Scholars will attend the assessments for their subject areas during the time that is designated by the IB.

- English Papers 1 and 2
- Spanish, French and Chinese Papers 1 and 2
- History Papers 1, 2 and 3 (3 is HL only)
- Global Politics Papers 1 and 2
- Psychology Papers 1, 2 and 3 (3 is HL only)
- Biology, Chemistry, Physics Papers 1a/b 2
- Environmental Systems and Societies Papers 1 and 2
- Math Papers 1, 2, and 3 (3 is Analysis and Approaches HL only)

CHMS CONTACTS & SUPPORT RESOURCES

CONTACTS

Questions related to:	Contact:
A course, assignment, or educational resource	Relevant teacher - use email or phone number
A technology issue/request	City Staff: - Reka Lockheart, Librarian/Parapro GRPS contact: - Helpdesk: 616-819-2487 or helpdesk@grps.org
Social, emotional, mental health	Danielle Ralston, Head Counselor
IB programmes	Jesse Antuma, IB Coordinator
School policies & Scholar Behavior	Scholar / Parent Handbook 2026-2027

School office phone number: (616) 819-2380

Administration

Principal | Charlie VanderVliet, vandervlietc@grps.org
Assistant Principal | Christie Modzeleski, modzeleskic@grps.org
Assistant Principal | Erica Dams, damse@grps.org
Administrator, IB Coordinator | Jesse Antuma, antumaj@grps.org
Head Secretary | Caeley Terwilliger, terwilligerc@grps.org

Counseling and student support

Grades 7-8, CFE | Barry Bryant, bryantb@grps.org
Grades 9-10 | Gerrit Immink, imminkg@grps.org
Grades 11-12 | Danielle Ralston, ralstond@grps.org
Emotional Health Support | Anna Poel, poela@grps.org
Youth Advocate | TBD

School & (SEL) Resources

School websites

- GRPS City High Middle School: <https://grps.org/schools/middle-school/city-high-ms/>
- IB Information: www.chmsib.com

Counseling Google Classroom codes

- Codes will be communicated by the counselor assigned to your grade during Core Advisory class.

Mental Health Assessment and Virtual Therapy Sessions

- GRPS is committed to addressing the mental health needs of its scholars.
- Mental Health Assessments and virtual therapy sessions can be scheduled for all GRPS scholars. If you are in need of mental health support, please contact your grade-aligned school counselor, administrator, or trusted teacher to begin the referral process.
- Appointments will be made with a licensed GRPS social worker or by referral to another qualified therapist.

Social Emotional Learning

Modules for parents: Parents.grps.org

GRPS resources:



Social Emotional and Learning [Resources](#) for Early Childhood

From the Counseling Department

Senior Checklist

The Senior Checklist is written to parents and guardians to assist their student(s) in the navigation of their scholar's senior year.

Summer

- ❑ **Visit colleges together.** If you haven't already, make plans to check out the campuses of colleges in which your student is interested. Use the [Campus Visit Checklist](#) to learn how to get the most out of these experiences.
- ❑ **Ask how you can help your senior finalize a college list.** You can help him or her choose which colleges to apply to by weighing how well each college meets his or her needs, for example. Find out more about [how to finalize a college list](#).
- ❑ **Find out a college's actual cost.** Once your 12th-grader has a list of a few colleges he or she is interested in, use [the College Board's Net Price Calculator](#) together to find out the potential for financial aid and the true out-of-pocket cost—or net price—of each college.
- ❑ **Encourage your student to get started on applications.** He or she can get the easy stuff out of the way now by filling in as much required information on college applications as possible. Read about [how to get started on applications](#).
- ❑ **Help your student decide about applying early.** If your senior is set on going to a certain college, he or she should think about whether applying early is a good option. Now is the time to decide because early applications are usually due in November. Read about the pros and cons of [applying early](#).
- ❑ **Gather financial documents:** To apply for most financial aid, your student will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You'll need your most recent tax returns and an FSA ID to complete the FAFSA, which opens Oct. 1.

Fall

- ❑ **Encourage your student to meet with the school counselor.** This year, he or she will work with the counselor to complete and submit college applications. Learn more about [the counselor's role in applying to college](#).
- ❑ **Create a calendar with your student.** This should include application deadlines and other important dates. Your student can find specific colleges' deadlines in [College Search](#). If your student saves colleges to a list there, he or she can get a custom online calendar that shows those colleges' deadlines.
- ❑ **Help your student prepare for college admission tests.** Many seniors retake college admission tests, such as the SAT, in the fall. Learn more about helping your 12th-grader [prepare for admission tests](#).
- ❑ **Help your student find and apply for scholarships.** He or she can find out about scholarship opportunities from the school counselor. Your high school student will need to request and complete scholarship applications and submit them on time. Learn more about [scholarships](#).
- ❑ **Offer to look over your senior's college applications.** But remember that this is your student's work so remain in the role of adviser and proofreader and respect his or her voice.

- ❑ **Fill out the FAFSA to apply for aid beginning Oct. 1.** The government and many colleges use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to award aid. Now it's easier than ever to fill out this form because you can automatically transfer your tax information online from the IRS to the FAFSA. Read [How to Complete the FAFSA](#) to learn more.
- ❑ **Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®, if required.** If your student needs to submit the PROFILE to a college or scholarship program, be sure to find out the priority deadline and submit it by that date. Read [How to Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE](#).
- ❑ **Encourage your student to set up college interviews.** An interview is a great way for your student to learn more about a college and for a college to learn more about your student. Get an overview of the [interview process](#).

Winter

- ❑ **Work together to apply for financial aid.** Have your student contact the financial aid offices at the colleges in which he or she is interested to find out what forms scholars must submit to apply for aid. Make sure he or she applies for aid by or before any stated deadlines. Funds are limited, so the earlier you apply, the better.
- ❑ **Learn about college loan options together.** Borrowing money for college can be a smart choice — especially if your high school student gets a low-interest federal loan. Learn more about the [parent's role in borrowing money](#).
- ❑ **Encourage your senior to take SAT Subject Tests.** These tests can showcase your student's interests and achievements — and many colleges require or recommend that applicants take one or more Subject Tests. Read more about [SAT Subject Tests](#).
- ❑ **Encourage your student to take AP Exams.** If your 12th-grader takes AP or other advanced classes, have him or her talk with teachers now about taking these tests in May. Read more about the [AP Program](#).

Spring

- ❑ **Help your student process college responses.** Once your student starts hearing back from colleges about admission and financial aid, he or she will need your support to decide what to do. Read about [how to choose a college](#).
- ❑ **Review financial aid offers together.** Your 12th-grader will need your help to read through financial aid award letters and figure out which package works best. Be sure your student pays attention to and meets any deadlines for acceptance. Get more information on [financial aid awards](#).
- ❑ **Help your student complete the paperwork to accept a college's offer of admittance.** Once your student has decided which college to attend, he or she will need to review the offer, accept a college's offer, mail a tuition deposit and submit other required paperwork. Learn more about your high school senior's [next steps](#).

Appendix A

The IB learner profile



The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

<u>Inquirers</u>	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
<u>Knowledgeable</u>	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
<u>Thinkers</u>	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
<u>Communicators</u>	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
<u>Principled</u>	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
<u>Open-minded</u>	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
<u>Caring</u>	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
<u>Risk-takers</u>	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
<u>Balanced</u>	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
<u>Reflective</u>	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Appendix B

The IB diploma points matrix

The following new matrix has been adopted from the May 2015 session onwards.

		Theory of Knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No Grade N
E x t e n d e d E s s a y	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade E	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	No Grade N	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition

Appendix C

Article 13: Award of the IB diploma

13.1 All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional IB diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB diploma, except under the conditions stipulated in articles 18 and 19 of these regulations.

13.2 The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate provided all the following requirements have been met.

- a. CAS requirements have been met.
- b. The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
- c. There is no "N" awarded for theory of knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject.
- d. There is no grade E awarded for theory of knowledge and/or the extended essay.
- e. There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- f. There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (higher level or standard level).
- g. There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL).
- h. The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (candidates who register for four higher level subjects, the three highest grades count).
- i. The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two standard level subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).
- j. The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.

13.3 A maximum of three examination sessions is allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB Diploma. The examination sessions need not be consecutive.

Appendix D

This table represents assessment components and weights for the May 2024-2025 exam session. This information will be updated as changes are made by the IBWO.

Subject Area	Assessments	Weight
Language and Literature		
English HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	80%
	Paper 1: Guided Literary Analysis	35%
	Paper 2: Comparative essay	25%
	HL Essay: 1200-1500 words	20%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	20%
	Individual Oral	
English SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	70%
	Paper 1: Guided Literary Analysis	35%
	Paper 2: Comparative essay	35%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	30%
	Individual Oral	
Language Acquisition		
World Language HL, SL, ab	<u>External Assessments</u>	75%
	Paper 1: Productive skills - writing	25%
	Paper 2: Listening	25%
	Paper 2: Reading	25%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	25%
	Individual Oral	
Individuals and Societies		
History of the Americas HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	80%
	Paper 1: Four short-answer/structured questions	20%
	Paper 2: Two extended-response questions	25%
	Paper 3: Three extended-response questions	35%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	20%
	Historical Investigation	
History of the Americas SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	75%
	Paper 1: Four short-answer/structured questions	30%
	Paper 2: Two extended-response questions	45%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	25%
	Historical Investigation	
Global Politics HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	60%
	Paper 1: Short answer/structured questions	20%
	Paper 2: Three essays	40%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	40%
	Engagement Activity	20%
	Extension Task - Oral presentation	20%
Global Politics SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	75%
	Paper 1: Short answer/structured questions	30%
	Paper 2: Two essays	45%

	Internal Assessments Engagement Activity	25%
Sciences		
Biology, Chemistry and Physics HL	External Assessments Paper 1A: Multiple-choice question on the core & AHL Paper 1B: Data-based questions Paper 2: One DBQ, short-answer questions, and two extended-response question - core & AHL	80% 36% 44%
	Internal Assessments Experimental investigation	20%
Biology, Chemistry and Physics SL	External Assessments Paper 1A: Multiple-choice question on the core & AHL Paper 1B: Data-based questions Paper 2: One DBQ, short-answer questions, and two extended-response question - core & AHL	80% 20% 40% 20%
	Internal Assessments Experimental investigation	20%
Environmental Systems and Societies SL	External Assessments Paper 1: Case study Paper 2: Section A- short answer and data-based questions Section B- structured essay questions	75% 25% 50%
	Internal Assessments Individual Investigation	25%
Mathematics		
Math: Analysis & Approaches HL	External Assessments Paper 1: Short & extended-response questions - NO CALCULATOR Paper 2: Short- & extended-response questions - Calculator Paper 3: Extended-response questions - Calculator	80% 30% 30% 20%
	Internal Assessments Mathematical Investigations	20%
Math: Analysis & Approaches SL	External Assessments Paper 1: Short & extended-response questions - NO CALCULATOR Paper 2: Short- & extended-response questions - Calculator	80% 40% 40%
	Internal Assessments Mathematical Investigations	20%
Math: Applications and Interpretations SL	External Assessments Paper 1: Short-response questions - NO CALCULATOR Paper 2: Extended-response questions - Calculator	80% 40% 40%
	Internal Assessments Mathematical Investigations	20%
The Arts		
Music HL	External Assessments Exploring music in context	100% 20%
	Experimenting with music	20%
	Presenting Music	30%
	Contemporary music maker	30%
Music SL	External Assessments	100%

	Exploring music in context Experimenting with music Presenting music	30% 30% 40%
Visual Arts HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	60%
	Process Portfolio	40%
	Comparative Study	20%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	40%
	Exhibition: 8-11 artworks and a 700 word rationale	
Visual Arts SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	60%
	Process Portfolio	40%
	Comparative Study	20%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	40%
	Exhibition: 4-7 artworks and a 400 word rationale	
Film SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	60%
	Textual Analysis	30%
	Comparative Study	30%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	40%
	Film portfolio	
Film HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	75%
	Textual Analysis	20%
	Comparative Study	20%
	Collaborative Film project	35%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	25%
	Film portfolio	
Elective (in place of Arts selection)		
Psychology HL	<u>External Assessments</u>	80%
	Paper 1: 6 short answer and 1 essay question	50%
	Paper 2: 15 short answer and 2 essay questions	20%
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	30%
	Simple Experimental Study	
Psychology SL	<u>External Assessments</u>	65%
	Paper 1: 6 short answer and 1 essay question	
	<u>Internal Assessments</u>	35%
	Simple Experimental Study	