ENROLLMENT INFORMATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM

(Updated December 2025)

Lee's Summit West High School is an authorized International Baccalaureate World School. IB is a globally recognized credit-by-exam college credit program. **If a student is currently finding success in an Advanced Studies course at LSWHS or has a strong passion for a particular subject area, he or she is encouraged to pursue one of three IB options during his or her junior and senior years of high school:**

- **The IB Diploma** — Students who commit to pursuing the IB Diploma leave LSWHS more than prepared for college and beyond. IB Diploma Candidates take 6 IB courses, one in each subject group. The school district pays testing fees for IBDP candidates.

- **The IB Career-related Program Certificate** — The IBCP program requires students to take at least two IB courses and complete three hours of coursework in an approved career-related pathway during their junior and senior years. The district pays testing fees for the two required IB courses for IBCP Certificate candidates.

- **IB Diploma Program Course Award** — Students may take individual IB courses without pursuing a DP or CP program. They are required to pay their own exam fees (financial assistance may be available). Students earn college credit by achieving the required score at their university.

For more information about the IB programs, try the following:

- Read the information contained in this packet.
- Visit with Dr. Edwards in the Counseling Center.
- Email michelle.edwards@lsr7.net or call 816-986-4061.
- Schedule an appointment with Dr. Edwards to review schedules, graduation plans, and related matters.
- Visit www.ibo.org or the LSWHS website for general information about IB.

IB Diploma Requirements

(More information about the content of specific courses can be found in the Career and Educational Planning Guide provided on the LSWHS website.)

The Diploma requires that students take six IB courses, including at least three "HL" courses (including a second language), and complete the following core requirements during junior/senior years: Theory of Knowledge**, Extended Essay, & Creativity/Activity/Service (CAS) hours.**

HL Options (all 2-year courses): IB English, IB History, IB Biology, IB Chemistry, IB Psychology, IB Visual Arts, IB Music, IB Film, IB Spanish, IB Business Management, IB Theater

SL Options: IB Math Analysis/Approaches SL (2 years), Math Applications and Interpretations SL (1 year), Business Management (1 year), Environmental Systems and Society (1 year), Sports, Exercise, and Health Science (1 year), IB Psychology (1 year), IB Social and Cultural Anthropology (1), Spanish IV & V, German IV & V, French IV & V, Chinese IV & V, IB Visual Arts, IB Music, and IB Film, IB Theater.

The IB Career-related Certificate Requirements

- At least three credits of approved career-related courses during the junior and senior years.
- At least two IB courses, with at least one being a two-year course (See options above).
- Successful completion of the IBCP Core Requirements
  - Personal & Professional Skills course (zero-hour course meets three times a week (2nd-semester junior year and first-semester senior year) from 6:30 a.m. to 7:20 a.m.
  - Career-related research project on ethics
  - Community Engagement - 30 hours of curriculum and 40 hours of community service
  - Language and Cultural Studies - 30 hours of curriculum and 40 hours of student experiences

Career Course Options (Some career courses meet at LSWHS, and some meet at Summit Technology Academy. At least three credits of career courses are required and must span junior and senior years.) Other options are available as well.

LSR7 Approved Career Pathways - See the LSR7 Career and Education Planning Guide for specific information.

- Health Services
- Industrial Engineering Technology
- Human Services
- Natural Resources Agriculture
- Business Management and Technology
- Arts and Communication

Common Parental Concerns and Questions Regarding the International Baccalaureate Program

Can my child have a life and participate in the IB program? Yes! Your student can participate in the IB program in various ways and to varying degrees. He or she should participate in a manner that aligns with his or her needs, abilities, and interests. Even students pursuing the full IB Diploma Programme challenge have time for social events and extracurricular activities. Our diploma candidates are often the leaders in our schools. They will tell you that it's all about time management—a skill they must learn quickly as they begin the program. Keep in mind that the IB Diploma Program encourages and rewards extracurricular activities through the CAS requirement.

Will taking IB courses lower my child's GPA? Typically, no! IB classes are the most highly weighted courses offered at LSWHS. In an IB course, a student can earn a 5.0 on a 4.0 scale. IB coursework typically improves students' class rank. Remember that a B in an IB course is like an A in a non-weighted course.

How much do IB courses cost? Pursuing the IB Diploma or the IB Career-related Certificate allows students to sit for all assessments at no cost. Registration and assessment fees for participating in one IB course total $124. This is a fraction of the cost of equivalent courses at the college level. Typically, 85-90% of LSWHS students earn qualifying scores for college credit. (Payment plans and scholarships are available to help with assessment fees.) All money collected goes directly to IB.

How can I determine whether my student should enroll in IB courses? If he or she is successfully managing Advanced Studies courses, he or she should be able to handle IB coursework. However, there are no GPA requirements for IB classes. Students are recommended based on their performance in relevant 9th- or 10th-grade or prerequisite courses.

Will my child have room in their schedule to pursue the IB Diploma or IBCP? This will vary from student to student. Summer school and online classes often help students meet graduation requirements while making room in their schedules for IB coursework, learning labs, or courses that reflect their specific interests (e.g., Debate, Music, Theater, Physics). **Summer school enrollment begins in February**. Check the LSWHS website for more information. IB Diploma and IBCP candidates should schedule an appointment with the IB coordinator or their guidance counselor to ensure their schedules are compatible.

How can my child earn college credit through IB courses? Most colleges and universities in the United States award college credit for IB exams. When they don't, they certainly value a student's participation in the IB Diploma Programme when admitting students or awarding scholarships. Anyone can find university credit policies for IB courses through an internet search.
Please note that some IB courses at LSWHS are also offered for dual credit, which requires payments to the appropriate university and IB testing fees. In the end, please keep in mind that even if no college credit is earned, participating fully in an IB course offers intangible benefits that will contribute to a student's future academic and career success.

Here's what underclassmen can do now to prepare for participation in the IB program

- Begin or continue a modern language course.
- Enroll in advanced study courses.
- Take care of graduation requirements in P.E., health, the fine arts, and the practical arts through summer school, online courses, or during the first two years of high school to allow room in junior year and senior year schedules for IB courses, extra-curricular-related courses, off-campus opportunities, and learning labs.
- Consider mapping out a four-year plan in preparation for life beyond high school.

Why IB?

- IB courses allow students to experience college-level classes at a slower pace and with support appropriate for high school students.
- Studies indicate that participation in advanced classes, including IB courses, improves ACT/SAT scores and college achievement.
- Studies show that students who participate in the IB program have higher admission rates to elite universities and higher college graduation rates.
- The IB program is offered at more than 5,000 high schools worldwide and is widely recognized by universities and scholarship programs.
- IB courses employ multiple assessments to measure student mastery rather than relying on a single end-of-course test. IB courses promote critical and creative thinking—not just memorization.
- IB courses promote critical thinking, inquiry, and communication skills, global awareness, and teamwork—all key components for success in college and a competitive job market.
- The IB program is carefully structured to ensure depth of instruction, fair testing practices, and objectivity in assessment scoring.
- The IB program is dynamic and diligent in keeping pace with a rapidly changing world, making programs more accessible to students with diverse interests and needs, and improving the curriculum, assessments, and services.
- The IB Diploma Programme promotes balance among its students. The diploma program rewards students for balance in their course selection and participation in extracurricular activities and service projects.
- The IB Diploma Programme allows students to pursue their passions by providing some flexibility in course selection and rewarding them for in-depth study of topics of interest and for time devoted to interests outside the classroom.
- The IB Diploma Programme often results in substantial free college credit, as the school district covers testing fees for Diploma and CP candidates.
- Students who don't pursue the diploma but enroll in IB courses are also eligible for college credit at a cost lower than that of taking the course in most colleges.
- To enroll in an IB course, a student does not need to be a straight-A student or exceptionally gifted; however, IB courses are typically filled with students who value education, creating a vibrant learning environment.
- At LSWHS, we honor IB students through invitations to special events, recognition at graduation, and space on the Academic Wall of Fame for IB diploma recipients.
- The IB program cultivates the ideal learner: a knowledgeable, well-balanced, open-minded, caring, principled, reflective thinker, inquirer, communicator, and risk-taker.

PERHAPS THE BETTER QUESTION IS "WHY *NOT* IB?"

IB Mission Statement (Published by the International Baccalaureate Organization in 2007)

- The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help create a better, more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

- To this end, the organization works with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging international education programs and rigorous assessments.

- These programs encourage students worldwide to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that people with their differences can also be correct.

The IB Philosophy

"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:

Inquirers: 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.

Knowledgeable: 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.

Thinkers: They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills, critically and creatively, to recognize and address complex problems and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: 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.

Principled: They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of individuals, groups, and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded: 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.

Caring: They show empathy, compassion, and respect for others' needs and feelings. They have a personal commitment to service and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers: 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.

Balanced: They understand the importance of intellectual, physical, and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective: 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.