

IB Update

Phase One 2011

News and information about NDPMA's International Baccalaureate Programme

Welcome to the *IB Update* for the Middle Years Programme of Notre Dame Marist Academy for Phase One. Through this newsletter we hope to inform our community of ways in which teaching and learning are evolving as we continue implementation of the IB framework of education. The *IB Update* will be published after each of the six phases to keep you informed of what is happening in the MYP classroom and in the middle school overall with respect to our curriculum. Please contact Brenda Kambakhsh if you have specific questions about the middle school IB program. Also, do not hesitate to contact the grade appropriate coordinator listed at the end of the newsletter if you have questions about any of our International Baccalaureate programs at NDPMA. Thank you for your continued interest and support.



What is the International Baccalaureate Program?

Founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968, the International Baccalaureate® (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation, motivated by its mission, focused on the student. The three programs, for students aged 3 to 19 help develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world.

There are currently 3,291 schools in 141 countries developing and offering three challenging programs to over 969,000 students aged 3 to 19 years. Notre Dame is currently the only Catholic school in Michigan offering all three programs of the IB.

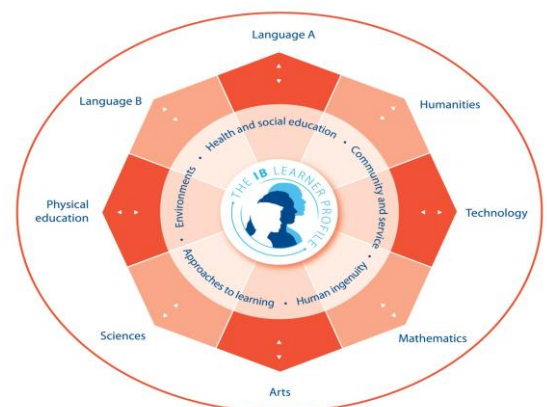
What is the IB Mission?

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

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

What is the Middle Years Program?



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The IB Middle Years Program provides a framework of education within which we form our curriculum. Important elements of the MYP framework are:

- A programme for 11-16 year olds
- A student-centered program
- A range of eight academic disciplines
- Areas of Interaction connect disciplines to the real world
- Learner Profile attributes are address attributes needed for the 21st century
- The curriculum is designed and reviewed by experienced, practicing educators

What do all those IB/MYP terms mean?

Following are some of the terms and acronyms you may hear from your students or at school related to the IB programs.



IB – International Baccalaureate

MYP – Middle Years Program (6-10th grades)

PYP – Primary Years Program (JK-5th grade)

DP – Diploma Program (11-12th grades)

AtL – Approaches to Learning skills taught to help students become better learners

AoI – The five Areas of Interaction used individually as a lens to focus unit planning. They are: Community & Service, Environments, Health and Social Education, Human Ingenuity, and Approaches to Learning.

Learner Profile – The IB mission statement translated into a set of ten attributes that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers (inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, balanced, open-minded, communicators, risk-takers, reflective, principled and caring).

Unit Question – An open-ended question that focuses inquiry on a specific subject, is non-judgmental, relevant and engaging, prompts students to ask more questions, has multiple answers, ensures that students must learn the content and do research, and promotes deep thinking about the area of interaction

Fundamental Concepts of the MYP - Intercultural Awareness, Holistic Education, Communication

Formative Assessment – Assessment which is ongoing and is used to determine student learning throughout an MYP unit

Summative Assessment – Final assessment task at the end of an MYP unit, marked with an IB grade

What's Been Happening in Our Middle School Classrooms?

Following is a sampling of units and activities taking place in classrooms on the Notre Dame middle division wing. Ask your student about the relevant inquiry-based learning experiences below, arranged by subject and grade.

Language A – Grade 8

In Ms. Keough's and Ms. Hall's 8th grade Language A class, students are reading *My Brother Sam is Dead* and talking about how our choices impact our lives and the lives of others. The 8th grade was visited by World War II veteran, Jack Keenan, on Thursday, October 6, 2011. Mr. Keenan talked about how the war impacted his life and others around him. The teachers are curious to hear student responses to his visit and how it will help them answer the unit question: *How do our choices impact our lives and the lives of others?* You can find out more about Jack Keenan at: <http://detnews.com/article/20091209/OPINION03/912>



Integrated Science – Grade 8

In Mr. Forrester's 8th grade Science classes students have been studying chemistry. Students explored: *What are the building blocks of life?* They started with the atom, followed by the elements and the periodic table. Students then studied material science via polymers, composites, alloys, ceramics, and glass. Labs included testing the properties of carbon and copper and creating a polymer (slime).

Algebra 8 Honors

In Algebra 8 Honors students have been working on a scavenger hunt exploring area and perimeter. The unit question is: *How do we use measurements to create?* Ms. Keough taped various shapes on the floor and her students had to precisely measure and calculate the area and perimeter. Students spent an entire week and had tons of fun sitting on the floor while they worked with their partner to measure the various shapes! We are looking forward to beginning a new IB unit on measuring, concluding with a *Dream House* project. This project will encourage students' creativity as they design and create their ultimate *Dream House*.

New Testament – Grade 7

In Sister Barbara Ann's 7th grade religion class, students have been considering the unit question: *What's In a Name?* Students researched, wrote about, and designed index cards about their names which were shared and displayed in class. Students were proud to share the history and the story of their names. They continued the study of names by writing about the titles used to refer to Jesus such as "King of Kings," "Lord of Lords," and "The Good Shepherd."

Visual Art Classes – Grades 6-8

In Mr. McGuire's 7th and 8th grade art classes students studied ancient Roman and early Christian mosaics. The unit question students considered: *What messages do symbols convey?* Students used paper and foil to



create spectacular images. These will soon be displayed in the Marist wing.

Sixth graders began the year practicing pencil techniques in the drawing of cones, spheres, and cylinders. Mr. McGuire was pleased with the work in both classes and is looking forward to the next unit with the 6th graders on paper collages.

Intermediate and Advanced Technology Grades 7-8

Students in Ms. Keough's and Mr. Jezdimir's technology classes are working on a Green School Initiative. Their unit question is: *How can we make our school greener?* Students are working to create and design a 3D model of a Notre Dame Marist Academy hallway, cafeteria, or classroom. These 3D models will reflect each group's ideas of what important things make up a green school and how we can change NDMA to be a greener school! The students are having so much fun with this project - bringing in



foam board, Popsicle sticks, hot glue guns, and even pizza tables from delivery boxes! We can't wait to see the final projects!

Eastern World – Grade 7

Why is it important to have a geographical perspective of the world? That is what the 7th graders are thinking about in Eastern World. They have looked at in which countries their clothes were manufactured and will use what they learned about geography through this search to answer the unit question above. Students are discovering that the cost of clothing is directly related to countries where people work for low wages.



Pre-Algebra – Grade 6

Ms. Brown's students are looking at the things that "vary" in their day. The unit question is: *What are the*

variables in your day? They are working on pre-algebra concepts and equations where variables are the focus. Students are being challenged to take normal real world activities and represent them and how they change, using the language of mathematics, especially variables. This is the basis of story problems students will be tackling in the years ahead.

Language A – Grade 6

Students are using a template in publisher to create *zines* (miniature magazines) that answer the unit question: *Where do I fit in?* The *zines* highlight a variety of student interests including: horses, sports, birds, pets, fashion, and reading, to name a few. While working on the project, students are learning the IB MYP Design Cycle. This method of research and design will help students in all future projects through middle and high school. Check out your student's *zine*!

US History – Grade 8

The unit question in US History is: *Why do we form communities?* By researching and studying the creation of the 13 original colonies, the 8th graders will be considering our need to form communities. Students are making travel brochures and will be presenting their colonies to their classmates, trying to convince them to settle in their colony.

International Day of Peace 2011 at Notre Dame

In May of 2008 Notre Dame installed a peace pole at the entrance to our school. Since then we have been celebrating International Day of Peace on September 21, gathering around the pole to pray for peace around the world. This year students learned in Religion classes about the purpose of the sign of peace we use during the liturgy and then wrote letters to someone with whom they wanted to make peace or become friends. Students also created a small stone with a sign of peace which was given to a fellow student. Father Joe and Sister Barbara Ann led the middle school students in prayer and Ms. Smith and some of our students accompanied us with their guitars while we sang, "Make Me Channel of Your Peace." Students came to a better understanding of peace on both a personal and global level, realizing that they too can make a difference through their actions. May Peace Prevail on Earth!



Integrated Science – Grade 6

Sixth Grade Science students have been considering the following question: *How do we learn?* They have learned the scientific process in order to discover that all learning begins with a question. We have designed experiments to race cars down ramps and to blow up balloons using baking soda and vinegar. It's been a blast!

Integrated Science – Grade 7

Seventh graders are learning about cells using the unit question: *What do outer appearances reveal or hide?* We are discussing that there is more to something than what you can see with the naked eye, whether it is in science or in life. We used microscopes to look at cheek cells, skin cells, and plant cells.

Language A – Grade 7

In grade seven, we began the year discussing the unit question: *Why do we read?* We created colorful posters to hang on our lockers that answered the unit question. Some people read to learn. Some people read to escape into a magical world. Some people simply read for fun. Students explored the reasons for reading and shared what they read during the summer. Students discovered that we read every day, not just for learning, but for reading menus, news, and much more!

Counseling and Guidance News from Ms. Smith

Character Counts – Grade 8

Young ladies from the 8th grade are meeting once a month with the Guidance Counselor, Ms. Smith, to discuss the six pillars of Character:

Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. Each month, group interaction, social activities, personal character analysis and reflection take place to further develop our young ladies to be empowered individuals. Our motto is: *Your Character Counts - Everywhere, All the Time.*

Good Times (Give Of Ourselves Daily)

Good Times occurs every Friday at lunch time. Each student is randomly paired with another student in their grade and placed at numbered lunch tables with other pairs to get to know each other. They stay with that partner for three weeks and then a new random mix occurs. The topic during these lunches is usually "What are you doing this weekend?", but many other topics evolve from students talking and getting to know each other. Ms. Smith says the "goals are for students to meet new friends, to develop tolerance and to continue to develop social skills."



New Student Irish Welcome Groups

Ms. Smith meets with six groups of sixth graders, one of new 7th graders, and one of new 8th graders at lunch on different days to check in and see how they are adjusting. It gives the newcomers a chance to ask questions, problem solve any issues, see familiar faces, and make new friends. Another way we are hoping to help your student feel at home at Notre Dame.



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