



# Seminole High School International Baccalaureate



## Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is IB?** The Seminole High School International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is a rigorous liberal arts, college readiness program that supports the IB mission of students becoming “inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and response.”
2. **Is IB only for gifted students?** No. It is for students who are highly motivated and willing to do the work necessary to be successful. IB encourages students “to have a life” through CAS, a requirement of the IB program that takes place during their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years. In addition, Beta Chi, an IB club, emboldens students to take a break through organized social events.
3. **How will SHS support my child in the IB program?** IB is a rigorous program and for some students, this will be the first time they are challenged. Teachers and staff are available to help students; the IB Coordinator and the IB school Counselors are available to advise and advocate for your child. We encourage students and parents to email whenever they have a question. Many of the teachers provide tutoring before and after school. In addition, we have both teacher-led and student-led tutoring available after school. We also have an IB Lab on the main campus that is available 6am to 7am, Monday-Friday, as a place for students to meet or work. In addition to academic support, we also try to support students socially through the Beta Chi Club. This organization for IB students holds social events each month to encourage students to take a break.
4. **What can I do to support my child in IB?** Please be aware that IB is not based on students being able to regurgitate what they have been specifically taught in a class. IB expects students to be able to use, understand and apply what they have learned, to make connections across concepts, and share their knowledge. For many students, because this is a new approach, it can be challenging. Support your child through the challenge. Encourage your child to take responsibility and build necessary skills. Have your child reach out to the teacher(s) and ask for help. Encourage your child to attend tutoring, to form study groups, and research concepts. This an excellent opportunity to help your child develop skills and personal mechanisms that will help them when they leave home to continue their education.
5. **What are the benefits to IB?** This is a harder question to answer as it depends on both the parent’s and student’s goals. IB students have a higher rate of retention and are more able to handle the complexities of their first year of college. Studies show IB students are more likely to finish their degree on time. If your goal is entrance into highly competitive colleges and universities, IB could be that extra advantage you need. If your goal is to earn college credits so you don’t need to pay for 4-5 years of college, IB could help you. Overall, IB creates the well-rounded students who understand and can function in a globalized society and have the skills colleges are looking for, such as advanced writing and research capabilities. The most important benefit to the program is that students are better prepared to navigate through real-world problems in their lives. The challenges IB students face within the program will require them to develop coping mechanisms that they will carry with them after high school. We want our students to be able to face challenges, not run from them.
6. **What is the difference between AP and IB?** Using eating as analogy, AP is like going to a buffet and IB is like ordering at a restaurant. When you go to a buffet, you pick the items that you enjoy and stay away from those you dislike or are unfamiliar to you. When you order at a restaurant, you are getting a complete meal. There may be some changes you make, like grilled zucchini instead of broccoli, but overall, you get a set of food items designed to go together. IB is a designed program that includes courses that will take your child out of their comfort zone and expose them to new ideas and concepts, which most students do not deliberately select on their own. One of the differences between AP and IB is the assessments. Generally, to earn college credit for an AP course, the student must earn a 3 or higher (scale 1-5) on the AP exam at the end of the year. For IB, the student must earn a 4 or higher (scale 1-7) on a combination of a written assessment, oral assessment and/or two or more exams, combined. The advantage of this is if an IB student does poorly on one assessment, they can make up for it on another, combining all for their final grade. The IB program at Seminole does incorporate AP courses into the IB requirements. For example, IB English HL uses AP Literature as year one and IB Mathematics: Analysis & Approaches HL uses AP Calculus BC as year one.
7. **What does an IB diploma entail?** Your child has the chance to earn two diplomas: a Florida High School Diploma in the IB program and an IB Diploma (from the International Baccalaureate Organization in Switzerland). To earn the high school diploma, your child must successfully meet all the requirements for the IBO IB Diploma, including sitting for their IB exams their junior and senior years. To earn the IBO IB Diploma, your child must successfully complete all the requirements and earn enough points from the IB exams taken the junior and senior years.
8. **What is the difference between Pre-DP and DP?** DP stands for Diploma Program and refers to the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade years. Pre-DP refers to the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. If a course is listed as Pre-DP that means it is an honors level course with only IB students. Courses that are listed as IB are DP courses and will only have IB students.

9. **What courses would my child take in 9<sup>th</sup> grade?** For a comprehensive view, you can refer to the 4-year curriculum handout. Students take seven classes. Incoming Pre-DP students in the IB program take the following (Pre-DP means an honors level course with IB students only):
- Pre-DP English
  - Pre-DP Spanish 1 or 2 **OR** Pre-DP French 1 or 2
  - Either Pre-DP World History or AP Human Geography
  - Pre-DP Biology 1 **OR** if the student has already taken biology, Pre-DP Chemistry 1
  - Students will take either Algebra 1 Honors, Geometry Honors or Algebra 2 Honors. Students must have Algebra 2 Honors completed before they start their 11<sup>th</sup> grade year.
  - Students may take two electives. We strongly encourage taking classes that the student will enjoy, such as music, art, culinary arts, etc. We urge parents to help their child find a balance between the rigor of IB and courses that appeal to and foster a new skill or interest.

Please note, 9<sup>th</sup> grade students may take a maximum of two classes on the main campus and that is only if those courses are available during first or fifth period.

10. **What IB classes will my child take?** For a comprehensive view, you can refer to the 4-year curriculum handout; here is a brief description. IB requires six courses, three HL (higher level) and three SL (standard level). These courses have to come from six groups:
- Group 1: English
  - Group 2: World Languages
  - Group 3: Individual & Society
  - Group 4: Experiment Science
  - Group 5: Mathematics
  - Group 6: Fine Arts and Electives

Three courses are predetermined: Group 1: English HL, Group 2: Spanish 5 SL or French 5 SL, and Group 3: History HL. That leaves one more HL and two more SL courses that students can pick from the remaining three groups.

11. **How do I get my child into the IB program at Seminole High School?** To apply for any magnet program in Seminole County Public School system, go to <https://www.scps.k12.fl.us/district/departments/assignment-access/>. Please note, that SCPS has two IB magnet programs: Seminole High School and Winter Springs High School. Students applying for the IB Program zoned Lake Brantley, Lake Mary, Lyman, & Seminole may **only** apply to Seminole High School. Students who are zoned for Hagerty, Lake Howell, Oviedo, & Winter Springs High may **only** apply to Winter Springs High School.
12. **If IB proves to be too much for my child, what happens next?** Students can withdraw from IB at the end of each school year. Hopefully, the child has reached out to us to find out what we can do to support him/her, such as tutoring or study groups, to be successful. At the end of the school year, we'll conduct an exit interview with the child and parent(s), a form will be signed, and a new schedule created for the following school year. Students who are out of zone must withdraw and re-enroll at their zoned high school.
13. **What is the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center like?** If you are interested in a tour of the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Center, please contact Ms. Amelia Walker at 407-320-8251.
14. **What are the requirements for an IB Diploma?** The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate who has taken three HL and three SL courses, provided all the following requirements have been met: All core requirements must have been met successfully, no score of 1 or less in a subject/level, there are no more than two grades of 2 awarded (HL or SL), there are not more than three grades of 3 or below awarded (HL or SL), the candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects and has gained 9 or more on SL (bonus points can be awarded based on the combined EE and TOK assignments), for a total of 24 points or more, and the candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.
- Candidates also have the option of taking four HL and two SL courses. The scoring for those candidates is as follows: of the four HL subjects, the three highest grades count and total must achieve at least 16 points and for the two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points (unless they have a total of 28 points or more then HL total becomes 14 points). Achieving the diploma is therefore arguably more demanding for these candidates.
15. **I am already a 9<sup>th</sup> grader. Can I apply?** Yes! You would still need to contact SAPA (407/320-0559) and include a copy of your transcript. We will look at the classes you took in 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade to make a final decision.