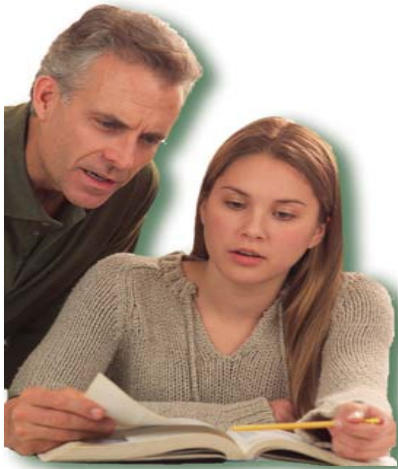


*Luckily for teens, they have adults at home and school to help them keep the future on their radar.*



### Helping your Student Think Ahead

Let's face it - teenagers are not well-known for their ability to think about the long-term consequences of the choices they make in the present. Luckily for teens, they have adults at home and school to help them keep the future on their radar. One thing parents can do with their 8<sup>th</sup> grade students is to prompt them think now about whether they might eventually consider the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program (DP) as their course of study in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade at East High and West High. If they think they might choose the DP, there are some steps they can take now that will prepare them for greater success in the program.

### Preparing for Success As an IB Diploma Program Student

Students who are planning to go to college and are willing to work hard are encouraged to choose the IB Diploma Program for a variety of reasons. (See the box below for details.) Students who fit this description

can build their readiness for the DP program by thinking carefully about whether they will choose to take required classes at a Regents level or an Honors level.

While being mindful not to over-do it, students considering the DP will want to include some Honors classes in their schedules in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. Taking a couple of Honors classes is a wise choice because doing so helps students learn where their strengths lie and also which topics they most enjoy studying. This experience can be helpful to DP students as they decide which courses to study at the Higher Level (two-year courses) and which to take at the Standard Level (one-year courses). Also, many underclass Honors courses teach material that provides a foundation of knowledge for the DP class in that subject.

For example, students who take an Honors level Biology class in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade will have a better sense of whether they would rather take Biology or Chemistry at the Higher Level in the Diploma Program. Not

only will students strengthen their base of knowledge in the Honors Bio class, but they will also get practice in the rigors of an advanced level course.

By including a few Honors classes during the first two years of high school, students actually set themselves up for success in the last two years. Even students who ultimately decide that the Diploma Program is not right for them will have done themselves a favor by challenging their minds in rigorous classes. The experience will help them to tackle whatever lies ahead.

In the end, though, taking some Honors classes and then *not* choosing the DP would be better for students than skipping the Honors courses in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade and then not feeling ready to pursue the IB diploma if they really want to do it.

*(Continued on reverse)*

### The IB Diploma Advantage

College-bound C-PP students would be wise to consider taking the IB Diploma Program in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Here are a few reasons why:

- In a survey of District 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, 80 percent said that preparing for college is very important. **No academic program prepares high school students for the rigors and responsibilities of college like IB—hands down.**
- In a survey of C-PP Diploma Program students, 63 percent said earning college credit during high school is important. **Students who graduate with the full IB diploma are eligible on average for 30 hours of college credit.\***
- Want to get into your dream school? In the highly competitive college application process, **admissions officers sometimes question the choices of capable students who do not pursue the IB diploma** when it is offered in their high school.

\* For a complete list of colleges and universities across the U.S. and elsewhere in the world that have IB diploma recognition policies, visit C-PP's IB web pages or go directly to [www.ibo.org/universities/listalluniversities.cfm](http://www.ibo.org/universities/listalluniversities.cfm).



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# IB Educating for Excellence.

(Continued)

*The best outcome to hope for is that your students identify a path that suits them well and will help them advance their personal goals.*

## Guiding Students' Choices About Their Classes

Students choose their 9<sup>th</sup> grade classes during their 8<sup>th</sup> grade year with the help of a guidance counselor at school. In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students choose their 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes, and so on. As parents, you can help your students by helping them think through their decisions about Honors Level courses realistically and with an eye toward the future.

The idea is to come up with the right mix of classes to meet the needs of the individual student. You want your students to be appropriately challenged and prepared to tackle future academic pursuits. At the

same time, though, you don't want them to take on course loads that will upset their balance.

Giving guidance to teenagers is never as cut and dried as adults would like it to be because young people in this age group are anxious to make their decisions independently. Yet, as adults, we can all too readily see the gaps in their insight. Try to guide your students through their own thinking rather than steering them in a particular direction. Offer them your candid, yet kind, assessment of their strengths and limitations. Help them see how one choice could help them more than another relative to their own goals. Prompt them to consider

the many factors that will affect their success in the short- and long-term. (See the box below for a set of guiding questions you can use to guide students as they think about course selections.)

The best outcome to hope for is that your students identify a path that suits them well and will help them advance their personal goals. If their goals change as they progress through high school, they surely can adapt. Nothing they decide in 9<sup>th</sup> grade limits any choices later on about the DP, Regents, college or anything else.

Still, thinking ahead now about steps toward future goals is a valuable exercise in its own right. It will serve as a good experience students can draw on in all of their decision-making throughout high school, college and beyond.

## Guiding Questions As You Think About Class Schedules

When thinking about course scheduling with your student, ask questions like the following to prompt deeper consideration:

- What do you hope to get out of your high school education?
- What subjects do you most enjoy?
- What subjects do you tend to grasp easily?
- What is your learning style?
- What kind of work highlights your strongest academic talents?
- Do you have your sights set on the IB DP program or other advanced courses later in high school?
- What kind of college are you hoping to attend?
- How good will your grades need to be to get into a certain college?
- What else do colleges look at besides grades?
- What activities are you willing to give up?
- Which activities are so important to you that you can't imagine giving them up?
- Is a part-time job something you are thinking about taking on?
- In the bigger picture of your dreams for the future, what do you see yourself doing?
- What path will get you there?
- What do you need to learn so you can eventually reach your goals?
- How well do you focus when you sit down to tackle school work?
- What distractions can you work to remove so you can be more successful?

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