

### Q: What is IB?

A: IB (International Baccalaureate) is a critical component of C-PP's *Quantum Leap* student achievement initiative that will help more students perform at higher levels faster. The world-renowned programs are based on a framework of proven, best practice teaching strategies that are designed to develop the "whole child" by addressing their academic, physical and social needs. Also, IB is focused on helping students develop critical thinking skills (Rigor), understanding the connections between subjects and with the "real world" (Relevance) and collaborating with others (Relationships). Additionally, it is often said that IB makes average students above average and above average students exceptional.

### Q: Why did the District choose IB?

A: Because we needed to make significant, District-wide changes in our curriculum to improve student achievement, especially at the middle school level. After a C-PP team conducted extensive research into available options, the Board of Education voted to implement IB. The program has a 38-year track record of success in schools all around the world. In fact, there is no other educational program that is as well known or as highly regarded as IB. The quality of education is so superb that 1,878 schools in 124 countries have instituted the programs. In the U.S. alone there are 684 IB schools, including 39 in New York State, and the numbers are continuing to grow. C-PP has the unique distinction of being the first and only public school district in New York State that provides the IB programs to all secondary students.

### Q: Who manages IB?

A: The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) is a non-profit located in Geneva, Switzerland. It is funded by fees from participating schools, income from workshops, sales of IB materials and donations. There are four regional offices around the world, including IB North America (IBNA) in New York, NY. The regional offices work closely with IB schools to provide support, training, resources and assistance with student assessments.

### Q: How does IB benefit students?

A: IB starts with the expectation that all children can learn and achieve at a high level. The programs help students become aware of their personal learning style, how to take responsibility for their learning and how to communicate what they have learned. Also, IB gives students a broader view of the world through studying different cultures and countries in a variety of classroom subjects, including foreign languages. In addition, IB provides students with the following key benefits:

- *Development of critical-thinking, problem-solving and time-management skills as part of the best college preparation available. (Rigor)*
- *Instruction that emphasizes the connections between classroom subjects and with the real world. (Relevance)*
- *More collaboration between teachers to create interesting and integrated learning experiences, and more hands-on and group activities for students. (Relationships)*

### Q: What are the specific IB programs?

A: There are three distinct IB programs: the Primary Years Program for grades Pre-K through 5; the Middle Years Program for grades 6 through 10 and the Diploma Program for grades 11 and 12. Currently, C-PP is in the process of implementing the Middle Years and Diploma Programs in all four of our middle and high school buildings. We have a long-term goal to adopt the Primary Years Program once the middle and high school programs are well-established.

### Q: What do I need to know about the IB Middle Years Program?

A: The Middle Years Program (MYP) is a "whole school program" for every C-PP student in grades 6 through 10. It was designed specifically for students in this critical age group who are transitioning into their teenage years. Most of them have a strong need to ask questions and understand how what they learn in school matters in the "real world." Therefore, the MYP focuses on the relevance of each subject, how they connect to each other and how they apply to the world outside. It is also important to know that the MYP recognizes that all students learn differently; therefore, tests and assessments are given in different formats – written, oral and demonstrations – so that students have a chance to show what they have learned in ways that best suit their personal learning style.

### Q: Is the MYP a new curriculum?

A: No. What we teach is the same; it's the way we teach that has changed. As

always, C-PP students in grades 6 through 10 will take English, Math, Science, Art, Humanities, Technology, Phys Ed and Spanish or French. (Foreign languages are an IB requirement.) The MYP difference is delivered through the program's five "Areas of Interaction," which are the tools teachers use to help students see how everything they learn is relevant and interconnected. The MYP experience ends with a Personal Project, which each student must complete over the course of 9th and 10th grades. Every student who successfully completes the five-year program will receive an official MYP certificate at the end of 10th grade.

### Q: What are the Areas of Interaction?

A: The Areas of Interaction are not "subjects" studied in a separate class. It's helpful to think of them as a set of "lenses" teachers use to help students "see" the connections between their regular classroom subjects, as well as between what they learn at school and "the real world" – that's **Relevance**. Also, the Areas of Interaction help students to really think about what they are learning in new and different ways, rather than simply memorizing lots of facts, dates and figures – that's **Rigor**. In addition, the Areas of Interaction develop students' sense of compassion and respect for self, others and our environment – that's **Relationships**.

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Visit C-PP's IB site to learn more.

[www.corningareaschools.com](http://www.corningareaschools.com)

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Briefly, the Five Areas of Interaction include:

- *Approaches to Learning:* helps students “learn how to learn” and develops their sense of how they learn best; encourages teachers to provide a variety of instructional activities to address varying student learning styles.
- *Community and Service:* deepens students’ knowledge of the world around them and builds their sense of self as members of a community.
- *Homo Faber “Man the Maker:”* allows students to explore the impact of humans on society and on the mind, and expands their sense of the human capacity to influence, transform, enjoy and improve the quality of life.
- *Environment:* develops students’ awareness of their interdependence with the environment so that they understand and accept their responsibilities.
- *Health & Social Education:* helps students develop a sense of responsibility for their own well-being and for their physical and social environment.

**Q: Exactly how do teachers collaborate to show the connections between subjects?**

**A:** The main way this is accomplished is by teachers working together to design class work centered on common themes. For example, 8th grade students might study *Romeo and Juliet* in English, paint a castle in Art and learn about medieval times in History during the same semester. These kinds

of experiences help students to understand how knowledge crosses over all subject areas.

**Q: What is the Personal Project?**

**A:** All C-PP students will complete a Personal Project as part of the MYP program. At the end of 9th grade, students choose their own topic and work with an adult advisor to decide what format they will use. For example, they might write a report, prepare a PowerPoint® presentation, build a model or create a work of art – there are many options. The student and his or her advisor will work together to agree on something that allows the student to demonstrate what they know in a way that best suits his or her learning style while meeting the MYP requirements. The advisor will then work with the student through the middle of 10th grade, when the project is due to be completed.

**Q: Are teachers trained in IB?**

**A:** To date, more than 200 teachers and administrators have been formally trained in the IB programs. C-PP has been privileged to host three national IB training conferences inside the District, saving more than \$500,000 in travel expenses that would have been spent if our teachers were sent to other locations for the same training. District leaders are committed to providing all appropriate IB training to faculty and staff on a continuing basis.

**Q: What about teachers – how do they benefit from IB?**

**A:** Teachers benefit from IB in a number of ways, including online resources and ongoing training opportunities. Also,

IB offers support to teachers as they collaborate to develop interrelated courses, lesson plans and activities, as well as to coordinate assignments to make the work load more manageable for students. In addition, roundtable discussions for each subject area are provided by the Western New York Consortium of IB Schools – C-PP is an active participant in these sessions. And, our secondary schools are served by IB Coordinators who conduct on-site teacher training, work with guidance counselors and serve as a link with the IB organization to make sure requirements are understood and met.

**Q: How is IB funded?**

**A:** C-PP has been extremely fortunate to have the Corning Incorporated Foundation as its *Quantum Leap* and International Baccalaureate partner. During the four years since *Quantum Leap* began, the Corning Foundation has provided generous grants to support many of the new initiatives we are implementing, including IB.

**Q: What will happen when the Corning Incorporated Foundation grants expire?**

**A:** The District is committed to the continuation of the IB programs in our middle and high schools. And, we have a long-term goal to adopt the Primary Years Program for our elementary schools once the middle and high school programs are well-established. Therefore, District leaders have taken the necessary steps to ensure IB costs will be covered within the normal operating budget when the Corning Incorporated Foundation grants expire.

**Q: Will taxes increase to pay for IB?**

**A:** Many factors influence the tax levy, including expenses such as maintenance, transportation, contract agreements, state and federal mandates and staffing – these items alone represent more than 90% of the total budget. Equally critical is the amount of support we receive from the New York State Education Department, which is always an unknown until the state budget is passed each year. It is important to remember that the public has the opportunity to vote on the school budget every year, and this year is no different.

**Q: How can I learn more about IB?**

**A:** If you are in middle or high school, talk with your teachers, IB Coordinators, guidance counselors or principals. You can also visit the IB pages on the C-PP Web site at: [www.corningareaschools.com](http://www.corningareaschools.com) or the International Baccalaureate Web site at: [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).

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