

A Parent's Guide to the International Baccalaureate Career-related Program at Spring Valley High School



Our Mission:

The Spring Valley High School community is committed to creating a dynamic learning environment that develops critical thinkers, problem solvers, and global citizens who are prepared to succeed in college and life.

Opened in 2004, Spring Valley is one of the best kept secrets in the Clark County School District. From our nationally recognized academic programs, to our wide array of visual and performing arts, athletic teams, and student organizations, we know we can provide every student the best opportunity to succeed and thrive. Our graduation rate is among the highest in the CCSD, and we feel our faculty is the best and most committed group of educators you'll find anywhere. We have always offered our students an outstanding high school experience, but the addition of the International Baccalaureate Program has enabled us to provide our very best students with an academic experience that is world-class.

Creating a Better World through Education

The International Baccalaureate Organization was established in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968. The original goal of the organization was twofold; to create a high school diploma that would be recognized worldwide for the purposes of college admissions, and to foster an attitude of intercultural understanding and respect in young people. Establishing an academic standard that would satisfy the requirements of all nations naturally resulted in very high expectations for graduates, so it is no accident that 50 years and 5000 schools later, IB enjoys a reputation as the most rigorous and prestigious high school curriculum available.

The IB Mission Statement:

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop **inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring** young people who to 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 programs of international education and rigorous assessment**.

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

The Career-related Program (CP): Established in 2012, the CP is the newest IB program. We are currently applying for authorization and will be offering it to Spring Valley students in the fall of 2021. The CP has been developed to prepare students for a successful transition to either higher education, or employment in a rapidly evolving workplace. The CP is still a highly challenging academic pathway for our students, but it also provides the flexibility needed for students to fulfill the requirements of a career and technical education (CTE) certification concurrently with their IB requirements.

What you need to know about the IBCP:

- Students study 3 IBDP courses at either SL or HL (one must be Foreign Language).
- These courses culminate in international exams that are administered in May of the 12th grade year. Results from these exams can earn advanced standing, and college credit.
- Students choose a CTE pathway at the end of 9th grade and fulfill the requirements of the certification over the ensuing three years. Choices include: Computer Science, Technical Theater, Video Productions, Photography, and Business Management.
- Students attend a two-year seminar called Personal and Professional Skills that is designed to develop the skills needed to navigate higher education, the workplace and society.
- Students must complete a 3000 word research paper that analyzes an ethical dilemma associated with an issue in their CTE strand.
- Students must complete 50 hours of self-directed service learning in which they develop personal and social skills involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, and accountability.

The Payoff:

We all know the high school years are incredibly significant in the intellectual, social, and emotional development of young people and at the heart of the IB Program is a desire to educate and support the whole student in all of these areas.

We also acknowledge that this is a very challenging path to choose, but we are confident that it is worth the effort. IB has existed for 50 years, and we have had the program in Las Vegas for 40 years. No other magnet school or career and technical academy in the city can refer to four decades of results when making promises to students and families such as yours. Generally speaking, those promises have to do with the program's influence on college preparation and admissions, so we'll close with this important aspect of the IB Program.

The college admissions process is increasingly competitive, and becoming more so. Students who are serious about their post-secondary education must take advantage of every opportunity to stand out as applicants. The process is still anchored by three equally important components, and the IB Program is structured to support all three:

- **Academic Merit:** The high school transcript is still the one factor most likely to get a student through the filters set up by university admissions officers. They are trying to assess college readiness, so they will look at the rigor of coursework and grades. Almost every class your student takes here will be weighted as either an honors course, or an IB course (highest weighting available) and this is clearly indicated on the transcript. It is also important to remember that attendance is included on the high school transcript, and colleges take it very seriously.
- **Standardized Tests:** The SAT or ACT is generally taken early in the senior year, so students have results in time to apply early action or early decision in November. The more challenging the coursework a student has taken, the higher the score. The national average on the SAT hovers around 1100 out of a total of 1600. In my 22 years involved with IB in the CCSD, IB graduates have consistently beaten that average by 25 – 30%.
- **Institutional Fit:** This can mean a few things, but often comes down to extracurricular involvement and/or exceptional talent. Universities know what they can do for you. What they want to know is what you will do for them. What will you bring to their campus that will make it a better place for all students? Creativity, athletics, volunteerism, activism; all of these things are ways to answer that question, and they are all required aspects of an IB education.

Thank you very much for coming tonight. I know your time is valuable, and I know you have many choices available to you when it comes to your child's education. We are committed to offering our students the very best academic experience available. Our goal is not to match or exceed the best high schools in Las Vegas, but to match or exceed the best high schools anywhere. We feel we have everything we need to meet your expectations, and to ensure that your student walks out of here in 2024 with every possible opportunity available to them.

