

A Parent's Guide to the International Baccalaureate Diploma 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 IB Diploma Program (DP): The DP is a curriculum that emphasizes both depth and breadth of knowledge, and is considered the most rigorous academic program available to high school students anywhere in the world. Students study six subjects that culminate in assessments that are used by universities to grant advanced standing and college credit. The DP also requires students to conduct in-depth research (the Extended Essay), and to take part in self-directed experiential learning and activism in a variety of settings (CAS).

What you need to know about the IBDP:

- Students study six IBDP courses including Language and Literature, History of the Americas, Foreign Language (Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, or Japanese), Math, Science (Biology, Sports, Exercise and Health Science, or Chemistry), and an IBDP elective (an additional language, an additional science, Global Politics, Psychology, Theatre, or Visual Arts).
- These courses culminate in international exams that are administered in May of the 12th grade year. Results from these exams can earn college credit.
- Exams are taken at two levels: Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL), and students must take three at each level.
- Exams are scored on a 1 – 7 scale and a composite score of 24 points earns the IB Diploma in addition to the Advanced Honors Diploma from the CCSD.
- Students attend a two-year seminar called Theory of Knowledge that aims to make students better consumers of information by exploring areas of knowledge and ways of knowing.
- Students must complete a 4000 word research paper on a topic/subject of their own choosing. They will be assigned a mentor to guide the process, and we will manage various components in the Theory of Knowledge course.
- Students must complete the Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) program. This is an experiential learning component that encourages students to go beyond their normal school day and routines, and connect with the world around them through creative endeavors, physically beneficial activities, and volunteerism.