

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PARENT GUIDE



INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PARENT GUIDE

A Parent's Guide to the International Baccalaureate PYP Program at Jefferson Elementary

What is the International Baccalaureate?

- Founded in 1968 in Geneva Switzerland, the International Baccalaureate® (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation offering four highly respected programmes of international education that develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills needed to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world.
- In order to teach IB programmes, schools must be authorized. Every school authorized to offer IB programmes is known as an IB World School.
- IB offers four programs of international education for students aged 3-19 years old:
 - The Primary Years Program (PYP) (for students 3-12 years old).
 - The Middle Years Program (MYP) (students 11-16 years old).
 - The Diploma Program (DP) at the high school level (grades 9-12).
 - The Career-related Programme (CP) at the high school level (grades 9-12).
- Over 4,200 IB World Schools Implementing more than 5,300 Programs

What is an IB education?

An IB education...

- **focuses on student agency:** The IB's student-centred programmes promote healthy relationships, ethical responsibility and personal challenge
- **develops effective approaches to teaching and learning:** IB programmes help students to develop the attitudes and skills they need for both academic and personal success,
- **works within global contexts:** IB programmes increase understanding of languages and cultures, and explore globally significant ideas and issues,
- **explores significant content:** IB programmes offer a curriculum that is broad and balanced, conceptual and connected.



What is an IB PYP (Primary Years Program) School?

Regardless of location, size, or make-up, a PYP school for students 3-12 years old, strives to develop an internationally minded person.

The mission of the IBO:

- To develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people.
- To create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.
- To work with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.
- To encourage students worldwide to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

"I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think."

—Socrates

What does that mean at Jefferson?

At JEFFERSON, students are taught WHY they should know something and how it connects to other subjects and the world around them. It means students often decide the direction of instruction, based on their curiosities and inquiries. It means high quality teaching and learning—challenging instruction and worldwide knowledge “at home” (so to speak, in whichever country where you live and go to school). It also means great opportunities to study abroad for college/university, as well as opportunities to make friends with other students at IB schools around the world.



How does the IB PYP teach students to be internationally-minded?

Through teaching and modeling the IB “Learner Profile.” Regardless of the IB school in any part of the world, these attributes are foundational to the IB learning experience.

What does it mean to be "internationally minded" and why is it important?

Being internationally minded is a thoughtful, critical perspective that applies to who we are and what we do. It includes how we communicate, our political awareness, cultural understanding, celebrating diversity, global awareness of global issues, and a reflection on how knowledge is constructed and applied. At JEFFERSON, we focus on moving students toward becoming people who reflect the characteristics of the “Learner Profile.”

What is the Learner Profile?

The IB learner profile represents ten attributes valued by IB world schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

The IB Learner Profile Attributes are..

INQUIRER
RISK-TAKER
BALANCED
THINKER
PRINCIPLED

COMMUNICATOR
OPEN-MINDED
CARING
KNOWLEDGEABLE
REFLECTIVE



What are the PYP Attitudes?

The “Attitudes” are the daily expressions of the “Learner Profile” used by teachers in teaching and by students in their learning. These are the day to day attitudes we value in the PYP: appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect, and tolerance.

What will my child be learning at Jefferson?

At Jefferson, we are committed to structured inquiry as the vehicle for learning. Six transdisciplinary themes called UNITS OF INQUIRY provide the framework for exploration and construction of knowledge. Teachers and students teach the common core standards while being guided by these transdisciplinary themes for exploration and study. The six transdisciplinary themes (UNITS OF INQUIRY) are...

- Who We Are
- Where We Are in Place and Time
- How We Express Ourselves
- How the World Works
- How We Organize Ourselves
- Sharing the Planet

IB programmes
share a powerful
vision
that is informed
by the values
described in the
learner profile

What does "Transdisciplinary" mean?

Transdisciplinary is the word that the PYP uses to describe a discipline that applies across all disciplines—it is an interconnectedness and can be applied across all subjects and applied to real life.

A PYP CONCEPT stretches across math, science, language arts, and social studies and ties it all together; it is not isolated to one subject. For example, the idea of change affects all subject areas—the IB PYP strives to demonstrate this through learning, giving understanding to a real life world. In the PYP there are eight fundamental concepts; expressed as key questions, to propel the process of inquiry. The eight fundamental concepts and guiding questions are...

- Form: What is it like?
- Function: How does it work?
- Causation: Why is it like it is?
- Change: How is it changing?
- Connection: How is it connected to other things?
- Perspective: What are the points of view?
- Reflection: How do we know?

What does Action look like at Jefferson?

At Jefferson, we believe that taking action is an important component of learning that incorporates students making connections to what they have learned, applying a variety of real life skills, demonstrating an enduring understanding.

Action is best grounded in the students' own experiences and it can be a small thing that arises from a genuine concern and commitment after a unit of inquiry has been completed and often takes place beyond the classroom.

At Jefferson, we strive to provide students with opportunities to choose, to act, to decide on their actions and to reflect on these actions in order to make a difference.

What are the IB ATLs?

"Approaches to Learning" skills. The ATLs are sets of relevant 21 century skills that students acquire to help thrive and adapt in any profession, challenge or situation. The skills are ...

- Thinking
- Communication
- Social
- Research
- Self-Management





The International Baccalaureate® (IB) offers four high quality international education programs to more than one million students in more than 146 countries.

How are students tested at Jefferson?

Students at JEFFERSON are assessed in a variety of ways, including written tests, exams, projects, oral presentations and written reports. Students may also be asked to put together a final project, draw, act out a performance, do a presentation, or some other way to show what they have learned. The goal of assessment is for our students to demonstrate that learning has taken place by showing what they understand and how they are applying that understanding to real life and the world around them. On larger assignments, teachers will give the students a rubric that explains to the students what is expected of them.



How can parent help?

- Ask your child about their current units of Inquiry and encourage them to ask questions and research to find answers/solutions.
- Become a member of the Friends of Jefferson and the Jefferson PTA
- Volunteer in your child's classroom or around the school.
- Provide communication between yourself and school that is regular, 2-way, and meaningful.
- Portfolios are a part of documenting student growth and reflections over the course of the student's elementary career. Ask your child to see his/hers online or when visiting the school.
- Collaborate with the community, through partnerships, which are mutually beneficial to our school and the community.
- You are always welcome at JEFFERSON! We need your support and assistance to make our school the great place that it is!

In the end, what makes the IB PYP so effective at Jefferson?

At JEFFERSON, with the IB PYP and STEAM program, our students in all grades have the opportunity to own their learning. Our teachers do not “cover” a subject or “give” a lesson. At JEFFERSON, our students take the lesson or learning process—they do it, make it, and experience it. Our students ask questions and learn how to find the answers to those questions and apply to their lives and the world around them. With the IB STEAM program, JEFFERSON students see how things are connected in a real way, rather than simply being fragmented into school subjects.

We are a truly international community and we are committed to the IB STEAM philosophy that students need to be at the center of real life learning by using their natural curiosity. The IB PYP model fits well with our goals, at JEFFERSON, to guide our students to be internationally minded with a passion for life-long learning.

“The whole art of teaching is only the awakening of the natural curiosity of young minds.”

-Anatole France

For more information please visit the IBO website...
www.ibo.org

Sources used in compiling this handbook:

- Ibo.org
- Making the PYP Happen*- IB Guidebook
- Education for a Better World*- IB Brochure
- Kazakhstan International School- Almaty, Kazakhstan
- Alpine Elementary School—Longmont, CO, USA
- Robbinsdale Area Schools—St. Paul, MN, USA

