

IB Parent Focus Groups Update

Representatives from the IB Committee recently hosted two focus group and information meetings for parents on the morning of February 25th and the evening of March 5th. In total, forty-five parents representing all grade levels attended either the day or evening meetings. After an initial presentation by Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Dr. Teresa Prendergast, high school principal Ms. Nanine Cuttitta and assistant principal Dr. Adele Pecora, members of the high school faculty and administration met with parents in smaller groups to listen to and discuss any questions or concerns they had about the program.

Topics for discussion included staff development requirements for teachers, opportunities for students to sit for both AP and IB courses and/or exams, the value of sitting for single IB courses rather than participating in the diploma program, identified skills set needed for writing and research, middle school preparation, identified IB districts on Long Island, concerns about cost and facilities, student assessments, the grading and/or appeals process, community endorsement, simultaneously meeting NYS Regents graduation requirements and IB requirements, the expected increase in the level of academic rigor required and the added CAS (community, action service) and extended essay components.

The IB Program can be pursued as both a full diploma course of study or as individual certificate programs. Assessments are both internal (high school IB teachers) and external (graded outside of the district.) IB education can co-exist with Advanced Placement at the high school level.

The IB committee will meet in April to review findings, as well as the feedback and questions raised at the parent focus group meetings. The members of the committee appreciated the comments and the conversation which took place amongst the groups and looks forward to updating the Board of Education later this spring with regard to the committee's findings and recommendations.