

From the 2009 Winter *On The Line* District Newsletter:

Garden City Public Schools continues to examine the merits of adding the International Baccalaureate Program at the high school level. In two recent informational meetings, IB committee members Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, Dr. Teresa Prendergast, high school principal Ms. Nanine Cuttita and assistant principal Dr. Adele Pecora, along with parent, teacher, and administration members of the investigative team, met with community attendees to share information and to answer questions about IB education.

International Baccalaureate is designed as an academically challenging “international-minded” educational program which prepares students for success at the university level and beyond. It is normally taught over two years and structured around six subject groups: two modern languages; a humanities or social science subject; an experimental science; mathematics, and the creative arts. Central to the program’s philosophy are three core elements: *extended essay* (4000 words on a topic of interest to the student); *theory of knowledge* (critical reflection, cultural perspectives, interdisciplinary focus), and *creativity, action and service* (community awareness, experiential learning).

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.

“Although we continue to study all aspects of IB, we acknowledge the current financial crisis and have not allocated any funds in the 2009-10 budget,” stated Dr. Prendergast.

“It was important that we had the opportunity to investigate IB without commitment to the program,” commented high school principal Nanine Cuttita. “It’s about preparing our students to move beyond us.”

On Long Island, IB education is currently offered in the Commack, Locust Valley, Northport-East Northport and Rockville Centre school districts. IB graduate student feedback from those districts is consistently positive, citing the program’s emphasis on college preparation in the areas of writing, critical thinking, time management, and multi-tasking.