



# **International Baccalaureate Program**

## **Guide for Students and Parents**

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**Douglas County High School**

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(IB Department)**

## **IBO Mission Statement**

*The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*

*To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.*

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

## From the Coordinator

A great deal can, and has been made of the rewards that await many of you upon your completion of the International Baccalaureate program -- credit hours, scholarships, selective college admittance and so on, but I choose neither to sell nor to evaluate the program based on such criteria.

The success of this program rests with you, and can be determined solely on your ability to place your confidence in your talents. A universal / international morality resides in such an approach to learning. This requires each of you, as individuals, to remain aware that your education involves a never-ending transition, resulting in personal growth. This occurs in three steps...

. . . Initially you must be aware of the person you are -- what you know, what you value, what you imagine.

. . . Secondly, you must be aware of what more you want to be.

. . . Finally, you must waken the talents, peculiarly yours, necessary to move you from the first stage to the second.

You must continue this pattern throughout your life. I call this "moral education" because it lives and it grows purely as a result of choice -- your INDIVIDUAL choices to become someone more than you were.

There is talk that IB is an elitist program. I have only a vague conception of what proponents of such an attitude mean by this, but I feel confident that they are wrong -- wrong even when, and I hope this rarely happens, individuals within the program promote such an attitude. Any IB student who thinks "I am better than him because I am an IB student," does not deserve to be called an IB student. He should say instead, "I am better than I was because I have chosen to challenge myself." This distinction is all-important because a moral education does not elevate some as a measure against others. It does not define by comparison with anything that lies outside of the self.

I will take this one step further. When one views her growth, her significance, her achievement, purely in relation to those around her, she not only fails to become more than she was but actually becomes something less...such comparisons comprise a form of slavery in which free will sacrifices itself to external comparisons.

Tests are not final measurements. Teachers and parents are not final judges. Rewards for achievement are not ends in themselves. They all simply attempt to encourage you to no longer depend on them -- to encourage you to help education take the step it must take if it wishes to function as the world's most powerful tool in the eradication of prejudice, and the development of free, thinking, moral individuals.

*--Dr. Steve Fleet, DCHS IB Coordinator*