

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) at Ray-Pec: *International Baccalaureate (IB)*

May 24, 2012 UPDATE

What is IB?

The International Baccalaureate Program is a comprehensive and balanced 2 year curriculum and assessment system that allows students to study courses across all disciplines. Through careful subject selection, students may tailor their course of studies to meet their needs. Students who choose to pursue the IB Diploma will explore the connections between six major subject areas through an international perspective. They will also pursue one subject in great detail through independent research and will have an opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills in community outreach. It is designed for highly motivated students who seek the challenge of a well-rounded international curriculum. The program equips students with the skills and attitudes necessary for success in higher education and employment.

Why is Ray-Pec adopting an IB Curriculum?

The IB aligns with the mission of the Raymore-Peculiar School District to maximize each student's achievement, encourage lifelong learning, and develop productive citizens. Offering the IB affords Ray-Pec the opportunity to provide a global, interdisciplinary curriculum with international assessment standards. The program will equip our students with exemplary critical thinking skills, and open doors for their post-secondary choices.

Guiding Principles that led to IB at Ray-Pec:

The district started developing Professional Learning Communities during the 2003-04 school year in all schools. Ray-Pec continues to be committed to answering the four fundamental questions of a Professional Learning Community (PLC):

1. What do we expect each student to be able to know and do?
*Ray-Pec's answer is to have a **Guaranteed (consistent) & Viable (doable) Curriculum***
2. How will we know when they have learned it and have the skills needed to be successful?
*Ray-Pec's answer is to have **Assessment for Learning** in every classroom every day.*
3. What will we do at each school and as a district when students are not learning or being successful?
*Ray-Pec's answer is to have **Differentiated Instruction** and to create **effective Extra Time & Support Systems** for all students as needed.*
4. What will we do at each school and as a district when students are already learning at high levels and being highly successful?
*Ray-Pec's answer is to have **Differentiated Instruction, Enrichment & Extended Learning** for all students as needed.*

IB will help Ray-Pec answer PLC Question #4. In addition, adopting the International Baccalaureate Program in Ray-Pec is consistent with the district's collective commitments: We are committed to consistency and accountability for each student's success. We are committed to a system of support for students and adults. We are committed to best practices. We are committed to high expectations for learning, behavior and citizenship.

We are committed to a guaranteed (consistent) and viable (doable) curriculum. We are committed to maintaining fiscal responsibility while improving student achievement.

IB Implementation Time line:

The tentative timeline for implementation of IB in Ray-Pec can be found at this link: <insert hyperlink to PDF of implementation schedule.

General Questions

Q: Can anyone take part in the IB Diploma Program?

A: Yes. A successful IB student is self-motivated, desires to challenge him or herself intellectually and academically, is open to new ideas, and participates in school and community activities.

Q: Who should take IB classes?

A: Successful IB student is self-motivated, desires to challenge him or herself intellectually and academically, is open to new ideas, and participates in school and community activities.

Q: When does a student start the IB?

A: The IB courses are taken over two years – during 11th and 12th grade. However, in order to be prepared to take the academically challenging courses, it is important that students begin to plan their path from the 8th grade.

Q: Can a student take just IB courses and not take part in the full IB Diploma Program?

A: Yes. A student can register to participate in the full IB Diploma Program requiring him or her to fulfill course requirements and three additional components (extended essay, CAS and Theory of Knowledge), or students can enroll in individual IB courses at the end of which he or she will pursue an IB certificate credit by successfully completing an external assessment as well as the IB exam for each course.

Q: How many courses do I have to take to get the IB Diploma?

A: Six courses are required in addition to completion of the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge course and Creativity, Action, Service requirement. At least three, and no more than four, courses need to be taken at the higher level (HL).

Q: Will taking IB classes get me into college?

A: Colleges throughout the United States and internationally recognize the IB program as representing world-class university preparation. Within the U.S. the weight given the IB program in admission decisions varies widely. Some schools show a preference for IB Diploma candidates in the admissions process. In general, the IB is recognized as a challenging course of study that is certainly viewed favorably in the admissions process. Selective institutions are looking for students who have taken the most challenging course of study available in their high school. Use this link to review how IB Courses are viewed by colleges and universities throughout the country:

<http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/recognitionpolicy/index.cfm>