**Communicating About the IB Middle Years Programme**

**Introduction**

We tend to focus internally on the technical aspects of IB, unit writing, professional development, and the challenges of working across multiple buildings with different structures, schedules, and cultures.

These are the things that dominate your work related to IB. But they are not the aspects that interest parents and taxpayers.

MYP is abstract. It’s process-oriented. Our task today is to step out of the professional role and think like a layperson.

In communicating with members of the public, remember that their burning question is **What’s in it for me and my student? For me as a Shaker resident and taxpayer?**

How, in 30 to 60 seconds, do you explain IB to laypeople who have entrusted their children and their tax dollars to our school system?

You may already have much of the answer. Reflect on:

* What kinds of questions have you received from parents and residents?
* What kinds of explanations have you been able to give?
* What words or phrases seem to resonate with the laypeople you’ve spoken with?

Drawing on your own experience and knowledge, develop key points that you would want to make in explaining IB to a layperson. The Q&A on the next page may be useful.

* **Be brief.** Your basic explanation should take no more than 45 seconds, preferably less. Time your delivery.
* **Be authentic.** Use your own words.
* **Relate it to what they already know.** Parents whose children have attended Shaker K-4 schools since the adoption of PYP will likely grasp the similarities.
* Keep the vocabulary simple and **avoid jargon** (which is plentiful in IB).
* **Give concrete examples** from your own experience where possible – e.g., an interdisciplinary unit or a project that demonstrates how IB works.
* Keep in mind that parents want to know **what’s in it for them and their child.**

**The IB Middle Years Programme at a Glance**

**What is the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme?**

* Enrichment for all students in grades 5 – 10.
* Emphasis on hands-on learning, inquiry, collaboration, connections between the subject areas, and a global outlook. [Give concrete example]
* Very similar in philosophy to the Primary Years Programme that we have in our K-4 schools.
* Good fit with the District’s mission to prepare students for success in our global and multicultural society.
* Common Core State Standards are *what* we teach in the core subjects; IB is *how* we teach it. [Give concrete example]

**How does it benefit students?**

* More engagement through hands-on learning and group work.
* Moves away from lecture to self-directed learning, deeper thinking, and emphasis on service. Students learn how to learn.
* Opportunities to tie classroom learning into real-world experiences.
* Greater consistency of expectations.
* Increased world language offerings beginning in 6th grade.
* [Give concrete example of how IB is changing your teaching and your students]

**How does it benefit teachers?**

* More collaboration to create and teach units of study both within and across disciplines.
* Encouragement of creativity and ingenuity to engage students.
* Establishment of clear learning objectives for each unit of study.

**What is the MYP Personal Project?**

* Capstone project for all 10th grade students.
* A product, event, or experience that reflects students’ learning and development over the course of their education.
* Allows students to put their passion into action. [Concrete example]
* Similar in purpose to the IB PYP Exhibition or the Senior Project.

**Where can I find more information?**

* Visit the Shaker MYP website at [www.shaker.org/IBMYP](http://www.shaker.org/IBMYP)
* Contact one of the MYP coordinators:  
  Amy Brodsky (Woodbury): [Brodsky\_a@shaker.org](mailto:Brodsky_a@shaker.org)

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