SACRED HEART ACADEMY IS A CANDIDATE SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

As of September 1, 2019, Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart is a Candidate School planning toward authorization as an International Baccalaureate World School. If authorized this year, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma will be available to students who are ready and motivated for this challenging academic experience.

What is an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma?

The IB Diploma is issued to students who take specific IB courses throughout their junior and senior years of high school and who also complete in-depth research, an extended essay based on a topic of choice, and who participate in independent activities demonstrating creativity, activity and service. Students must complete all requirements and acquire sufficient points to receive an IB Diploma.

What is the advantage of an International Baccalaureate Diploma?

The IB Program is a robust and comprehensive course of study that includes rigorous courses in Mathematics Applications, History of the Americas, English Language and Literature, World Religions, Biology, and a world language. These courses take place over two years and offer in-depth study, research and interdisciplinary connections among the courses. In addition to the subject courses, all IB students take the core “Theory of Knowledge” course that teaches them to explore how they know what they know and connects the subject course topics to “ways of knowing and thinking.” Finally, students choose a topic of interest and write a 4,000 word extended essay that involves research, determination of a thesis, and the written essay. Creativity, activity and service are also required each year of the program.

The greatest benefit to the program is achievement of a rigorous and challenging curriculum and program that develops students as thinkers who are internationally-minded and who contribute positively to their own and the lives of others. Colleges and universities hold the IB Diploma in high esteem and generally recognize it as the “gold standard” high school program. Many institutions of higher learning offer advanced placement and/or college credits for completion of the diploma requirements.

When will this program opportunity begin at Sacred Heart?

If authorized during this academic year, students in the Class of 2022 will be eligible to begin this course of study during their junior and senior years.
Who will be eligible for this program?

In order to participate, students will have to have demonstrated high academic achievement in their freshman and sophomore years of high school. Motivation, work ethic, and a desire to become more internationally-minded are factors that will be considered.

Are there pre-requisites for admission to the program?

Generally, students would have taken honors level courses in their freshman and sophomore years and have achieved at the high honor roll level. Participation in the IB Program will be based on coursework, grades, and an application process. Eligible students will be invited during the second half of their freshman year, which will allow them to prepare throughout their sophomore year for the demands of the program.

Will students in the IB program receive a NYS Regents Diploma?

Yes, IB students will meet and exceed all requirements for a NYS Regents Diploma and will also receive an IB Diploma recognizing their accomplishments.

Will IB students take AP courses and examinations?

In some IB courses, students will take an AP and IB exam, particularly in IB Biology and IB History of the Americas. There will be additional opportunities to take AP exams in English, Spanish and French.

Will IB students receive college credit for any of the IB courses?

Students who complete the full program and are awarded an IB Diploma are seen as desirable candidates for college acceptance. Once accepted, many colleges and universities award college credits or advanced placement based on courses completed and scores on the external examinations. Regardless of the ways in which colleges and universities award credits, the IB diploma program is considered a “gold standard” course of study for students who are willing and ready to pursue this course of study in high school.

Is there an additional cost for participation in the IB Diploma course of study?

There is no cost to participate in the IB Diploma course of study. The only additional cost would be for the external examination fee, which would be similar to the fee for an Advanced Placement (AP) exam.

Are there other schools in Western New York that offer the International Baccalaureate course of study?

Currently, Kenmore-West High School, Kenmore-East High School, and City Honors High School offer this program. If authorized, Sacred Heart would be the only private and the only all-girls school in WNY to offer the IB Diploma.

May a student participate in the STEM Honors program as well as the IB Program?

Students who meet the qualifications for both programs will choose one of the two program options. Both are outstanding learning opportunities for students. The STEM Honors Program emphasizes math and science while the emphasis of the IB Program is studies in the Humanities.

If you have further questions, please contact Linda Cimusz, Director of Academics, at lcimusz@sacredheartacademy.org or 834-2101 X308.