

# Lawrence Elementary School

*Official IB Candidate School*



## International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP)

IB PYP schools develop students' academic, social, and emotional well-being, focusing on international-mindedness and strong personal values. The PYP nurtures independent learning skills, encouraging every student to take responsibility for their learning through an inquiry approach. The curriculum is organized into themes, selected for their relevance to the real world. The transdisciplinary themes focus on developing curiosity, reflection, and action among all students.

### Learner Profile

The goal of IB is to develop internationally minded students who help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB uses the Learner Profile as the foundation to reach this goal. The focus of the Learner Profile asks WHO DO WE WANT TO BE? IB schools strive to develop students who are:

Inquirers	Open-Minded
Knowledgeable	Caring
Thinkers	Risk-Takers
Communicators	Balanced
Principled	Reflective

### Themes

The PYP aims to create and organize a curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging, and authentic for learners in the 3–12 age range. The curriculum is transdisciplinary, meaning students learn across subject areas while investigating big ideas.

The PYP incorporates local and global issues into the curriculum, asking students to look at six themes and to consider the links between them. These are:

- Who we are
- Where we are in place and time
- How we express ourselves
- How the world works
- How we organize ourselves
- Sharing the planet

These themes are selected for their relevance to the real world. The transdisciplinary themes focus on developing a program of inquiry. Teachers work together to develop investigations into important ideas, which require a substantial and high level of involvement on the part of students. The Learner Profile is embedded throughout the six themes.

## Curriculum

The International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) balances the acquisition of significant and relevant knowledge and skills, the development of conceptual understanding, the formation of personal, positive attitudes and the capacity to take responsible actions. The current Middletown curriculum will still be used, yet current units will be organized into themes with an emphasis on social emotional learning and global-mindedness. Grade level teams at Lawrence School will work with the PYP Coordinator to organize the curriculum around the themes

The PYP:

- addresses students' academic needs and their social and emotional well-being
- encourages students to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own learning
- supports students' effort to gain understanding of the world and to function effectively within it
- helps students to establish personal values as a foundation on which international-mindedness will flourish.

The written curriculum is made up of five essential elements and details what students will learn. The five essential elements of the PYP are:

- **knowledge**, which is both disciplinary, represented by traditional subject areas (language, math, science, social studies, arts), and transdisciplinary
- **concepts**, which students explore through structured inquiry in order to develop coherent, in-depth understanding, and which have relevance both within and beyond subject areas
- **skills**, which are the broad capabilities students develop and apply during learning
- **attitudes**, which contribute to international-mindedness and connect directly to the IB learner profile
- **action**, which is an expectation in the PYP that successful inquiry leads to responsible, thoughtful, and appropriate action.

The PYP is committed to structured, purposeful inquiry that engages students actively in their own learning. The program supports students' efforts to construct meaning from the world around them by:

- drawing on their prior knowledge
- engaging in new experiences
- providing opportunities for reflection

This approach respects students' developing ideas about how the world works. It encourages them to question, consider and refine their understanding of the social and natural world.

## **Assessments**

Students at Lawrence School will continue to be assessed using the same local and state assessments that other schools use across the district. Additionally, formative and summative assessments tied to the transdisciplinary units will be created.

In the PYP, learning is viewed as a continuous journey, where teachers identify students' needs and use assessment data to plan the next stage of their learning.

Through assessment, the IB helps teachers to identify what students know, understand, can do and value at different stages in the teaching and learning process.

## **The PYP Exhibition**

In fifth grade, students carry out an extended, in-depth, collaborative project known as the PYP exhibition.

This involves students working collaboratively to conduct an in-depth inquiry into real life issues or problems. Students collectively synthesize all of the essential elements of the PYP in ways that can be shared with the whole school community.

The exhibition represents a unique and significant opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the IB learner profile developed throughout their engagement with the PYP.

## **Language**

All students in the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Program (PYP) have the opportunity to learn more than one language. Lawrence School has chosen Spanish, which will be integrated throughout all classrooms. There will be direct instruction in Spanish, as well as an integration of Spanish into the classroom environment.

IB recognizes the importance of valuing language and cultural development.