



# Bennett Elementary School

***“An internationally minded community of learners who work to make a difference in our world.”***

**An International Baccalaureate World School**

# Community Handbook



*Poudre School District  
Educate Every Child Every Day*

# **The Mission Statement of the International Baccalaureate Organization**

**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.**

# PYP at a Glance

The Primary Years Program is designed for students in grades K-6. This transdisciplinary program of international education focuses not only on academic growth, but also on the growth of the child as a whole, encompassing academic, social, physical, emotional, and cultural needs.

The PYP combines the best research and practice from a range of national systems with a wealth of knowledge and experience to create a “relevant, engaging, challenging, and significant” framework for all children (IB website, 2008). The PYP also promotes an inquiry approach, which puts students at the center of their own learning.

A PYP school is one that strives toward developing an internationally minded person who has the attributes and dispositions described in the learner profile.

Key components of the program include:

- ❖ Additional language instruction (Spanish)
- ❖ Inquiry based learning
- ❖ Character education
- ❖ International perspectives

## What is an internationally-minded person?

Many interrelated factors go into to defining an internationally-minded person. Simply stated, this person is “one who demonstrates the attributes of the IB learner profile.” We guide students to think and act on both a local and global level, to embody the learner profile attributes in all that they do (both in and out of school), and to develop their own set of values based on these attributes.

*Quote taken from Making the PYP Happen, 2007*

# IB Learner Profile

Below are definitions of the Learner Profile attributes as well as ways that students and adults can demonstrate those attributes.

## **Inquirer**

Definition: *They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show their independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.*

Students: Conduct purposeful, constructive research; ask questions that are relevant to studies; show curiosity; use a variety of resources; raise new questions.

Adults: Encourage areas of the learner's interest by visiting the library to borrow books that explore these topics; model being an inquirer, admitting when you don't know the answer to a problem or question and seek out answers in front of the learner.

## **Thinker**

Definition: *They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.*

Students: Construct own meaning; solves problems; formulate searchable and productive questions; use time management skills; think before acting.

Adults: Encourage the learner to think of solutions to problems independently; ask the learner questions when they are working on a problem; allow the learner to think about their own behaviors and appropriate consequences.

## **Communicator**

Definition: *They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of models of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.*

Students: Consults and listens to others; share ideas; ask for help when needed; make recommendations.

Adults: Encourage the learner to explain his/her answers orally, in written form, or by drawing a picture; work with the learner to improve listening skills.

## **Risk-Taker**

Definition: *They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.*

Students: Take risks in learning new information, skills and technologies; defend ideas; challenge own reading level; take on new roles.

Adults: Encourage the learner to attempt something new and then help them reflect on their successes and failures; help the learner to understand that they won't always be successful and that they can learn from being unsuccessful; explain the difference between trying new things and doing dangerous things.

## **Knowledgeable**

Definition: *They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.*

Students: Know where to find information; inquire into a range of topics; read for a variety of purposes; help others find information.

Adults: Encourage the learner to read books that correspond to topics covered in school; ask the learner about what they are learning in school and engage them in conversations about it; encourage the learner to become familiar with current events (at an age-appropriate level).

## **Principled**

Definition: *They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.*

Students: Accept responsibility for behavior; act fairly, with respect towards others; accept responsibility for sharing resources; do not bully or tease.

Adults: Follow the rules of a game so the learner experiences winning and losing; ensure the learner sticks to rules and agreements; hold the learner responsible for their own behavior.

## **Caring**

Definition: *They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and to the environment.*

Students: Respect and show empathy towards others; collaborate with others during group work; care for school property and the environment.

Adults: Model caring behavior - use kind words, help others, are active listeners.

## **Open-Minded**

Definition: *They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.*

Students: Accept others' ideas and points of view; show sensitivity towards diversity; use text to learn more about other cultures, beliefs, and perspectives.

Adults: Encourage the learner to really listen to others when they speak; encourage the learner to out new things.

## **Balanced**

Definition: *They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.*

Students: Demonstrate good time/task management skills; are physically and mentally fit; do many different things in moderation; use a variety of sources.

Adults: Encourage the learner to participate in a wide variety of activities; are active in many different things; support the learner in balancing work with play.

## **Reflective**

Definition: *They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.*

Students: Choose, act, and reflect; make connections; assess their own strengths and weaknesses as a learner.

Adults: Reflect with the learner about their work, focusing on strengths and goals for improvement; help the child reflect upon their choices and the consequences; ask the learner specific questions about their day.

*All italicized definitions taken from Making the PYP Happen, 2007.*

# What does Inquiry look like?

Inquiry is the process initiated by the students or the teacher that moves the students from their current level of understanding to a new and deeper level of understanding. This can mean:

- exploring, wondering and questioning
- experimenting and playing with possibilities
- making connections between previous learning and current learning
- making predictions and acting purposefully to see what happens
- collecting data and reporting findings
- clarifying existing ideas and reappraising perceptions of events
- deepening understanding through the application of a concept
- making and testing theories
- researching and seeking information
- taking and defending a position
- solving problems in a variety of ways.

# What is the Program of Inquiry?

Throughout the school year, six units of inquiry are taught at each grade level. Though each unit differs in topic, they all cover the following transdisciplinary themes: *Who we are*, *Where we are in place and time*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves*, and *Sharing the Planet*. All of these units put together make up a curriculum map known as the Program of Inquiry. The Program of Inquiry is displayed in the front hall of the PYP schools for your information.

# What is a Planner?

A planner is a graphic organizer that helps a teacher plan their unit of inquiry. In order to strengthen teaching and learning, IB provides a structured plan for teachers to use while designing instruction. The planner is designed around seven open-ended questions:

- what is our purpose?
- what resources will we use?
- what do we want to learn?
- how best will we learn?
- how will we know what we have learned?
- how will we take action?
- to what extent did we achieve our purpose?

*Information taken from Making the PYP Happen, 2007.*

# What is the difference between the learner profile and attitudes?

The IB learner profile was developed as a way to show what IB learners strive to be. The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. To further develop these attributes of the learner profile within our community, we also promote a set of attitudes (traits we want all students to have), which are listed and described below.

# PYP Attitudes

Below are definitions of the different PYP attitudes, as well as ways that students and adults can demonstrate these attitudes.

## Appreciation

Definition: *Appreciating the wonder and beauty of the world and its people.*

Students: Show interest in the people and things around you; show gratitude for the things people have done.

Adults: Encourage the learner to learn about different cultures; be an example of a person who shows interest in the people and things around you.

## Commitment

Definition: *Being committed to their own learning, persevering and showing self-discipline and responsibility.*

Students: Keep trying, even if it is hard; try different solutions to a problem.

Adults: Encourage the learner to follow through with what they have started; help them to persevere through difficult times.

## Confidence

Definition: *Feeling confident in their ability as learners, having the courage to take risks, applying what they have learned and making appropriate decisions and choices.*

Students: Are confident in what they know and aren't afraid to be wrong; Apply prior knowledge to future decisions.

Adults: Allow the learner to take educational risks; assist the learner in making appropriate decisions and choices.

## **Cooperation**

Definition: *Cooperating, collaborating, and leading or following as the situation demands.*

Students: Work together; accept responsibility in all situations and use communication skills to work through problems and assignments; are able to lead and follow depending on the situation.

Adults: Encourage the learner to use communication skills and knowledge to work through problems and assignments; provide opportunities for working with others; support the learner in various group roles.

## **Creativity**

Definition: *Being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas.*

Students: Think outside the box; demonstrate creative problem solving; show personality in work; use interesting details.

Adults: Expose the learner to many forms of expression; encourage the learner to come up with their own unique ideas; value the learner's ideas.

## **Curiosity**

Definition: *Being curious about the nature of learning and of the world, its people and cultures.*

Students: Try new things; question; complete research; explore ideas.

Adults: Model questioning; explore new ideas with the learner; support the interests of the learner.

## **Empathy**

Definition: *Imaginatively projecting themselves into another's situation, in order to understand his/her thoughts, reasoning and emotions.*

Students: Help others in need; share; take turns; give encouragement to others; understand others' points of view.

Adults: Show the learner how to help others in need; expect the learner to share and take turns; model encouragement for others; show understanding of various points of view.

## **Enthusiasm**

Definition: *Enjoying learning and willingly putting the effort into the process.*

Students: Show interest in others; smile; are excited about learning; participate in class and school activities.

Adults: Show excitement when hearing the learner's day; participate in home and school activities with the learner; volunteer.

## **Independence**

Definition: *Thinking and acting without help from others, making their own judgments based on reasoned argument, and being able to defend their judgments.*

Students: Think about how to solve a problem before asking for help; ask questions and form opinions; try new things independently.

Adults: Encourage the learner to think for themselves and ask questions; offer guidance but allow the learner to try things on their own.

## **Integrity**

Definition: *Being honest and demonstrating a considered sense of fairness.*

Students: Are honest about thoughts, feelings, and actions; act fairly.

Adults: Are honest; expect honesty; teach the learner that even if they have made a mistake, it is better to be honest about it and to learn from it; are fair in decision making.

## **Respect**

Definition: *Appreciating and honoring themselves, others and the world around them.*

Students: Appreciate and honor the people and things around them; treat others as they would like to be treated.

Adults: Model respect for the learner; teach ways the learner can respect the world around them.

## **Tolerance**

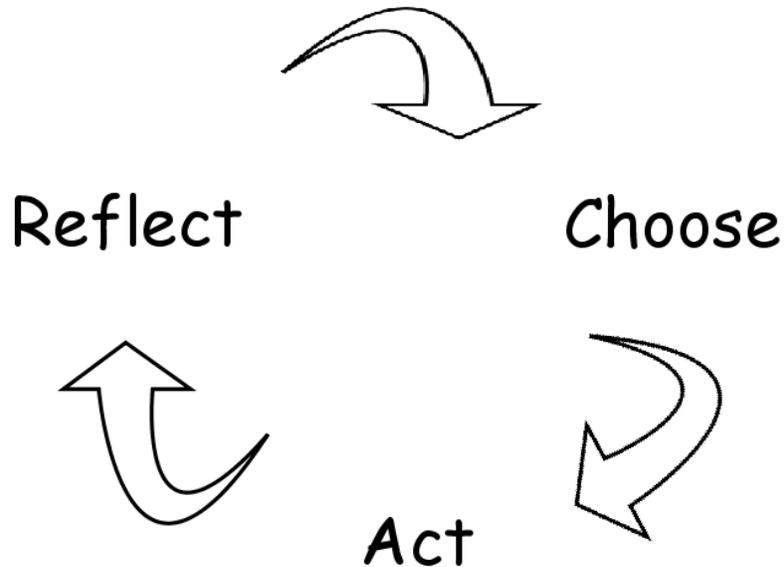
Definition: *Being sensitive about differences and diversity in the world and being responsive to the needs of others.*

Students: Accept the differences in other people; are kind to all people.

Adults: Help define the difference between tolerance and intolerance; provide the learner experiences with diversity.

*All italicized definitions taken from Making the PYP Happen, 2007.*

# Action as Service



The action component of the PYP can involve service in the wildest sense of the word: service to fellow students, and to the larger community, both in and outside the school. Through such service, students are able to grow both personally and socially, developing skills such as cooperation, problem solving, conflict resolution, and creative and critical thinking. Moreover, these actions are ways in which the students exhibit their commitment to the attributes of the learner profile and to the attitudes that we seek to engender within the PYP classroom.

Effective action:

- should be modeled by the adults in the school community – the action in which schools may engage will be based on the needs of the school community and the local community
- should be voluntary and involve students in exercising their own initiative
- is best grounded in the students' concrete experiences
- is most beneficial to the students when they are able to witness the outcomes

*Information taken from Making the PYP Happen, 2007.*

# Exhibition

In the final year of the PYP, students participate in a culminating project, the PYP exhibition. Exhibition is a way for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the PYP.

The PYP exhibition has many key purposes, including:

- For students to engage in an in-depth, collaborative inquiry
- For students to be able to demonstrate independence and responsibility for their own learning
- To provide students with an opportunity to explore multiple perspectives
- For students to synthesize and apply their learning and to reflect on their journey through the PYP
- To demonstrate how students can take action as a result of their learning

During exhibition, each group is assigned a mentor. This person can be someone from the school (teacher, administrator, paraprofessional, etc) or a volunteer from the community. Mentors are not required to be professionals on the exhibition topic, just “consultants” who advise the small group of students as needed and help direct research. Being a mentor is a great way to get involved and to see our IB students at work. The commitment is one hour per week for six weeks during the spring semester. If interested, contact the main office @ 970-488-4750.

# **How can you support your child's experience as an IB student?**

- Be aware of the individual needs and interests of your child.
- Help your child make connections between their prior knowledge and previous experiences.
- Assist your child in establishing a positive relationship with their peers and with other adults.
- Stay informed and involved in the school experience of your child.
- Create a home environment that encourages your child to take responsibility for their own learning and actions.
- Model and value inquiry.
- Provide opportunities for your child to work collaboratively with others.
- Initiate inquiry and ask questions.
- Help your child organize their time in order to stay balanced with home, school, and activities.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **1. What is the difference between an IB School and a regular neighborhood school?**

" The Primary Years Programme (PYP) provides an educational framework based upon what is currently known about how young children learn. It draws on the best practices in elementary school instruction.

The PYP requires all teachers in the school to plan units of instruction and lessons collaboratively around six important themes. The collaboration facilitates a carefully thought-out and sequential development of skills, knowledge and attitudes, while the organizing themes provide both students and teachers a rich and inviting learning environment in which they can explore. In brief, the six organizing themes are: Who we are; Where we are we in place and time; How we express ourselves; How the world works; How we organize ourselves; and How we share the planet.

In the PYP, students are taught to understand that learning is about asking questions and looking for answers, which in turn may generate new, and perhaps more complex questions in need of answers. As teachers work with students through this programme of guided inquiry, they also help students understand what their relationship and responsibility is towards what they are learning. In the PYP character-building shares a prominent place alongside learning. " -excerpt from IBO website

## **2. Do teachers have to go to special training?**

"... all teachers at PYP schools need to receive IB recognized professional development in the form of a regional or on-site workshop. "  
-excerpt from IBO website

## **3. Is the IB program for gifted or accelerated students?**

" The Primary Years Programme is intended for all children... IB-authorized schools are expected to involve all of their students in the Primary Years Programme, regardless of their learning needs. The IB refers to this as a "whole-school approach." The IB expects that schools will make any necessary accommodation for students with special needs. " - excerpt from IBO website

## **4. Does the school offer a second language?**

" All authorized PYP schools are required to begin second language instruction to all students aged seven and older. "-excerpt from IBO website  
Students receive Spanish instruction in Kindergarten through 6th grade.

## **5. What if my child wants to continue in IB to the Middle School?**

The IB MYP (Middle Years Program) is offered at both Lesher and Lincoln Middle Schools and Poudre High School for 9th-10th grades. Your child has a special priority within school of choice to allow for continuing within a program such as IB.

See School of Choice page for more information.

## **6. What is the Learner Profile and why is it so important?**

" The IB learner profile is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century.

The learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose. " -excerpt from IBO website

## **7. What is the PYP Exhibition?**

" Students aged 10 to 12 who are in their final year of the programme are expected to carry out an extended, collaborative inquiry project, known as the exhibition, under the guidance of their teachers.

The exhibition represents a significant event in the life of both the school and student, synthesizing the essential elements of the programme and sharing them with the whole school community. It is an opportunity for students to exhibit the attributes of the learner profile that have been developing throughout their engagement with the programme. It is a culminating experience marking the transition from the PYP to the Middle Years Programme (MYP). "

Schools are given considerable flexibility in their choice of the real-life issues or problems to be explored and investigated in the exhibition. " -excerpt from IBO website

**If you still have questions, see the resource page for links to further information or contact the office.**

# **IB in Poudre School District**

Poudre School District currently offers the IB program at all three levels: Primary Years Program, Middle Years Program, and Diploma Program. There are over 2,700 students in these programs each year. The PYP schools are: Dunn, McGraw, Bennett, CLPE, and Riffenburgh.. MYP is offered at Lincoln and Leshar and in grades 9 and 10 at Poudre High School. DP is offered at Poudre High School.

## **School Choice**

PSD's School Choice program allows families to select the school that best meets their child's educational needs. Parents may register their child to attend a school outside their neighborhood attendance area on a space-available basis. Round-trip transportation is the responsibility of parents.

## **School Choice Priority Order**

School Choice students are accepted in the following priority order:

1. Students who reside within the attendance area of the neighborhood school they wish to attend
2. Currently enrolled students and students who wish to continue attending a program that spans different grade levels and schools (such as a Core Knowledge or IB program)
3. New student applicants who reside in the district who are siblings of a currently enrolled student and who live at the same residence as the currently enrolled student
4. Children of school employees who reside in the district
5. New student applicants who reside in the district and are not siblings of a currently enrolled student living at the same residence or the child of a school employee
6. New student applicants who reside outside the district who are siblings of a currently enrolled student and who live at the same residence as the currently enrolled student
7. Children of school employees who reside outside the district

School of Choice applications are available on the PSD website.

# **MYP and DP at a Glance**

## **Middle Years Program**

The Middle Years Program in PSD is a five-year program of international education offered during sixth through tenth grades. The MYP is designed to help students develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to participate actively and responsibly in a changing world. Students study eight subject groups (Humanities, Technology, Mathematics, Art, Sciences, Physical Education, Language A, and Language B) through the following five areas of interaction: approaches to learning, community and service, human ingenuity (students explore in many ways the processes and products of human creativity), environments, and health and social education.

## **Diploma Program**

The Diploma Program in PSD is a two-year program of international education during the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. The Diploma Program is designed to develop a well rounded student who has taken advanced academic work in six core subject areas, has completed at least 150 hours of service to the community, has completed a 4,000 word professional research essay, and has explored the interaction of all Diploma Program requirements in a specifically designed class titled Theory of Knowledge. It emphasizes the development of many characteristics, including, but not limited to international mindedness, critical thinking, and communication skills, both oral and written. The IB Diploma is recognized as the most rigorous high school curriculum in the world and students can earn college credit depending on their exam scores.

# Resources

- **International Baccalaureate Website**  
<<http://www.ibo.org>>
- **PYP Book Lists**  
<<http://pyplibrary.wikispaces.com>>
- **PSD IB Website**  
<<http://schoolweb.psdschools.org/ib>>
- **IBNA FAQ's**  
<[http://www.ibo.org/ibna/parents\\_students/pypstudents.cfm](http://www.ibo.org/ibna/parents_students/pypstudents.cfm)>

## Glossary

**IBO:** International Baccalaureate Organization. The governing body of the entire IB program.

**IB:** The International Baccalaureate (IB) offers high quality programmes of international education to a worldwide community of schools.

**PYP:** The Primary Years Programme (PYP) for pupils aged 3 to 12 focuses on the development of the whole child in the classroom and in the world outside.

**MYP:** The Middle Years Programme (MYP) for students aged 11 to 16 provides a framework of academic challenge and life skills through embracing and transcending traditional school subjects.

**DP:** The Diploma Programme for students aged 16 to 19 is a demanding two-year curriculum that meets the needs of highly motivated students, and leads to a qualification that is recognized by leading universities around the world.

**Learner Profile:** The IB learner profile is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century. The learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose.

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*Terms and Definitions taken from Making the PYP Happen 2007.*