



## **Letter to the Community from the Elementary School Principals**

### **The International Baccalaureate**

“In a list of nearly impossible questions that all principals face, right near the top- next to: Where is the money going to come from to pay for everything?- is this urgent question: What do our students need to learn now to be successful in school, work, family, and community life?” (*Bernie Trilling, Principal Jan/Feb2010*).

### **Working Together as a Community**

Today’s schools are charged with the responsibility of providing a relevant, rigorous education for our children’s success in a changing world. National and international research has led to widespread educational reforms based on both national and international standards. For information about this, visit [www.21stcenturyskills.org](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org), [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) and [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org). Four years ago, the Monticello Central School District began to explore the International Baccalaureate program (IB) to answer some of these needs. The IB is a leading provider of established, recognized academic solutions for students, teachers and schools. The IB offers high quality education that is recognized internationally for its standards and measures of effectiveness. The public should be aware that the IB is an independent, not-for-profit, educational foundation that guides schools through the process of curriculum development, collaborative planning, teaching and assessment. As part of the process, teams of parents, community members, teachers, students and other interested parties meet to discuss methods of implementing the IB and continue to be an integral part of the program.

### **The Primary Years Programme**

Monticello’s elementary school model is referred to as the Primary Years Programme (PYP), and is separate and distinct from both the Middle Years Programme and the Diploma Programme. In the PYP, no curriculum, textbooks or assessments are provided or specified by the IB. Curriculum is developed in each individual school based on local, state and national standards. The IB believes that relevant education begins with an understanding and appreciation for one’s own culture and history. Schools have traditionally taught students to collaborate, build interpersonal skills, to inquire, to research and to develop into lifelong learners. In addition, the IB promotes intercultural understanding and respect.

### **Some IB Schools Best in the Country**

The IB provides established structures and supports for schools, teachers and students that have resulted in these schools being recognized as some of the best in the nation according to Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report. The IB has been implemented in Christian and Jewish schools, as well as schools where military personnel send their children. Some examples include: Yeshiva University, Texas Christian University, Southern Methodist University, Langley Air Force Base, Fort Belvoir, Fort Meade and Fort Hood. In addition, the following military academies award credits for successful completion of the IB Diploma Program: U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Military Academy at West Point, U.S. Air Force Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, The Citadel and the Virginia Military Institute.

### **A History of Success**

The IB has been offering academic programs to schools for nearly 40 years. Presently, IB programs are offered by over 2,400 schools in more than 129 countries. At least 800 universities in the United States alone recognize the IB Diploma as a mark of academic excellence. Such universities include: Brown, Columbia, Cornell, John Hopkins, MIT, Stanford and Princeton, among others.

### **Preparing Students for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century World**

As leaders of our schools' learning communities, we must prepare and nurture students to be successful 21<sup>st</sup> century learners as they grow into workers, parents and community members. We are very proud of our students, our curriculum and our schools. We would encourage you to contact us with questions or concerns or to visit our learning communities to witness firsthand the success of your children.

*Sincerely,*

Susan G. Gottlieb, Chase Elementary School Principal  
Linda S. Holmes, Chase Elementary School PYP Coach  
Patti Sonnenschein, Duggan Elementary School Principal  
Marianne Harden, Duggan Elementary School PYP Coach  
Sandra Johnson-Fields, Cooke Elementary School Principal  
Kimberly Patterson, Rutherford Elementary School Principal  
Claudia Cordisco, Rutherford Elementary School PYP Coach

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