

Frequently Asked Questions & Answers Concerning Incoming IB Students

Visit: www.phsibsupport.org

-This document is posted on the website

-Please make sure all new students come to IB informational night on August 1st at 5:30pm with their parents as well as the general Freshman Orientation on August 4th at 1:30pm. Both sessions are held in the PHS auditorium.

Freshman and parents are invited to a “Pot Luck Picnic” Tues, July 25th from 6- 7:30 p.m. in the PHS Cafeteria! Please bring a dish to share. **Last name beginning with A – E, bring an appetizer; F – O, bring a main dish; P – R, bring a side dish; S – Z, bring a dessert.** Drinks provided. Each freshman family will be contacted by an IB parent to invite you to the picnic and will serve as your “parent partner”. **For more info on the Pot Luck Picnic or Parent Partner Program, please contact Beth Partington at [850-572-5245](tel:850-572-5245) or beth-partington@cox.net**

When will my child receive his or her schedule?

**Students will receive their schedules at the general Freshman Orientation on August 4th and then walk to each class period to receive a brief overview from their teachers and become familiar with the school. Schedules will not be available before orientation.*

What if we are unable to attend orientation on August 4th?

**You may pick up your schedule on the first day of school if you are not able to come to orientation.*

What is the policy regarding schedule changes?

**To ensure a smooth start to the school year, there is a no schedule change policy; therefore, each student received the classes they selected on their course request sheet or they were called if changes were made. Understandably, if there is a major problem with the schedule, please e-mail the IB office and we will resolve it the best way possible. Thank you for your cooperation and your assistance to ensure a smooth transition to the IB program!*

When does school begin?

**School begins August 10th at 8:20am (late bell rings at 8:25am) and ends at 3:10pm. Please know that students are allowed to come before school starts with teacher permission only to receive extra help or tutoring. A full school calendar can be found on the IB website listed above under Students & Parents > Calendars > 2016-2017 School Calendar. Please plan your vacations accordingly as missing school can be a determinant to your student's success especially with the rigor of the program at the high school level.*

Is there a car drop off procedure?

**You may drop your child off at the front of PHS on Maxwell Street. Please note that students are deterred from entering the building prior to 8:20 unless given a pass by faculty as noted previously. Many of the IB students mingle at the tree directly in front of the school before the bell rings.*

What if my child needs to take a bus to school but lives out of the PHS district?

** There are multiple center to center bus routes where you can drop off your child to be bused to PHS. Please contact Ms. McKnight if you have questions at (850) 429-2949 or you may go to: <http://ecsd-fl.schoolloop.com/parentresources>*

Is PHS a safe environment?

**PHS is a very safe environment. If you ask any of our current or former IB students, they will confirm that PHS is safe. Our previous Resource Officer has worked in other high schools and states that PHS is one of the safest in the county so do not be concerned by any false chitchat. Our campus is locked and secured throughout the entire day. The IB program is known as a little family community.*

How many community service hours are required for IB students? Can we start hours before school starts?

Aside from strongly preparing students for college, one of the goals of the IB program is to assist students in becoming more well-rounded. CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) is a step above community service. PHS pre-IB students are required to do 25 hours their freshman year and 25 hours their sophomore year prior to their project that is necessary during junior and senior year. The method of documentation and different ways to accumulate CAS hours will be discussed at the beginning of the school year. These hours will also be documented for students' Bright Future Scholarship community service. CAS is not meant to be another checklist item to complete but rather an interesting variety of activities that the student finds worthwhile. **Students coming into the program should not start hours until further instruction is given at the beginning of the year. For more information on CAS to start thinking of ideas, please see below.*

CAS is:

- Creativity-** arts and other experiences that involve thinking
 - Action-** physical exertion contributing to healthy lifestyle
 - Service-** unpaid & voluntary exchange that is a learning experience
- Examples:
- Purposeful activities that promote learning
 - Activities that include thoughtful planning
 - Range of various activities to explore what a student enjoys
 - Flyers of opportunities will be posted on the IB website.
 - CAS club will begin this coming school year to help students with ideas and opportunities.

CAS is NOT:

- Any project or activity that is part of a course
- Any activity for which student receives a grade, a reward, or a payment
- An activity in which a profit-seeking entity makes money from student activity (working for free for a dance studio that charges students a fee, even though “teacher” is unpaid)
- Family duty
- Experience that only benefits the student
- Fund-raising without a specific service goal
- Any activity without a responsible adult in charge
- Anything that divides the community
- CAS is NOT simple, repetitive work over a long period of time

How can my child be successful in the IB program? Is there time for extracurricular activities?

** Time management is the key to being successful in the IB program. Procrastination will lead to being overwhelmed and a possible decline in grades. Our program is designed for students to be successful but students must keep on top of their work. Learning how to study effectively and organizing a weekly schedule is well worthwhile. A majority of our IB students do participate in many extracurricular activities and this is manageable. This year, the IB faculty will be meeting bi-weekly to make a calendar in order to evenly spread major assignments and tests throughout the week so students are not overloaded. Communicate with your child about how they are doing as well as their teachers if you*

How can I monitor my child's grades?

* All teachers use a gradebook system called FOCUS whereby you can track your child's progress. Once the school year begins, you can create a user account on FOCUS by registering on their website: focus.escambia.k12.fl.us/focus/ You can also access the FOCUS link through the Parent Portal of the ECSD website. Teachers' grading policies will be noted in the class syllabus.

Do students have a homeroom?

*Students have an alpha home room that they attend periodically throughout the school year. Students will go to their alpha home room for the first few days of school. There are alpha room lists posted in several areas of the school.

What information is posted on the PHS IB website, www.phsibsupport.org?

* Helpful information is available on the IB website such as an on-line calendar where tests and major assignments are noted, CAS opportunities and information regarding requirements, college information, [faculty directory](#), tutoring information, study tips, and more. Please visit this website regularly to stay updated on upcoming events!

What is the process for parent/teacher conferences?

* Parent teacher conferences are arranged through the IB office by contacting Mrs. Gilson, the IB secretary, at (850) 595-1500 ext 244. You may also contact the teacher via e-mail if you have questions. Teacher e-mails are listed on the IB PHS website: www.phsibsupport.org (Click Faculty tab for a detailed listing of teachers).

What are the requirements to remain in the program?

*If a student falls below an unweighted GPA of 2.75, he or she will be placed on academic probation. Probation letters are sent home at the end of each semester. It is recommended that students take advantage of the after school tutoring program if they are struggling.

Is there tutoring available?

*Tutoring is available before and after school through National Honor Society. More information will be announced after school begins.

What is the attendance policy?

* Students are responsible for providing notification within three (3) days of the student's return to school, or the absence will result in an unexcused absence. There is an absence form that must be completed with an attached note from the guardian that must be submitted in the main lobby in a designated box. Students are only permitted to make up assignments if their absences are excused. If students miss more than 5 absences per semester, they have to pass the semester exam or have a 75% average overall to receive credit for the course.

What is the cheating policy?

* The PHS IB Program offers a quality education that cultivates not only knowledge and service but also the virtue of honor. The IB Honor Code prohibits violations of cheating, lying, stealing, plagiarizing or any action compromising the academic integrity of the program. Students are to be committed to honorable behavior. Violators will be subject to removal from the program.

What are the student checkout procedures?

*When checking out a student, every person must show his or her picture ID at the main office. A student check out form will be sent home the first week of school. Individuals are only permitted to check out a student if their names are listed on the form. After 2:50pm, no student is permitted to be checked out per Escambia County District Policy. Students are only allowed to check themselves out of school if a letter is signed by the parent and the main office staff calls to verify. If a student becomes ill, he or she should report to the clinic. The clinic will call home if necessary and make appropriate arrangements.

Can my child bring a laptop or iPad to use at school?

*Students may use their own personal laptops during the school day for classroom instruction. Please be forewarned that PHS is not responsible for these items so please be mindful about the security of your personal items. There will also be the option for students to check out a Chromebook if they do not have their own computer. The contract for a Chromebook can be found at the following website: <http://phsibsupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Chromebook-contract.pdf>

What about textbooks? And lockers?

*Textbooks will be issued within the first week of school, or a digital option may be available. Books will be collected at the end of the year or students will be fined for any books not turned in.

What about lunch?

*Students are not permitted to leave campus for lunch. The majority of IB students do pack a lunch to avoid standing in line because lunchtime is limited to 25 minutes. The cafeteria phone number is 850-595-1523. You may transfer funds electronically to your students lunch account by registering at <https://www.mypaymentsplus.com/default.aspx> or your child may bring lunch money.

What is the dress code policy?

*At orientation, the dress code policy will be reviewed. For a detailed description of the dress code policy, please refer to the following link: <http://ecsd-fl.schoolloop.com/file/1311481016073/1344704555009/408435811253977005.pdf> < scroll to page 43.

When do students take the PSAT?

*Students take the PSAT in the fall of their sophomore year and junior year. Selections for National Merit are based on junior year results only. For more information regarding this and other college prep information, please attend IB College Night that is held every fall.

Summer Reading List: The list has been included in the acceptance packet but can also be found on the IB PHS website, www.phsibsupport.org > Students & Parents. It is essential that you read the required books prior to the start of school to ensure a smooth transition.

~ We look forward to meeting you soon! Sincerely, *Mrs. Brewer*, IB Coordinator/Administrator