



November 2018

Upcoming Dates

November 21

Alumni meet with Diploma Candidates about CAS

November 29

Part 1 of Group 4 Collaborative Science Project

December 4

Part 2 of Group 4 Collaborative Science Project

December 17-21

IB Info Presented in Sophomore English Classes

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HHD Parent IB News

A Note from the Coordinator

Ansley and I get together and “talk IB” as we brainstorm newsletter topics. This meandering, conversational meeting is a contrast to my typical day, which is often driven by deadlines, measurable outcomes, and task completion. Pausing to identify important parent/teacher topics with Ansley is a departure- and a treat.

Our talks continue in my mind long after we’ve parted. This time we discussed the importance of nurturing a questioning spirit in IB students. After Ansley left, I thought, “Who am I to encourage students to question?” Many families might not value this approach, and I deeply believe the IB Mission Statement that “Other people, with their differences, can also be right.” So where does this leave me as a teacher who values both parental input and curricular directives? For me it comes down to this: IB values inquiry and mandates questioning; it is not an IB instructor’s choice.

“Straddling the world between pushing and cheering” is not just a parental issue. In my role as IB Diploma Coordinator I work hard to find the best balance of pushing and cheering and it’s different for each student. Certain times of the year require more pushing. To achieve the completion of IB mandated assessments means I push students hard. But then the advent of testing season puts me in a purely supportive role. I even tell students: “My time of ‘judging’ you through grades is over. Now I’m here to listen and support as you drive.”

It’s fun to see my relationship with the students change over the course of their journey. I have more flexibility than a parent does, because I can shift roles more cleanly: I understand the cycle, and I’m not in it for the “long game” in the same way. My job, through IB, is about getting students to push themselves into the uncomfortable and to come out stronger for it.

Why IB? Learning to Ask Questions

When Sarah and I were discussing the IB newsletter this month, she said something interesting. “IB teaches students to be inquirers. They are taught to respectfully question everything. IB families have to be ok with that.” I spent the rest of the week mulling that over. Am I ok with that? Definitely. Well, until the questions are pointed at where I stand and what I believe.

Learning to be good questioners encompasses all of the IB Learner Profile traits. Questions force students to think deeply about their subject-area knowledge. The answers may run contrary to their principles a process could strain comfort zones. Communication skills give students the courage (risk-taking ability) to respond in a measured manner. The key is the word *respectfully*.

**Great Holiday
Gift Idea!**

**Buy an IB
T Shirt!**



*Available to anyone in
our IB World School*

\$15

**Pick up an order
form in the
Counseling
Office!**

**Orders due
Wednesday,
November 21.**

*CAS Project
Diploma Candidates
Amelia Kraef
Allison Lapham
Shreya Nagarkar*

Last year my daughter and I were on a long car trip. It was late, I was driving, and we were both tired. “You’ve got to keep talking to me,” I told her as I sipped at my caffeine. After a minute, she said, “Ok, we’re going to talk controversial subjects.” For the next four hours, we hit up every controversy out there, each giving our opinion on the matter at hand and listening to the other’s perspective. We agreed on some things, and we disagreed on a lot, but I learned so much—not only about my daughter but also about another side to the issues. The most gratifying part? Being reminded that we are both principled people who want the best for the world.

Parent Perspective: Straddling the World Between Pushing and Cheering

I believe in the IB program with everything I’ve got. It’s the best preparation for life (and college) I’ve seen. I wonder how my own life might have been different if I had gone through IB. I know my kids can do the work. But sometimes they don’t know it. Or at least they don’t do the work, whether they think they can or not. Sometimes I have to sit on them to make something happen.

Sometimes I actually do know something my kids don’t. (It’s generally mundane, as in, “Yes, you do need flashcards to learn that German vocabulary by rote, which you will do right now at the kitchen butcher block so I can make sure that you are actually doing it.”) Does my pushing run contrary to the IB philosophy that encourages kids to own their own learning?

I don’t think so. It’s our job to see the potential in our kids and encourage them to reach (and exceed) it. To do that, we sometimes have to push, and maybe push hard. Allowing them to take the easy way repeatedly isn’t good preparation for real life.

The key, I think, is to see our kids’ potential (and not just what we want for them). That’s really hard. As in learning an alien culture hard. It involves a lot of dialogue and concessions on both sides without outcome certainty.

I’m not always good with this; my husband gently refocuses me all the time. But the magic comes when our kids finally realize that we do actually want the best for them, their best and not our version of their best. We set goals with them (not for them) and eventually get to watch as they make their plans without our input. Then we push them into the uncomfortable and cheer them through it, whether we fully understand it or not. We give them credence for being themselves, and then we do a lot of praying that we’ve given them the foundation to continue forge their own path with integrity.

*Have a question or issue you would like to see addressed in a future issue?
Contact Ansley Dauenhauer at: ansley.dauenhauer@gmail.com.*