The Primary Years Programme (PYP) develops confident lifelong learners who can demonstrate cultural empathy and respect. It is a child-centered approach that sparks curiosity and creativity, while building passion and skills for learning.

**OVERVIEW**

For more than 50 years, the IB has equipped students with the skills, confidence and lifelong learning they need to thrive and make a difference in an ever-changing world. [IB Continuum](#) Through a powerful continuum of four student-centric programmes developed for learners aged 3-19, IB programmes can be implemented independently or in combination. They are underpinned by shared values and a shared emphasis on developing students who are lifelong learners and who are able to not only make sense of, but to make a positive impact on, our complex and interconnected world. Central to all four of its programmes are: [What is an IB Education?](#)

- 1. International-mindedness
- 2. The IB learner profile
- 3. A broad, balanced, conceptual, and connected curriculum
- 4. An approach to teaching and learning centered on inquiry and positive agency

The PYP is unique in that it caters to the developmental needs of learners aged 3-12. It focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. It is a framework guided by six transdisciplinary themes of global significance, explored using knowledge and skills derived from six subject areas, as well as transdisciplinary skills, with a powerful emphasis on inquiry.

In order to implement any IB programme, schools must undergo an authorization process. The IB offers a variety of professional development, certifications, and resources for its school community. Free resources are available for schools interested in learning more.

[The IB Primary Years Programme Overview](#)
**What Makes This Model Innovative?**

**Active Self-Direction**

PYP learners are empowered to become self-regulated learners who ask good questions, set effective goals, pursue their aspirations, and have the determination to achieve them. They see their learning as an active and dynamic process.

**Relevance**

The PYP’s transdisciplinary curriculum focuses on concepts that have relevance across, between, and beyond individual subject areas to enable learners to build deeper conceptual understanding.

**Whole-Child Focus**

Early learning in the PYP is a holistic learning experience that integrates socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive development. It takes place in dynamic environments that promote play, discovery, and exploration.

---

**DESIGN**

**Goals**

While the IB learner profile underpins all IB programmes, the PYP has a unique set of outcomes for learners at this developmental stage. [IB Learner Profile]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>The learner is an agent for their own and others' learning and teachers, students, and parents are partners in the learning process.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy</td>
<td>Learners direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others; they build a sense of community and awareness for the opinions, values, and needs of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Through taking individual and collective action, students come to understand the responsibilities associated with being internationally-minded and to appreciate the benefits of working with others for a shared purpose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International-Mindedness</td>
<td>The PYP supports students' efforts to gain understanding of the world and to be able to enact change within it. It also helps students establish a foundation to embrace the shared humanity of all people and accept and respect other cultures and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

© Transcend Inc. & International Baccalaureate, 2022
Experience

The Primary Years Programme framework illustrates how the PYP's unique focus on young learners intersects with the overall approach of the IB. 

Summary of PYP Framework

Three main learner experiences—reflected in the middle layers of the framework—make up the PYP:
1. A transdisciplinary approach
2. Concept-driven inquiry
3. The exhibition

Transdisciplinary Approach

The PYP is a transformative learning and teaching experience and represents a commitment to student learning in an authentic and transdisciplinary context. Transdisciplinary learning in the PYP has relevance between and beyond subjects. It transcends borders and connects to the real world.

Each IB World School offering the PYP collaboratively develops a programme of inquiry to reflect the unique aspects of that school's community. The programme of inquiry is organized and framed by six transdisciplinary themes of global significance:
1. who we are
2. where we are in place and time
3. how we express ourselves
4. how the world works
5. how we organize ourselves
6. sharing the planet

These transdisciplinary themes provide children with authentic learning experiences that are not confined to the boundaries of traditional subjects. They provide schools with the opportunity to incorporate local and global issues into the curriculum and effectively allow students to apply their learning to issues and problems of local, national, and international relevance. While subjects play an important role in learning, PYP learners explore real-world problems by going beyond subject boundaries. Students have opportunities to reflect on the significance of their learning by taking meaningful action in their community and the wider world.

You can learn more about transdisciplinary learning in the PYP by engaging with a short, interactive module. 

Learning in a Transdisciplinary World Module
**Concept-Driven Inquiry**

The PYP curriculum recognizes learners' innate potential to inquire, question, wonder, and theorize about themselves, others, and the world around them. A conceptual inquiry approach is a powerful vehicle for learning that values concepts and promotes meaning and understanding. It challenges students to engage critically and creatively with significant ideas beyond the surface level of knowing. ▶PYP Learners Take Ownership Over Their Learning

PYP teachers use powerful, broad, and abstract concepts as a lens to organize learning within units of inquiry and subject-specific learning. ▶Inquiry teacher attributes

**The Exhibition**

In the final year of the PYP, students take part in the PYP exhibition. The exhibition is an authentic process for students to explore, document and share their understanding of a topic of personal significance. All exhibitions are student-initiated, student-designed, and collaborative. They undertake their investigation both individually and with their peers and are supported by the guidance of a mentor. Through the exhibition, students demonstrate their ability to take responsibility for their learning—and their capacity to take action—as they are actively engaged in planning, presenting, and assessing their learning. The exhibition is a powerful demonstration of student agency, as well as the agency of the community that has nurtured them through their years in the PYP. The learning community participates in the exhibition by supporting and celebrating the development of internationally-minded students who make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others. ▶PYP Exhibition 2022

The graphic below explains how prior PYP learning and the exhibition have synergy with one another.
Supporting Structures

While schools have some flexibility in ensuring the programme meets the needs of their local context, they must satisfy IB criteria for accreditation, assessment, and quality assurance, which are detailed below, and in more depth in the Programme standards and practices. [IB Programme Standards and Practices (PSP)]

While schools have some flexibility around curriculum and assessment, there are some unifying approaches across all IB programmes.

The PYP is flexible to accommodate the demands of most national or local curricula and provides the best preparation for students to engage in the IB Primary Years Programme. Despite this adaptability in both context and program, there are some unifying themes in the approach to learning. Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills permeate the IB teaching and learning environment. These consist of five categories of interrelated skills and associated sub-skills that support students of all ages to become self-regulated learners:

- thinking skills
- research skills
- communication skills
- social skills
- self-management skills

These interrelated skills aim to empower IB students of all ages to become self-regulated learners who know how to ask good questions, set effective goals, pursue their aspirations and have the determination to achieve them. Teachers document and analyze student learning over time to design learning experiences based on data and in accordance with IB guidelines.

You can see how this plays out in practice here: [Co-constructing Central Ideas with Students]

The school community must support learners in realizing the IB Learner Profile.

While schools have the freedom to create a school culture that reflects the needs of their community, there are aspects that are essential to implementing the PYP. Together, all stakeholders sustain a positive school culture by committing to continuous school improvement; well-being; and a safe and engaging environment that nurtures resilient, optimistic, and lifelong learners.

IB World Schools seek to create an inclusive learning community that:

- lives peacefully together by engaging with different ways of knowing and being
- prioritizes people and their relationships
- assumes shared responsibility for learning, health, and well-being.

These attributes foster internationally minded people who embody all attributes of the IB Learner Profile. Additionally, this cultural foundation, coupled with the pedagogy and experiences designed for PYP learners, helps promote learner agency.  

Teachers must be trained in approaches to teaching and learning and collaborate to make connections between subjects.

All PYP teachers receive requisite professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders.  

Example Workshop Series: Engaging Collaborative Communities  
This is because the same six approaches to teaching underpin teaching in all IB programmes:

- based on inquiry
- focused on conceptual understanding
- developed in local and global contexts
- focused on effective teamwork and collaboration
- designed to remove barriers to learning for all students
- informed by formative and summative assessment

The approaches are deliberately broad and are designed to give teachers the flexibility to choose specific strategies that best reflect their own particular contexts and the needs of their students.

Teachers collaboratively design, plan, and deliver implicit and explicit opportunities for learning using a variety of strategies to develop learners’ skills both inside and outside the programme of inquiry.

The schedule must enable a sufficient number of transdisciplinary units as well as play-based learning

Adopting schools must implement a schedule that provides for the development of the required number of transdisciplinary units of inquiry.

In the earliest years (pre-K through kindergarten), the schedule must also be conducive to play-based learning, which requires long periods of uninterrupted time for adult-supported freely chosen play and adult-led small group activities.
The learning community must be broad and promote agency for all.

The IB learning community views the world as the broadest context for learning, where everyone involved in the life of the school is recognized as part of the learning process: students and their families, all school staff members, other important adults in the students’ lives and the community at large. Members of the learning community form the bridge that connects learning and teaching. IB provides resources which help families and community members better understand what it means to receive a PYP education. Everyone in the learning community has the agency to influence and transform learning, which in turn supports students and the wider community in becoming internationally-minded.

Implementation of the IB requires that learning spaces be informed by pedagogy.

Learning environments are made up of multiple learning spaces: built and natural, outdoor and indoor, formal and informal. Spaces should inspire creativity, innovation and collaboration, support and respond to emerging inquiries, and help students to develop and demonstrate the attributes of the learner profile. Students should be involved in the setting up and ongoing maintenance of their learning spaces, for greater ownership and influence over their learning.

Technology should be used to build strong citizens and deepen conceptual understanding.

Technology, the learner profile, and approaches to learning work together to develop internationally-minded digital citizens able to exercise academic integrity and practice safe and ethical behaviors. Students must understand the functionality of tools, how to operate tools and resources, and how technology can be used to research, problem solve, create new opportunities and communicate. Technology should enable unique opportunities for the learning community to co-construct knowledge and develop conceptual understanding with their school and broader community.
All operations must support strong implementation of the PYP.

All students in a school building should be given access to the PYP and supported to reach their full potential.

The school funds and allocates resources that sustain and further develop its IB programmes. For the PYP, this means allocating adequate resources to support collaborative planning among subject specialists and classroom teachers for transdisciplinary learning. The IB is a permitted use of Title I, II, and IV funding and federal Perkins V fund, as well as federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding. IB Using Federal Funds

A digital toolkit can be used for communications.

The IB offers a digital toolkit which provides authorized schools with a wide range of communications materials. IB Digital Toolkit These can be used to present the IB and its programmes to stakeholders such as students, parents, teachers, and school boards, as well as universities and government bodies.

Both the IB and adopting schools must facilitate continuous improvement.

The IB gathers together a worldwide community of educators who share a common belief that education can help to build a better world. Each IB programme and curriculum undergoes regular review to help ensure that it delivers the best possible education for IB students, and this curriculum review process involves educators from many different cultures and backgrounds.

To maintain its status as an IB World school and to improve practice, it is up to schools to regularly review and follow all IB rules, regulations and guidelines. IB world schools are required to regularly review systems and processes to improve the operation and sustainability of its IB programme delivery. The entire IB global community of schools participates in an ongoing process of review and development ensuring the continued quality assurance of the programme/s delivered.
Supports Offered
All schools offering the PYP must first participate in the candidacy and authorization process. The IB works with school communities on this journey toward creating a better world through education. The IB supports schools in obtaining and sustaining the status of IB World School in a few ways. While there are costs associated, the programme can be funded using a variety of federal funds. 

IB World School Authorization Process
Cost Associated, Funding Available

During the authorization process, the IB supports schools in building the understanding and organizational structures needed to implement the PYP as well as other IB programmes. If you are interested in implementing the PYP, please submit the online form to receive more information about how to become an IB school.

Express Interest

Professional Development
Cost Associated, Funding Available

The International Baccalaureate (IB) provides a range of professional development that supports effective educators and collaborative learning communities. The professional development opportunities include face-to-face and online workshops, webinars, blended learning, and e-learning resources. These opportunities are open to both authorized and candidate schools.

Sign Up

IB Educator and Leadership Certificates (IBEC)
Cost Associated, Funding Available

The IB educator and leadership certificates help educators develop in many areas that benefit teaching and learning and deepen understanding of inquiry, research and project-based learning among other things.

Get in Touch

All IB World Schools use the Guide to School Authorization and the Programme standards and practices (PSP) framework to ensure quality and fidelity implementation of each IB programme. The IB offers short, interactive PD courses to help schools gain insight into the PSP and how it is used to implement, grow and develop IB programmes.
**Reach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IB Schools in the US</th>
<th>Public Schools</th>
<th>FRL</th>
<th>US Schools Offering PYP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,921</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Impact**

The IB Research Department collaborates with universities and independent research institutions around the world to produce rigorous studies examining the impact and outcomes of the IB’s four programmes. Below are some key findings from recent studies relating to the PYP in the US (PYP Research Studies) (studies with a more global focus can be found here: Key Findings from Research on the Primary Years Programme).

**The PYP framework has been shown to benefit student well-being.** [PYP Study: Well-being]
- The PYP curriculum and programmatic elements are imbued with activities and practices that promote well-being.
- PYP students also demonstrated consistently higher levels of well-being compared with similar non-PYP students.
- PYP schools with strong implementation showed a more positive school climate and higher levels of teacher engagement, student participation, and student well-being outcomes attributable to the PYP.

**The PYP framework has also been shown to have a positive impact on school climate.** [PYP Study: School Climate]
- Participants at every school in the study reported increased focus on social-emotional learning and the whole child and the use of transdisciplinary instruction and teacher collaboration because of the PYP.
- The quantitative data showed small, but statistically significant, improvements post-authorization on six school climate outcomes: perceived safety, caring relationships, fairness, parent involvement, bullying, and victimization.

**There is also evidence that PYP improves academic outcomes.** [Performance Comparison between IB and Non-IB School Students]
- PYP students outperformed non-IB students in mathematics, reading, and writing in a global International Schools’ Assessment study.

**Finally, there are many stories of impact coming directly from school communities.** [A Day in the Life at Benteen Elementary School]
Contact

IB Outreach Department
iba.outreach@ibo.org

RESOURCES

IB Continuum
A video explaining how the four IB programmes operate on an integrated spectrum.

What is an IB Education?
A document with an in-depth description of the concepts that underpin the entire IB programme.

PYP Overview Video
A video overview of the Primary Years Programme.

IB Learner Profile
A PDF of the attributes in the IB Learner Profile.

PYP Framework Summary
A PDF overview of the PYP.

PYP Transdisciplinary Themes
A PDF depicting the six transdisciplinary themes taught in the PYP.

PYP Transdisciplinary World Module
A learning module to deepen one's understanding of transdisciplinary learning.

PYP Learner Ownership
A video depicting how PYP learners engage in active self-direction.

IB Inquiry Teacher Attributes
A graphic depicting the attributes of a strong inquiry-based teacher in the PYP.
**PYP Exhibition 2022**
A collection of student videos from the virtual 2022 PYP Exhibition.

**Examining Learner Agency**
An overview of what learner agency looks like for students, staff, and the environment.

**IB Using Federal Funds**
A quick guide to using federal funding to implement the PYP.

**Funding the IB Toolkit**
Tools and resources for understanding how to fund IB authorization.

**Programme standards and practices**
**IB Programme Standards and Practices (PSP)**
The framework used to ensure quality and fidelity implementation of each IB programme.

**Co-constructing central ideas with students**
**Co-constructing Central Ideas**
A learning story exploring a way in which teachers and students can work together to develop a list of criteria in order to write meaningful central ideas.

**PYP Workshop Series**
An example online workshop for educators looking to promote more collaboration.

**Digital toolkit**
**IB Digital Toolkit**
A digital toolkit to provide authorized IB schools with a wide range of communications materials.

**IB Journey**
An overview of the journey to become an authorized IB school.

**PSP learning resources**
**IB PSP Learning Resources**
Short, interactive PD courses to help you understand the PSP and how it is used to implement, grow, and develop the IB programme.
## IB Authorization Support
A brief overview of the authorization process and how the IB supports schools along the way.

## IB Authorization Resource Library
A list of critical documents (including samples) and information about the process of becoming an IB school.

## IB Educator Certificate FAQ
Current IBEC candidates & graduates
Prospective IBEC students

## IB Educator Certificate FAQ
FAQs about the IBEC programme and credential.

## IB PD Offerings Chart
An overview of IB PD offerings, type, eligibility, cost, and more.

## PYP Research Studies
A website containing abstracts, links, and more for PYP studies.

## PYP Key Findings
A short research brief on recent PYP studies.

## PYP Study: Well-being
A study on the impact of the PYP on student well-being.

## PYP Study: School Climate
A study on the impact of the PYP on school climate.

## IB Comparative Study
A comparative study on the impact of the PYP and MYP on student performance.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Mathematical</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Written</th>
<th>Oral</th>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Scientific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

© Transcend Inc. & International Baccalaureate, 2022