



Roberts Elementary

IB PYP

Parent Handbook



What is the International Baccalaureate Organization?

- It is a non-profit educational and non-governmental (NGO) organization of UNESCO. The IB's alliance with UNESCO encourages the integration of its educational goals into the curriculum.
- It was established in 1968 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It is governed by a 16-member council and is funded by fees from IB World Schools.
- The IBO offers four programs of international education for students aged 3-19 years old:
 - The Diploma Program at the high school level (grades 9-12).
 - The Career-related program , at the basis of MYP Program
 - The Middle Years Program (MYP) (students 11-16 years old).
 - The Primary Years Program (PYP) (for students 3-12 years old).

There are about 651,000 IB students and 4,949 authorized IB schools in 129 countries.

What's the story behind the IBO?

Marie Therese Maurette created the framework for what would eventually become the IB Diploma Programme, in 1948, when she wrote *Is There a Way of Teaching for Peace?*, a handbook for UNESCO.

In the mid-1960's, a group of teachers from the International School of Geneva (Ecolint) created the International Schools Examinations Syndicate (ISES), which would later become the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO).

The IB headquarters were officially established in Geneva, Switzerland in 1968, for the development and maintenance of the Diploma Programme, which provided an internationally acceptable university admissions qualifications for young people whose parents worked as diplomats or with international and multi-national companies.



What is an IB PYP School?

Regardless of location, size, or make-up, an IB PYP school strives to develop an internationally minded person.

The mission of the IBO:

- To develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people.
- To create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.
- To work with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.
- To encourage students worldwide to become active, compassionate, and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

What does that mean at Roberts Elementary?

It means our RE students are taught **WHY** they should know something and **HOW** it connects to other subjects and the real world. It means high quality teaching and learning—challenging instruction and worldwide knowledge “at home” (so to speak, in whichever country you live and go to school). It also means opportunities to study abroad for college/university, as well as opportunities to make friends with others at IB schools around the world.

How does the IB PYP teach students to be “internationally minded?”

Through teaching and modeling the “Learner Profile.” Regardless of the IB school your child may visit, these characteristics or “Learner Profile” remain the same—foundational to the IB PYP learning experience.

But, really, what does it mean to be “internationally minded” and why is it important?

It is a thoughtful, critical perspective that applies to who we are and what we do. It includes how we communicate, our political awareness, cultural understanding, celebrating diversity, global awareness of global issues, and a reflection on how knowledge is constructed and applied. At Roberts Elementary, we focus on moving students toward becoming people who reflect the characteristics of the “Learner Profile.”



Who is an “internationally minded” person?

According to the IB PYP, an “internationally minded” person is someone who demonstrates the attributes of the “Learner Profile.”

What is the “Learner Profile?”

These are qualities determined to be most important in creating positive and productive citizens of the world.

But, what does it mean, “Profile?”

HINT: Think Facebook. A profile is the description of a person’s qualities, values, and characteristics.

What are these “Learner Profile” qualities?

- **Inquirers**—I am curious and know how to discover answers to many of my questions. I love to learn!
- **Thinkers**—I use my thinking skills to make good choices and solve problems.
- **Communicators**—I understand and share ideas in more than one language.
- **Risk Takers**—I try new things, love to explore, and confidently share my experiences.
- **Knowledgeable**—I explore big ideas that are important. I know and can do a lot of important things.
- **Principled**—I am fair and honest. I can make good decisions about what is right and wrong for me.
- **Caring**—I am concerned about other people’s needs and feelings. I believe it is important to help others.
- **Open-Minded**—I am comfortable with differences. I welcome and respect other people’s points of views and ways of doing things.
- **Balanced**—To be healthy, it is important for me to balance the needs of my mind and body.
- **Reflective**—I think about and discuss my learning, skills, and products.



So, what will my child be learning at Roberts Elementary?

With the IB PYP at RE, we are committed to structured inquiry as the vehicle for learning. Six transdisciplinary themes provide the framework for exploration and construction of knowledge. Teachers and students are guided by these transdisciplinary themes—as they design units of inquiry for exploration and study. Through this process, students develop an understanding of important concepts, acquire essential skills and knowledge, develop particular attitudes and learn to take socially responsible action.

Ok, what does “transdisciplinary” mean?

Transdisciplinary is the word that IB uses to describe a discipline that applies across all disciplines—it is interconnected and can be applied across all subjects and applied to real life. A transdisciplinary concept stretches across math, science, English, geography and ties it all together; it is not isolated to one subject. For example, the idea of change affects math, science, English, geography—the IB PYP strives to demonstrate this through learning, giving understanding to a real-life world.

So, what actually is a “Unit of Inquiry?”

A **Unit of Inquiry** usually lasts for 4-6 weeks and the objective is to cover all 6 themes throughout the year. For example, during the Unit, “Sharing the Planet,” students may spend 6 weeks looking at the resources we have in the world and how various countries use, share, and dispose of these resources. Students will answer questions like: How do these resources connect people around the world? Or, how are these resources changing and what does that mean for people? These concepts and questions move across all school subjects (i.e. math, English, geography, etc.) and apply to real life and the world around us.

And, how does RE implement these Units of Inquiry?

These themes or **Units of Inquiry**, provide a framework on which our teachers build students’ knowledge. With the IB PYP, the priority is not on using a set of textbooks, but rather the emphasis is on a wide variety of resources from which teachers and students extract knowledge, develop understanding, and explore ways of applying that to real life.

Why not use textbooks/workbooks? It seems more systematic?

Because the IB PYP philosophy believes that students learn best through authentic inquiry. While there is certainly a place in the curriculum for textbooks and workbooks, RE uses a wide range of resources that best cater to our students’ individual needs and learning styles.



The IB PYP also recognizes that it is **not** knowledge alone that makes a learner successful, but the skills and attitudes they develop along the way.

How can parents help students with schoolwork?

Follow up daily with your child to see what homework they have. Realize that you will probably help them with (**not do**) some of their larger projects. Example: Parents may make a trip with their child to museums for history or cultural projects or help them create display boards for presentations. Most parents will find pleasure or pride in helping their child grow in this way, as they work together to do larger projects.

How can you, as a PARENT, get involved?

- Volunteer in your child's classroom, the library, in the computer lab, at lunch, etc.
- Provide communication between yourself and school that is regular, 2-way, and meaningful.
- Participate as a full partner in decisions that impact your child and family.
- Portfolios are a part of documenting student growth and reflections over the course of the students' elementary career. Ask your child to see his/her portfolio often when visiting the school.
- Collaboration with the community, through partnerships, which are mutually beneficial to our school and the community.

You are always welcome at Roberts Elementary! We need your support and assistance to make our school the great place that it is!

