



Oscar F. Smith High School IB Diploma Program Admissions Policy

Rationale

Chesapeake Public Schools aims to provide all students with a program of education that best meets their needs, both as learners and as young people. The district's mission is to ensure that students attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become lifelong learners and productive citizens by combining the efforts of the students, parents, community and staff to provide a quality education in a safe, orderly environment in which human dignity is valued.

Oscar Smith High School IB Program Description

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB) is a rigorous, pre-university course of study that meets the needs of highly motivated secondary students in the eleventh and twelfth grades. The goals of IB are to ensure "intellectual rigor and high academic standards, to teach young people to relate the experiences of the classroom to the outside world, and to assist students in becoming critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and informed participants" in their communities and in the world. The program fosters an international perspective by encouraging students to understand and to value others' cultural perspectives. Oscar F. Smith High School was accepted as an IB world school by the Director General of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB) of Geneva, Switzerland in February 2003, thereby authorizing the school to offer the Grade 11-12 Diploma Program beginning in the fall of 2004.

Procedure

Oscar Smith High School is an IB World School offering two years of pre-Diploma courses in grades 9 and 10 followed by the IB Diploma Program in grades 11 and 12. Eighth graders are invited to apply in the fall of each school year following information visits to all ten Chesapeake Middle Schools and a city-wide open house event for parents and students. Approximately 60 students are selected each year to enter the program in grade 9.

Admissions criteria include the following:

- Composite Essay Score
- Composite Short Answer Score (questions based upon the IB Learner Profile)
- Overall GPA for Grades 7 & 8
- Core Area GPA for Grade 8
- Core Area Teacher Recommendations
- Honors/High School Equivalent Course Work

These criteria are each weighted equally, so that no one criterion weighs more heavily than another. In addition, the screening process is blind; each student is given an applicant number and all identifying information is omitted from the application. Once all applications have been received, a central office selections committee meets to review applications and identify students for the new cohort. Students are placed in ranked order and admission is offered to the top 60 candidates. Students are selected off of the waiting list to fill spaces as students decline admission or elect to enroll in another program offered within Chesapeake Public Schools.

Review of Application Process

IB stakeholders continuously review the application process and all screening procedures to ensure equity and fairness. The committee recommends modifications based upon this feedback and implements changes as needed.

Maintaining Good Standing within the IB Program

Once admitted, Students are expected to maintain an overall weighted GPA of 3.0 to remain in good standing within the program. This ensures that the program is the best academic fit for the student. The overall weighted GPA is first calculated following the students' freshman year in the Chesapeake Public Schools Pre-IB (Pre-Diploma) Program. This allows students a full year to adjust to the pre-Diploma courses and provides time for interventions, if necessary. Students falling between a 2.6-2.9 are placed on *Academic Warning* and have a full semester to attain a weighted GPA of 3.0. Only those remaining below a 3.0 for a full year are placed on *Academic Probation*. Once on Academic Probation, students have a full semester to raise the GPA above a 3.0 before they are recommended for removal from the program. This generous policy allows time to develop intervention plans for students so that they are able to develop the habits and skill necessary to be successful as they enter the IB Diploma Program in Grade 11.

IB Course Candidates

Oscar Smith High School juniors and seniors are given an opportunity to enroll in one or more IB Diploma Program elective subjects as IB Course Candidates. Courses available currently are IB World Religions, IB Psychology, IB Physics, and IB Visual Arts. The master schedule allows for IB Course students to complete both years of the course.

All IB Program Policies are posted on the Oscar F. Smith High School website in the IB Program tab. They are also shared with students in the IB Program Schoology group and emailed to all parents at the beginning of each school year. IB Policies are revised every 2-3 years by IB stakeholders.