



THE ROCK SCHOOL
A Foundation for Flourishing

2024-2025
COURSE GUIDE
GRADES 6-12



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VISION & MISSION

The Rock School Vision Statement

The vision of The Rock School is to make disciples of Jesus who possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to courageously cooperate with God in the work of redeeming the world.

- Character (to make disciples)
- Scholarship (knowledge, skills, and attitudes)
- Service (redeeming the world)

*The Rock School has been authorized by the International Baccalaureate organization as an official **IB World School** to offer the Diploma Programme (DP) starting in the 2023-2024 school year.*

The Rock School is also a Candidate School for the IB's Primary Years and Middle Years Programmes and expects to be authorized to offer the MYP (6th-10th Grade) in the 2024-2025 school year and the PYP (Kindergarten-5th Grade) in the 2025-2026 school year.

In doing so, The Rock School will be an IB Continuum School, providing an IB education to all students in all grades. The Rock School would be just the fourth such school in Florida and one of only four evangelical Christian schools to offer the continuum in North America.

For further information about the IB and its programmes, visit www.ibo.org.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE OVERVIEW

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a global leader in international education—developing inquiring, knowledgeable, confident, and caring young people. These programmes empower students to take ownership in their own learning and help them develop future-ready skills to make a difference and thrive in a world that changes fast. (65% of current K-12 students will do a job in the future that doesn't yet exist!)

We believe the IB is uniquely suited to help us achieve our academic goals while we keep our focus distinctly Christian:

- **Unity** – IB provides continuous, cohesive programming from Kindergarten through 12th Grade.
- **Accessibility** – The Rock School is committed to the idea of “IB for All.” The program is designed to be accessible to every student, no matter what their specific learning needs are.
- **Complexity** – The IB education model prioritizes the exploration of rich, cross-curricular conceptual understandings supported by relevant content knowledge to prepare students for a variety of contexts.
- **Identity** – IB World Schools are internationally recognized and respected.
- **Accountability** – To become and maintain our status as an IB World School involves a challenging authorization process and ongoing evaluation plan that will continue to hold us to a high standard.

Some benefits of the International Baccalaureate for students include:

- IB graduates are more likely to persist through college.
- IB students are prepared for college-level coursework.
- IB students graduate with a sense of civic responsibility.
- IB students demonstrate strong critical thinking skills.
- The IB prepares students to attend top universities.
- IB Diploma students automatically qualify for Florida’s Bright Futures.

“IB FOR ALL” – The Rock School believes that all students will benefit from an IB education, but not all students will pursue or earn an IB Diploma.

- All students in grades K-12 complete IB coursework.
- All students do not have to pursue an IB Diploma in grades 11-12.

Middle Years Programme (MYP) Grades 6 - 10

The IB Middle Years Programme, for students aged eleven to sixteen, provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and become critical and reflective thinkers. The program consists of eight subject groups integrated through six global contexts that provide lenses for learning within and across the subjects. The emphasis is on the fluidity of the curricular framework and of the subjects. Aspects of the areas of interaction are addressed naturally through the distinct disciplines. The overall philosophy of the program is expressed through three fundamental concepts that support and strengthen all areas of the curriculum. These concepts are based on intercultural awareness, holistic learning, and communication.

The IB Middle Years Programme at The Rock School consists of nine groups:

Language & Literature | Language Acquisition | Individuals & Societies | Sciences
Mathematics | The Arts | Design | Physical & Health Education | Discipleship

Personal Project: In the final year of the program (10th grade), each student is required to complete a personal project. This project is a significant piece of work that is the product of the student's own initiative and creativity. Each student is responsible for their own choice of topic, development of criteria, planning and reflection on processes and progress. The entire project is completed under the supervision of a teacher. Students present their projects with an authentic audience.

Diploma Programme (DP) Grades 11-12

The IB Diploma Programme is a comprehensive and rigorous two-year curriculum, leading to examinations, for students aged between sixteen and nineteen. Based on the pattern of no single country, it is a deliberate compromise between the specialization required in some national systems and the breadth preferred in others. The general objectives of the IB program are to provide students with a balanced education; to facilitate geographic and cultural mobility; and to promote international understanding through a shared academic experience.

The IB Diploma Programme curriculum at The Rock School consists of six groups with studies in:

Language & Literature | Language Acquisition | Individuals & Societies
Sciences | Mathematics | The Arts

Plus additional requirements: Discipleship, Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

All IB Diploma Candidates are required to test in one subject from each of the groups. At least three and not more than four of the six subjects are taken at the Higher level, the others at Standard level. Each examined subject is graded on a scale of 1 (minimum) to 7 (maximum). The award of the Diploma requires a minimum total of 24 points and the satisfactory completion of the Extended Essay, TOK, and CAS. Bonus points may be awarded for the exceptional essay or performance in Theory of Knowledge.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IB AT TRS

Will the IB program equip me with the skills and knowledge I need to succeed?

Simply put: Yes! The Rock School's vision is to make disciples of Jesus who possess the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to courageously cooperate with God in the work of redeeming the world. That remains our focus, and we believe incorporating IB programs into our students' educational experience will strengthen the execution of our vision.

We view the IB not just a replacement for traditional transactional models of education, but a transformational and adaptive system for learning. The IB approach equips students with relevant content knowledge and helps them develop a well-rounded skill set that prepares them for success in and outside of the classroom in the short and long term. Our goal is to provide students with knowledge and skills that will serve them (and ultimately, help them serve God) no matter where they end up or what vocation they ultimately pursue.

All schools are entrusted with decisions about the kind of content they want to teach their students, and through considerable research, reflection, and prayer, we believe integrating IB programs will best equip TRS students to carry out their unique God-given callings.

Do I have to take IB courses at The Rock School?

Yes, all students will take IB coursework in grades K-12. Students in grade 11-12 do not have to complete the Diploma track, but they will still complete a full schedule of IB courses & related requirements.

Will I be overwhelmed with schoolwork, or will I be able to maintain a good school/life balance?

The Rock School is committed to the idea of "IB for All." While some schools set up their IB programs as magnet programs that limit access to only the highest-performing students, our program is designed to be accessible to *all* students at The Rock School.

One of the key benefits of the IB program is that both academic work and "extracurricular" activities are viewed as essential elements of a well-rounded student's development. Students will have an opportunity to pursue their non-academic interests both in and outside of the classroom. While some homework and in-class assignments may look different than in years past, the workload is expected to remain manageable and ultimately enhance students' enjoyment of and appreciation for the academic and non-academic subjects they're studying.

How does the IB Diploma affect high school graduation?

Students who complete the IB Course Candidate Track, as well as those who complete the IB Diploma Track, will graduate with a high school diploma from The Rock School. Students who complete all of the requirements of the IB's Diploma Programme and earn the qualifying number of points, will also be awarded an IB Diploma. The IB Diploma is awarded independent of the traditional high school diploma. In short, every graduating student earns a high school diploma from The Rock School regardless of the status of the IB Diploma candidacy.

How do universities view an IB diploma?

IB diplomas are highly respected by universities throughout the world, in the U.S. and particularly in Florida*. Students pursuing IB diplomas are often put at the top of universities' admissions lists.

Completion of IB coursework often indicates that a student will be successful at the college level and is less likely to drop out – an important factor for universities. Students who are pursuing an IB diploma or complete individual IB courses also have an opportunity to receive college credit for them. Remember when you were applying to colleges and searching for anything to add to your application that could set you apart? An IB diploma is exactly that.

**Visit <https://recognition.ibo.org/en-US/> to review a list of the universities that recognize the IB Diploma & award credit for individual IB DP courses*

How does IB compare to Advanced Placement (AP) courses?

Because the IB is taught much more like a college or university class, some schools believe that the IB offers a more seamless transition to higher education. Further, an IB diploma stands out because a student has had in-depth study in all types of subjects, not just the ones in which a student is “strong.”

The IB program is not solely about academics; it also challenges students to enhance their personal growth. IB aspires to help schools develop well-rounded students with strong character and a global mindset. IB students often indicate that they have gained excellent time-management skills and other critical attitudes needed for academic and personal success.

Finally, in terms of assessment, students have multiple opportunities in each course to “show what they know” using various modes of communication and formats. The IB program is not about memorizing and guessing from a list of answers, but about truly understanding the material at a deeper level.

What about honors credit and weighted GPAs?

All IB courses in 9th-12th grade are coded as honors classes. This includes all MYP courses in 9th-10th grade and all DP courses in 11th-12th grade, both standard level and higher level.

Do I have to take PE / Arts / Spanish?

Physical & Health Education and The Arts are required courses in the MYP for grades 6-10. The Diploma Programme requires the completion of an Arts course, but offers an exemption for students who choose to instead take a second course in the Sciences or Individuals & Societies (when offered by the school).

Language Acquisition (foreign language) is required in grades 2-12 at The Rock School. At present, The Rock School offers Spanish as its language acquisition course. In PYP, it is part of the activities classes along with PE, art, music. In MYP, it is a half-time course in grades 6-8 and a standard course in grades 9-10. Language Acquisition is a required course for the IB Diploma Track in grades 11-12.

All IB courses are required. Students may not opt-out of any of their IB coursework.

How much does it cost to do IB?

There is no additional fee to families to participate in IB. In grades 11-12, there are IB exam fees, but these will be built into the tuition costs for these grades.

How do you earn an IB Diploma?

In the IB diploma program, each IB course is scored on a scale from one to seven, with seven representing the highest mark possible. Students take six courses and must also complete the theory of knowledge; extended essay; and creativity, action, service requirements.

To receive a diploma, a student must accumulate at least 24 points across all classes. Higher level and standard level courses count equally.

Students can gain up to three additional points from the extended essay and theory of knowledge components, but all three of the above requirements must be completed satisfactorily for you to earn a diploma – even if you receive sevens in all of your classes.

What types of assessment will I encounter in a single IB course?

View The Rock School's [Assessment Policy](#) for philosophy, principles, and practices.

I've heard that the IB is an anti-America and anti-Christian organization, is that true?

No, the IB isn't anti-America or anti-Christian in any way, and we'll unpack why these ideas are false below. First, here is the IB mission statement:

"The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right."

When the mission statement mentions "governments," it's simply referring to government-run school systems (ie. public schools), as the organization works with both private and public schools around the world. Some people may also have heard that the IB is run by the United Nations, but it's an independent organization and is not controlled by the UN.

While the organization's mission statement may not be explicitly Christian, there are two main reasons this isn't a cause for concern for The Rock School.

First, the themes included in the organization's mission statement don't contradict a Biblical worldview or a Christian focus in education; they instead simply offer a partial picture of those things. For instance, it's not a bad aim to help create a more peaceful world, and as Christians, we know that peace can only be created through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The mission statement also isn't making a theological statement in favor of moral relativism, but instead emphasizes the organization's focus on respecting all people no matter their background. This is in line with our Biblical view of all people as intrinsically valuable image-bearers of Christ.

Second, the IB ultimately offers schools like ours tools to better carry out our own distinct missions, and the mission of The Rock School will always be Christ-centered. We take the IB programs and approaches to learning and apply them to our Christian context, but we remain in the driver's seat.

GRADES 6-8 COURSE SEQUENCE

SUBJECTS	GRADE 6 MYP YEAR 1	GRADE 7 MYP YEAR 2	GRADE 8 MYP YEAR 3
Language & Literature	MYP Lang & Lit 6	MYP Lang & Lit 7	MYP Lang & Lit 8
Language Acquisition*	MYP Exploratory Spanish, Year 1	MYP Exploratory Spanish, Year 2	MYP Exploratory Spanish, Year 3
Individuals & Societies	MYP I&S 6 (Ancient Civilizations)	MYP I&S 7 (World History)	MYP I&S 8 (US History)
Sciences	MYP Comprehensive Science Year 1	MYP Comprehensive Science Year 2	MYP Comprehensive Science Year 3
Mathematics	MYP Math Year 1	MYP Math Year 2	MYP Math Year 3
Physical & Health Education**	PHE 6	PHE 7	PHE 8
The Arts***	Visual Art / Theatre / Band / Dance	Visual Art / Theatre / Band / Dance	Visual Art / Theatre / Band / Dance
Design*	Design	Design	Design
Discipleship	Discipleship 6	Discipleship 7	Discipleship 8

*Students take one semester of Spanish and one semester of Design. (0.5 credit per class)

**PHE and The Arts “share” a period, alternating time on a Week A/Week B rotating schedule. Each class is assigned to one day per week, then they alternate meetings on Fridays. (0.5 credit per class)

- Example: A student will have PHE 4th period on Tuesday and Dance (Arts) 4th period on Thursday. On Week A, the student will have PHE for 4th period on Friday. On Week B, the student will have Dance (Arts) for 4th period on Friday.
- Don't worry about remembering it all! We provide schedule labels for students at the beginning of the year and post lots of reminders. You'll get in the rhythm once you're in it.

***Students choose two Arts courses and will take one per semester. (Band is a year-long course.)

GRADES 9-12 COURSE SEQUENCE

For the Class of 2025 & Beyond

IB Diploma Pathway | Course Candidate Pathway
HL = Higher Level | SL = Standard Level

SUBJECTS	GRADE 9 MYP YEAR 4	GRADE 10 MYP YEAR 5	GRADE 11 DP YEAR 1	GRADE 12 DP YEAR 2
Language & Literature (Subject Group 1)	MYP English 9	MYP English 10	Language A: English Language & Literature HL Year 1 Language A: English Language & Literature SL Year 1	Language A: English Language & Literature HL Year 2 Language A: English Language & Literature SL Year 2
Language Acquisition (Subject Group 2)	Emergent Spanish - Phase 1 (<i>Spanish I equivalent</i>)	Emergent Spanish - Phase 2 (<i>Spanish II equivalent</i>)	Spanish Ab Initio SL Year 1 (Optional)	Spanish Ab Initio SL Year 2 (Optional)
Individuals & Societies (Subject Group 3)	MYP World History	MYP US History	Global Politics HL Year 1 Global Politics SL Year 1	Global Politics HL Year 2 Global Politics SL Year 2
Sciences (Subject Group 4)	MYP Biology	MYP Chemistry	Environmental Systems & Societies SL Year 1 Environmental Systems & Societies SL Year 1	Environmental Systems & Societies SL Year 2 Environmental Systems & Societies SL Year 2
Mathematics (Subject Group 5)	MYP Math 9 or MYP Math 9 - Extended	MYP Math 10 or 2023-2024: Algebra II Honors 2024-2025 and beyond: MYP Math 10 - Extended	Math Applications & Interpretations SL Year 1 2023-2024: Algebra II 2024-2025 and beyond: Math for College Algebra	Math Applications & Interpretations SL Year 2 2024-2025 and beyond: Math for College Statistics
Physical & Health Education + The Arts* (Subject Group 6)	PHE / Theatre / Draw/Paint / Instrumental Ensemble	PHE / Theatre / Draw/Paint / Instrumental Ensemble	Theatre HL Year 1 PHE / Studio Art / Instrumental Ensemble	Theatre HL Year 2 PHE / Studio Art / Instrumental Ensemble
Discipleship + Theory of Knowledge	Discipleship I	Discipleship II	Discipleship III + TOK Year 1	Philosophy + TOK Year 2
Further MYP/DP Requirements		Personal Project	Extended Essay CAS (Community Service—75 hours/year)	

* Students choose one course per year in either Physical & Health Education or The Arts. All courses are year-long (2 semesters). Students may take any combination of Physical & Health Education and/or The Arts.

WHAT ABOUT MATH?

All MYP courses, including Math, consist of honors level coursework. Extended courses move at a faster pace and cover additional topics.

All Math courses prepare students to take DP Math in 11th-12th grade.

SEQUENCE

Grade	Traditional Standard Sequence	Traditional Advanced Sequence	New Sequence	
6	Math 6	Math 6	Math Year 1	
7	Math 7	Pre Algebra (Math 7)	Math Year 2	
8	Pre Algebra (Math 8)	Algebra I Honors	Math Year 3	
9	Algebra I	Geometry Honors	Year 4 Math (Math 9)	Year 4 Math Extended (Math 9 Extended)
10	Geometry	Algebra II Honors	Year 5 Math (Math 10)	Year 5 Math Extended (Math 10 Extended)
11	Algebra II	Precalculus	DP Math Applications & Interpretations SL Year 1 or Mathematics for College Algebra	
12	Math for College Readiness	AP Calculus AB	DP Math Applications & Interpretations SL Year 2 or Mathematics for College Statistics	

TERMS EXPLAINED

HIGHER LEVEL (HL) & STANDARD LEVEL (SL)

Grades: 11,12

HL and SL courses differ in scope but are measured according to the same grade descriptors, with students expected to demonstrate a greater body of knowledge, understanding and skills at the higher level.

CREATIVITY, ACTIVITY, SERVICE (CAS)

Grades: 11,12

CAS gives students the opportunity to enhance their personal development by learning through experience. In these 18 months of learning experiences, (fall of junior year through spring of senior year), students will participate in a balance of the three strands - creativity, activity, and service - through ongoing CAS experiences (ideally on a weekly basis) and at least one culminating CAS project that demonstrates initiative and perseverance. Participation in CAS is recorded in a student portfolio along with formal interviews with a CAS advisor. Students are given time during the school day to work on their portfolio, and will complete their experiences and project outside of school hours.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (TOK)

Grades: 11, 12

Theory of Knowledge is a core IB class that examines the very nature of knowledge itself within individual disciplines and by making connections between various fields of study. This course is taught during the school day in conjunction with Philosophy.

EXTENDED ESSAY (EE)

Grades: 11,12

Extended Essay is an academic-style research paper on a topic of the student's choice from the available IB subjects, assessed according to the formal IB guidelines. Its goal is to cultivate a range of skills including: inquiry, research, independence, communication, critical thinking, writing, organization, referencing, and creativity. Extended Essay compels an IB candidate to understand the ethical academic process of adding individual voice to the body of knowledge. Extended Essay is a requirement of all TRS graduates - 4000 words for Diploma Candidates and 2000 words for Course Candidates.

PERSONAL PROJECT (PP)

Grades: 10

At the end of the Middle Years Programme in 10th grade, all students have the opportunity to undertake an independent and age-appropriate exploration into an area of personal interest involving the process of inquiry, action and reflection. The project allows students to explore an area that motivates and interests them. Students choose what they want to focus on, which can be an existing or a new interest, choose how to achieve their goal, and create their own success criteria for the product. The project provides an excellent opportunity for students to produce a truly personal and often creative product and to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning in the MYP.

POLICIES PERTAINING TO COURSE OFFERINGS

COURSE AVAILABILITY

Course offerings are subject to change without notice. While every effort will be made to provide the courses described in this guide, some classes may not be available due to student enrollment numbers, staffing, and resources.

COURSE LOAD

- Grades 6-8: Students will take 8 courses each semester, for the equivalent of 7 block periods. (*Spanish + Design are one semester each, Physical & Health Education + The Arts split time across both semesters*)
- Grades 9-10: Students will take 7 courses each semester, one in each of the seven subject groups.
- Grades 11-12: Students will take 7 courses each semester, one in each of the seven subject groups. Students also must complete the Extended Essay (EE) and Creativity, Activity, & Service (CAS) Project, requiring both in-school and out-of-school hours.

COURSE SELECTION

The Rock School uses a prescribed course sequence for grades 6-12. Choices may be made in the following areas.

- Grades 6-8: Students will choose their **Arts** course no later than the first week of school.
- Grades 9-10: Students will choose their **Arts** course no later than the first week of school. **Spanish and Math** level placement will be determined based on previous courses taken and/or teacher recommendation.
- Grade 11: **Pathway selection** will be made at the end of 10th grade (for returning students) or over the summer (new students). **Arts** course selection will be made no later than the first week of school.
- Grade 12 (for the class of 2025 and beyond): Students will continue the courses begun in 11th grade. If a new **Arts/Elective** course selection is needed, it will be made no later than the first week of school.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Schedule change requests may be submitted no later than the first Monday of school. All schedule change requests are processed and approved by the Academic Advisor.

INCLUSION POLICY

Review the [Inclusion Policy](#) for information on classroom and testing accommodations.

BLOCK SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30 AM	CHAPEL 8:30-9:20	PERIOD 4 8:30-9:50	PERIOD 1 8:30-9:45	PERIOD 4 8:30-9:50	PERIOD 1 8:30-9:15
8:35 AM					
8:40 AM					
8:45 AM					
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RESOURCES

This guide was created using the following references.

[The Rock School Parent & Student Handbook](#)

[Diploma Programme: From principles into practice](#)

[The Rock School Assessment Policy](#)

[The Rock School Inclusion Policy](#)

[SHHS Course Registration Guide - 2020-21.pdf](#)