The International Baccalaureate (IB) Global Research Department collaborates with universities and independent research organizations worldwide to produce rigorous studies examining the impact and outcomes of IB programmes. Areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to: standards alignment, programme implementation, the learner profile and student performance. In addition, many researchers—indeed of the IB—produce quality studies on the effects of IB programmes.

The findings below come from a sampling of research reports commissioned by the IB. To find further information on these studies, please visit: http://www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/.

Compared to a matched comparison group, Diploma Programme (DP) students in Chicago Public Schools are more likely to attend college, attend a selective college and persist in college for two years. These same students reported feeling prepared to succeed and indeed excel in their coursework. They cited strong academic skills, work ethic, motivation, time management and help-seeking as sources of strength in the transition to college, and credited their preparation in the DP as the source of their success as college students.

Examination of data from the University of Florida revealed a positive association between DP subject exam scores and student grades in first college courses in corresponding subjects. Additionally, college course choice varied more by exam performance than by participation in standard level or high level courses.

In a sample of DP students from US high schools, 71% enrolled in full-time post-secondary institutions (the US average is 56%). Of those students, the four-year and six-year graduation rates (64% and 81% respectively) were higher than the national averages (36% and 57% respectively).

**Figure 1:** Average graduation rates at four-year post-secondary institutions with highest numbers of DP students from the US. Sample included 24,487 IB certificate and diploma candidates who graduated from US high schools in 2001 or 2002 and subsequently enrolled in US post-secondary institutions.

In the University of California system, DP students generally earned higher grade point averages (GPAs) and graduated at higher rates than matched comparison group students and UC students overall. Performance in the theory of knowledge (TOK) and extended essay were especially correlated with college GPA.

**Figure 2:** UC GPA: IB students vs UC students overall. Sample: 1,547 US high school students who participated in the DP and subsequently enrolled in the University of California (UC) system between 2000 and 2002.

A high degree of alignment was found between DP standards in all subject areas and the Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS). There was complete alignment in several subject areas, and many individual IB standards were more advanced than those required for success in entry-level college courses.

The most successful support services for US Title I high schools were found to be: access to professional development and the network of peer schools; guidance counselor training and involvement; support and advocacy from the IB regional office; and Professional Learning Groups.

MYP and DP students participating in the High School Survey of Student Engagement were significantly more likely to feel engaged and challenged in school than non-IB students. They reported that they could: write and speak effectively; think critically; solve real-world problems; learn independently; and work well with others. They were also found to spend more time studying for class, doing written homework, volunteering, and participating in school-sponsored activities.

Successful strategies for implementation of the PYP in Georgia include: whole school immersion; collaborative planning; continuous training; availability of resources; existence of a media centre; strategies to promote family and community involvement; support by school leadership and an IB coordinator.

At middle schools in a US public school district, there was some evidence of improved performance in mathematics and science for Middle Years Programme (MYP) students. Principals at these MYP schools noted interdisciplinary learning as a positive influence, and teacher training and the support of the MYP coordinator as important benefits.

In Primary Years Programme (PYP) and MYP classrooms in Texas, favourable instructional practices, student behaviours and activities were observed more frequently than in regular classrooms.

To read more in-depth summaries or the complete reports of the research projects highlighted on this page, as well as projects currently under way, please visit http://www.ibo.org/research or email research@ibo.org.
A study exploring the international understanding of DP and advance placement (AP) students at two US high schools, suggests that while there was no significant difference between the groups on a survey of worldview, the IB students’ self-definition of the concept included more elements of international understanding, and utilized “a richness of vocabulary and language to express and personalize their values in their definitions”. Because the groups did not differ on standardized state assessments and the DP students “expressed belief that particular courses in school had enhanced their international understanding”, the author attributes differences to the effect of the programme (Hinrichs 2003: 344).

A review of AP and DP courses concluded that “academic expectations for these courses are decently expressed, the end-of-course exams are well aligned to the curriculum and the grading standards are clearly described and accessible to teachers and students. The … curricula and exams are certainly much better than nearly all of the state standards and exams … reviewed in years past” (Byrd et al, 2007: 17).

A dissertation exploring the effects of the MYP on the academic achievement, behaviour and extra-curricular involvement of seventh graders in a US public school concluded that involvement in the MYP is associated with some academic gains and greater involvement in extra-curricular activities, when compared with students in a traditional academic programme at that same school (Wilson 2007).

A dissertation comparing the American College Testing (ACT) mathematics and reading scores of MYP students with those of matched non-MYP peers at a high school in the western US, revealed statistically significant higher scores for the MYP students after controlling for prior academic achievement (Houston Magee 2005).