Why IB?

A Guide for International Families

Cheshire Academy is the only boarding school in Connecticut — and one of just a few in New England — offering the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme. The IB provides students with a high-quality, wholistic education revered by higher education throughout the world, and the opportunity to earn college credit for their work.

What is the IB?

International Baccalaureate (IB) is the **top** internationally recognized standard for a rigorous global education program. Founded in 1968, the IB emphasizes:

- High standards
- Deep analysis
- Critical thinking
- University-level work

A Clear Advantage: IB vs. AP

How does the IB curriculum and diploma program compare against Advanced Placement (AP) classes and other programs found in many American high schools? Colleges and universities accept and respect both IB and AP experience in applicants; however, in recent years, the **IB has become a preferred curriculum for many institutions** because of its similarity to university-level learning and teaching methodologies, according to the American Foreign Service Association. The IB also takes on a more global context than the AP, with international mindedness at its core.

College Acceptance for IB Graduates

18%
HIGHER RATE INTO IVY LEAGUE SCHOOLS

22%
HIGHER RATE INTO OTHER TOP-RANKED UNIVERSITIES

Mandarin Bilingual Diploma Program

A Key Differentiator

Cheshire Academy is one of the few U.S. schools to offer students with a native-level fluency in Mandarin the unique opportunity to earn the IB Bilingual Diploma.

Through IB Chinese A: Literature SL — taught exclusively in Mandarin — students gain a second IB Group 1 subject — in addition to English — on their transcripts. This challenging and impressive designation allows students to build their skills in their home language. Studying in Mandarin offers students a chance to concentrate on the material, not the delivery. This path is part of the Academy's multi-pronged approach to becoming a linguistically inclusive community.



Research shows that IB Diploma graduates outperform students nationally in university enrollment, persistence, and graduation.



"To me, **the bilingual diploma is an optimal choice to succeed in the IB curriculum.** Studying in Mandarin allows me to express my ideas more naturally since it is my native language. The coursework is hard because literature always needs deep analysis in order to understand; however, it is also flexible, which means that there isn't really a correct or wrong analysis, as long as you make a point and justify it. I chose Cheshire Academy for its diversity and its inclusiveness. I found things that I am passionate about here and had the opportunity to try them."

– Zhengnan "Sam" Wang '26
Cornell University, *Food Science Major*

What Makes the IB Different?

Interdisciplinary Learning + Research Skills

IB provides a rigorous program across disciplines – and more. In addition to a traditional course of science, math, language, literature, and art, the IB requires three core components for full diploma status: Theory of Knowledge (TOK); the Extended Essay (EE) research project; and a Creative Action, and Service (CAS) component. Students are encouraged to build critical thinking, make connections across disciplines, and foster research and analysis skills.

Global Recognition

U.S. colleges and universities all accept both IB and AP credits; and if you're looking at enrolling in college in Europe or elsewhere in the world, the IB has much higher recognition than does the AP.

According to an American Foreign Service Association report, both IB and AP programs offer opportunities for students to received post-secondary credits, but the IB is better known in other countries, especially in Europe.

Better College Preparation

Subjects are taught in an interdisciplinary fashion, not in isolation. The IB introduces languages and cultures, exploring globally significant ideas in all subject areas. A quantitative study of the IB Diploma Programme in the U.S. showed **IB students are more academically adjusted to the expectations of college**.

Personal Growth + Healthy Lifestyle

The IB moves beyond academics. **The IB philosophy challenges students to enhance their personal growth.** The program helps develop well-rounded students with strong character and a global mindset, an aspiration that melds well with Cheshire's own philosophy. The CAS component inspires a healthy lifestyle.

Time Management + Study Skills

Students learn how to learn. IB students remark that they've developed excellent time management and other executive function skills. Cheshire Academy augments this goal with the personalized, research-based academic coaching of the Roxbury Center for Learning & Leadership.



"Our IB students are engaged, curious, and creative. In the increasingly competitive world of higher education, their academic readiness and unique talents continue to find great success in the selective admission process!"

– Madeleine Bergstrom
Dean of College Counseling