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## Indiana educators promote international baccalaureate program

*Provided by Angie Dye*

On Dec. 4, representatives from elementary, middle, and high schools across Indiana met to form the Hoosier Association of International Baccalaureate World Schools (HIBS). This organization of teachers and school administrators aims to promote the values, ideals, and expansion of the International Baccalaureate program and to support existing and prospective Indiana IB world schools.

Nineteen public and private schools in the state are currently authorized to offer the International Baccalaureate curriculum. According to the International Baccalaureate Organization website, the challenging educational program is designed to "help develop the intellectual, personal, emotional, and social skills to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world."

More than 2,445 schools in 131 countries offer the IB curriculum to over 667,000 students worldwide. High school students who successfully complete the diploma program requirements receive an internationally recognized diploma and see higher rates of acceptance at universities in the United States and abroad.

Bridgette Joseph, Ben Davis High School IB Coordinator and English teacher, was elected president of the organization's executive board, which also consists of Shelly Wilfong, Goshen High School; Valerie Piehl, Fishers High School; Melody Coryell, Lawrence North High School; Michael Urquhart, the International School of Indiana; and Debra Fray, Valparaiso High School.

Joseph says of the endeavor, "The formation of HIBS is a significant step for expanding Indiana students' access to a program that is recognized worldwide for its success in preparing students for college and for an increasingly 'flat' world."

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