



ROBBINSDALE COOPER HIGH SCHOOL

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Robbinsdale Cooper High School IB Diploma Program

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History

Cooper is a 45-year-old high school located in the northwest suburbs of Minneapolis. In the years leading up to 1997, the Robbinsdale Area Schools administration investigated programs that would bring a new level of rigor to the district, in which there are two high schools (Armstrong and Cooper). International Baccalaureate (IB) was chosen and placed at Cooper High School. Application to IB was made in '97-98, acceptance was granted in the summer of 1998, and first "IBPrep" classes were

offered to 9th and 10th graders in the fall of 1998. Since then, an IB Middle Years Program (MYP), first at Sandburg Middle and then moved to Robbinsdale Middle, has been established and authorized for grades 6-8, with concluding years 9 and 10 offered at Cooper. In June 2009, our ninth class of Diploma Candidates graduated and our sixth year of MYP Certificates were awarded. In the 2009-10 school year, we have 52 students in grades 11 and 12 pursuing the Diploma.

Since then . . .

The IB program has brought changes with it to Cooper. Over 30% of our students come from the district's other high school to participate in IB. A smaller number come from Minneapolis, Osseo, and Hopkins through open enrollment. These students as well as our own Cooper-attendance-area students regularly star in our drama productions, fill the ranks of our school sports teams, win prizes for Cooper in musical and foreign language competitions, and serve as leaders and captains in student organizations and volunteer groups. IB parents are committed and generous members of our school community who help staff our Career Center as volunteers and have raised over \$48,000 in the last nine years for school materials which benefit all students, not just IB.

IB's footprint

The presence of the IB program has had several other effects on the entire school. IB students serve as tutors for other students within the building. Since IB teachers do not form a separate cadre, IB teaching methods and insights are employed in teachers' other classes as well, which

has the effect of “raising all boats”. For IB students themselves, traditions have sprung up to promote a sense of collegiality. We have, for example, a breakfast before exams to Wish ‘Em Well; an all-IB picnic in the fall and kickball tournament in the spring; MYP Personal Project Night; and Silver Platter Day, on which Extended Essays are turned in, with attendant publicity and a celebration party. IB students raised funds to purchase flags from all 55 countries where Cooper students were born, and these hang proudly in the foyer.

Graduates of the IB program, whether as Diploma or Certificate Candidates, annually gain admissions and financial aid to a variety of colleges. In recent years, students have been accepted at Yale, Dartmouth, Davidson, Wellesley, Northwestern, Pomona, Mount Holyoke, Carleton, Dickinson, Macalester, University of Chicago, Caltech, University of Pennsylvania, Columbia, USC, Duke, Notre Dame, and many other selective colleges. Students regularly receive college credit for their IB exams and a few have begun college as sophomores. Scholarship aid has been plentiful for our IB graduates as well.

Cooper offers the following classes at the Diploma Level:

- English HL 1, 2
- French HL/SL
- Spanish HL/SL
- History of the Americas HL
- 20th Century Topics, SL
- Business&Management SL
- Physics HL
- Biology SL
- Chemistry HL/SL
- Math HL
- Math SL
- Math Studies SL

(Higher Level = HL; Standard Level = SL)

