

## **Where do we go from here? Conclusions from the first-ever DP scores released this summer**

By Julie Heng

After scores were released in July, 40 of the 59 students in Huron's first International Baccalaureate graduating cohort - 68 percent - passed all exams and requirements to earn full IB diplomas.

"We feel really good about where we started with the number of students [in the Diploma Programme] that received [the IB diploma in addition to the Huron High School diploma], although we are really looking forward to Cohort Two," district IB facilitator Kevin Karr said.

IB exams are scored from one to seven. In order to receive an IB diploma, candidates must receive a minimum of 24 points or an average of four out of a possible seven points for six courses. Candidates must also receive a minimum of 12 points in their three Higher Level courses and a minimum of nine points in their Standard Level courses. Thus, on average, earning a four or above on an exam is considered passing. The students who earned their IB diplomas had an average score of 4.96.

As a whole, out of the 35 exams Huron students took, exam averages across 22 subjects were either above a four or above the world average score.

These scores acted as "a good barometer check" for the IB team to evaluate teachers' predicted scores against actual scores from IB examiners.

"We saw that sometimes the scores were very close to what teachers thought they were going to be," Karr said. "We also saw that sometimes our teachers were grading too hard: [what] they thought maybe was a five and IB thought is a six."

The opposite was also true, where students received lower scores than predicted by teachers.

“That additional feedback lets us understand where [teachers and examiners] saw differences in terms of how the student performed based on what they turned in,” Karr said, noting that teachers have already begun working virtually and in-person over the summer to revise courses. In late August, all the Ann Arbor IB teachers attended training with 20 other IB schools across the state. There were 13 workshops designed specifically in topics like math, science, counseling and special education.

“Every subject in every course has places where they have to do work to get better because we certainly expect that Huron will perform at the top,” Karr said. “Every subject area has some highlights and areas to work on and we'll end up talking about those and planning for those this year.”

Karr has also been working with some of the individual cohort students who did not pass all their exams. He remarked that certain students were “very, very close” to passing and achieving the diploma - often just one or two points away from the cutoff. So some students are considering appealing their scores to the IB for rescoring or retaking the exam.

Changes have already been made to assist the second cohort of DP students with time management and deadline control. Drafts of extended essays are now required well in advance, with more structured deadlines to keep students on track.

There are several new introductions to the DP as well.

Firstly, four new math courses will be introduced this year to replace last year’s Math Standard Level and Higher Level classes: Math Applications & Interpretation (in both Standard and Higher Level options) and Math Analysis and Approaches (Standard and Higher Level). These are consistent with new changes to all IB school curriculums.

Secondly, Huron has a new DP facilitator who will oversee the program.

Eric Wynn, the previous facilitator, left Huron over the summer. He transferred to De La Salle, an all-boys Catholic high school in Warren, where he is the new DP program director.

Wynn's position will be filled by Anna Fleury, who has taught in IB schools from Kenya to China and the International Academy. In her 18 years of IB experience, Fleury has served many roles: MYP and DP Literature teacher, Theory of Knowledge teacher, extended essay coordinator and mentor in theatre and English, moderator for internal assessments and official examiner for Group One English exams.

"Every school has their own IB flavor," Fleury said. "One of the strengths of the IB program is its ability to adapt to almost any community while still maintaining high standards. The biggest difference I see between schools abroad and U.S. schools is class size. The U.S. classes are much larger and feed many more students. It's a testament to our teachers and our schools that we have great success - success equal to international schools - with larger class sizes."

Fleury said she sees "a great amount of passion and knowledge of this program among the staff" and looks forward to growing Huron's program, especially its international mindedness component.