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RESEARCH SUMMARY

Postsecondary Enrollment Patterns of IB Certificate and Diploma Candidates from International High Schools

Based on a research report prepared for the IB by

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. This process of preparing educated world citizens goes beyond a high school diploma. Given the increasingly complex demands of today's global economy, IB is also interested in preparing students to successfully enter and complete college.

To this end, the IB research department requested data from the National Student Clearinghouse of IB certificate and diploma candidates from U.S. high schools as well as high schools outside of the U.S and who subsequently enrolled in U.S. postsecondary institutions. SRI International was commissioned to analyze the data sources shown in table 1 to examine whether IB's goal of providing rigorous preparation for college is reflected in high college attendance, achievement and completion rates.

This report summarizes the findings pertaining to 1,919 IB certificate and diploma candidates who completed high school outside the U.S. in 2001 or 2002 and who subsequently enrolled in U.S. postsecondary institutions.

	IB Data	National Student Clearinghouse	2005 Carnegie Classifications	IPEDS
Data elements	Results on IB assessments, program type (i.e., certificate, diploma)	Enrollment dates, status (full/half time), degree earned, institution level (2/4 year)	Selectivity, size, undergraduate program focus	4- and 6-year graduation rates for U.S. postsecondary institutions
Year	2000 and 2001	2000-2008	Classifications based on data from 2003 and 2004	2001 cohort

Table 1: Data sources¹

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

General demographics

1. IB students from high schools outside of the U.S. who enrolled in U.S. postsecondary institutions were observed to be a very high-achieving group.
 - On average, these students took 5.2 IB exams, with a mean score of 5.4 (as compared to the global mean of approximate 4.7). 75% of these students were diploma candidates, nearly all of whom earned the IB diploma.
 - 60% of diploma candidates from these high schools scored 6 or higher on 3 or more IB exams.

¹ The IB data on cohorts are defined by students who took IB exams in 2000 and 2001; students who took IB courses but did not take any IB exams are excluded from the analysis.

2. Almost half (47%) of these IB students from high schools outside the U.S. who came to the U.S. for postsecondary studies identified as American².

Enrollment patterns

1. The majority of these IB students from high schools outside of the U.S. who chose to enter U.S. postsecondary institutions enrolled in selective 4-year institutions.
 - 84% of these IB students enrolled full time at a 4-year institution.
 - 68% enrolled at an institution classified as *more selective*.
2. Of IB diploma candidates who scored 6 or higher on 3 or more exams, 17% enrolled in small arts and sciences colleges classified as *more selective*, and 48% enrolled in research universities classified as *more selective*.

Graduation rates

1. The IB students included in this analysis reported very high graduation rates. Diploma recipients had the highest graduation rate, followed by certificate candidates and then diploma non-recipients.
 - 75% of diploma recipients graduated from college within 4 years of enrollment, and 86% graduated within 6 years.
 - 55% of certificate candidates graduated within 4 years, and 80% within 6 years.
 - The small group of diploma non-recipients—students who attempted but did not complete the IB diploma—had a 4-year graduation rate of 41%, and a 6-year graduation rate of 66%.
2. 81% of the highest achieving IB students from high schools outside of the U.S. – those who scored a 6 or 7 on 3 or more exams—graduated within 4 years of enrolling in college in the U.S., and 91% graduated within 6 years.
3. IB students who enrolled in *small arts and sciences colleges* and *research universities* reported high 4-year graduation rates of 78% and 73% respectively.
4. At the 25 postsecondary institutions with the highest number of enrollments from IB students included in the analysis, reported institutional graduation rates were generally very high, and in many cases the IB student graduation rates exceeded these already-high institutional rates.
 - In 13 of the 24 postsecondary institutions included in the analysis³, the 4-year institution-wide graduation rates were 80% or higher. At 8 of these 13 institutions, the 4-year IB student graduation rate for IB students was approximately the same or even higher than the institutional average.

² These students had U.S. listed as their first or second nationality in the IB student dataset.

³ These represent postsecondary institutions with higher enrollments from IB students.

- Moreover, at 14 of the 25 postsecondary institutions included in the analysis, the 4-year IB student graduation rate exceeded the institutional average by at least 2 percentage points. More specifically, at 3 of these 14 institutions, the 4-year IB student graduation rate exceeded the institutional average by more than 20 percentage points.
- At only 3 of the 24 postsecondary institutions included in the analysis was the 4-year IB student graduation rate less than the institutional average by more than 3 percentage points (in no cases was it more than 9 points).

SOME LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study go some length to validate the rigor of IB exams and diploma requirements, particularly in terms of successful U.S. college enrollment and completion specific to IB students who completed their high school outside of the U.S.

It is important to note, however, that the design of this study does not permit claims about whether students achieved these postsecondary enrolment and achievement outcomes as a direct result of their engagement with the IB curriculum. For instance, in comparing college enrollment and graduation rates of certificate and diploma students, the extent to which the rates observed are directly attributable to students' participation in the IB curriculum cannot be clearly determined, as these rates may also reflect the differential achievement and motivation of students who chose to attempt the full Diploma Programme rather than enroll in a few IB courses. In similar vein, when comparing enrollment and graduation rates of students who performed at different levels in the IB curriculum—whether comparing diploma candidates who did and did not successfully earn the IB diploma or comparing students who performed at different levels on IB exams—the results do provide validation for the rigor of the IB exams and the diploma requirements; however, it is not known if students who performed higher in the IB programme also started IB with higher level of preparation and achievement.

Despite these limitations, it is noteworthy that the overall postsecondary enrollment patterns and graduation rates for the 2000 and 2001 cohorts of IB diploma and certificate students from high schools outside of the U.S. compare favorably with institutional averages for a majority of the comparative analyses. Additionally, it can be inferred that the *selective* and *more selective* institutions included in this study do acknowledge performance within the IB as an acceptable standard by which to admit students. These findings lend some empirical support to the fact that IB is achieving its goal of providing its students, in this case from outside of the U.S., with rigorous preparation for college success, as reflected in the high college attendance, achievement and completion rates.

This summary was developed by the IB Research Department. A copy of the full report prepared by SRI International is available here:

<http://www.ibo.org/research/programmevalidation/index.cfm>. For more information on this study or other IB research, please email research@ibo.org.