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RIPPOWAM MIDDLE SCHOOL EARNS INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE AUTHORIZATION

(September 20, 2010) The International Baccalaureate has authorized Rippowam Middle School as a three-year programme (levels 1, 2, and 3) to offer the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (MYP), and refer to itself as an IB World School, effective immediately.

The authorization process began two years ago when a pilot group of four sixth grade teachers began to experiment with the framework and principles behind the Middle Years Programme of the International Baccalaureate School. Rippowam's IB coordinator, Angela Schumann, wrote a comprehensive curriculum based on the requirements of the IB programme.

"I'm very proud of the leadership of Principal George Giberti, his administrative team, and the teachers at Rippowam," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joshua Starr. "They have embraced the IB programme and its focus on 21st century knowledge and skills and I'm thrilled that we are able to offer this type of education in Stamford."

George Giberti commended faculty members John Carrigan and Angela Schumann in particular for their efforts, along with pilot staff members James Stanton, Megan McGrath, Mary Ann Pasqua, and Michael Sapia. "We are creating goals for our school's future, and these goals will ultimately affect the structuring of our entire school," he said, adding, "We are attempting to bring about adaptive change at Rippowam while incorporating the frameworks of the International Baccalaureate."

Rippowam's MYP will follow the standards and practices that apply to all IB World Schools. The MYP academically challenges students to understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and to become critical and reflective thinkers. The programme consists of eight subject groups integrated through five areas of interaction that provide a framework for learning within and across the subjects. Students are required to study their mother tongue, a second language, humanities, sciences, mathematics, arts, physical education and technology. In the final year of the programme, students also engage in a personal project, which allows them to demonstrate the understandings and skills they have developed throughout the programme.

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Currently, there are a total of 319 Rippowam students in the MYP. The program is currently offered to students who live in Rippowam's attendance zone. There is a lottery application process for admission managed by the Stamford School district's central office and students are randomly selected using balanced population criteria from the district lottery process. In the spring, incoming fifth graders may apply for admission into the school's lottery.

Rippowam's MYP pilot teachers offered a final word on the authorization: "We are ecstatic upon receipt of our I.B. authorization. It is particularly amazing to us, that after only two years we were fully authorized as an IB WORLD SCHOOL. We are fortunate to be at the forefront of such a successful and globally recognized program."

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Rippowam Middle School is the second school in the Stamford Public School district to earn IB authorization. In 2005, Rogers International School, an interdistrict magnet school, was also authorized as an IB World School.