

# **RIVERHILLS ELEMENTARY**

## **2024-2025 STUDENT HANDBOOK**



# 2024-2025 Riverhills Elementary Policies and Procedures



**Student Early Release – Each Monday is a one hour early release**  
- Last day of school: 2.5 hours early

Please use the following link to check for updates to the Hillsborough County School District calendar. [Hillsborough County Public Schools / District Calendar \(hillsboroughschools.org\)](https://hillsboroughschools.org)

## School Hours

**Students:** Monday: 8:45 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday: 8:45 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

**Teachers:** Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

**Office:** Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

### *Vision Statement:*

Empowering children to make  
a better future.



### *Mission Statement:*

To provide meaningful  
opportunities which develop  
lifelong learners who are globally  
minded citizens through  
reflection, action and inquiry.

**Riverhills Elementary School is an International Baccalaureate Magnet school. All students are selected through the School Choice procedures of Hillsborough County Public Schools. As part of the acceptance to a Choice school, all students, parents, guardians, etc. are required to follow the district's policy for behavior, attendance, tardiness, and civility. Please read and discuss the below Statement of Understanding and Reasons for Revocation with your student(s).**

### **Statement of Understanding: School Choice**

The approval of School Choice and Choice Hardship is a courtesy granted by the School Board of Hillsborough County with the understanding that students will maintain appropriate behavior, attendance, and timeliness and that all parties will honor the school district's Civility guidelines. Parents receiving approval for Choice Hardship are required to provide transportation to and from the requested school. All parents and students are advised that School Choice and Choice Hardship may be revoked by Principals, at anytime, if established standards of conduct, attendance, tardiness, and civility are not maintained.

### **Reasons for Revocation of School Choice**

- **Student Change-of-Placement:** A student change-of-placement will result in revocation of school choice and choice hardship
- **Violation of Level One-Zero Tolerance Offense**
- **Violation of Level Two-Major Offense:** A student violation of either Level One-Zero Tolerance or Level Two-Major Offense may result in revocation of school choice and choice hardship
- **Student Conduct:** Three (3) referrals for misconduct may generate a warning letter to parents for possible revocation of school choice and choice hardship. Subsequent absence may result in revocation of school choice and choice hardship.
- **Student Tardies:** Five (5) tardies to school within a grading period may generate a warning letter to parents for possible revocation of school choice and choice hardship. Subsequent tardies may result in revocation of school choice and choice hardship.
- **Student Pick-Up:** Continued failure by a parent to pick-up a child from school at the designated dismissal time may result in a revocation of choice hardship.
- **Attendance:** Five (5) absences from school within a grading period may generate a warning letter to parents for possible revocation of school choice and choice hardship. Subsequent absence may result in revocation of school choice and choice hardship.
- **Civility:** Failure on the part of the student or parent to abide by the Hillsborough County School Board's Civility Policy may result in the revocation of school choice and choice hardship.
- **Submission of fraudulent, false, misleading information:** The submission of fraudulent, false, or misleading information on School Choice and Choice Hardship applications may result in revocation of the School Choice and Choice Hardship.
- **Appeals:** Appeals for Revocation of School Choice and Choice Hardship are processed through the Hillsborough County School Board's established Grievance Procedure.

### **Riverhills Policies and Procedures**

**The below policies and procedures are vital to ensuring your student receive the best education in a caring and safe environment. Again, please read and discuss with your student(s).**

#### **Attendance Policy**

To fully benefit from the instructional program, students are expected to attend school regularly, be on time for classes, stay for the entire school day and satisfy all the course requirements. Poor attendance, excessive tardiness, or excessive times of leaving before the end of the school day may result in low or failing grades. Riverhills Elementary has a school goal of having 96% of our students in attendance every day. Please make the attendance of your child a priority. Parents are advised that School Choice may be revoked at any time if students do not meet behavior and attendance standards established by schools. See above School Choice information.

You are encouraged to provide enough time in the mornings for your child to be on time. Students should arrive to school between 8:15 a.m. – 8:40 a.m. There are no adults on duty prior to 8:15 a.m. Do not leave your child unattended prior to 8:15 a.m.

When a student is absent, for any reason, the parent must call the school on or before the day of the absence. Riverhills has a 24-hour phone number **987-6911, option #1** for reporting. Please report your child's absence no later than 8:30 a.m. the day of the absence. When calling the attendance line, please share the following:

"This is \_\_\_\_\_. My child \_\_\_\_\_ is in grade \_\_\_\_\_. His/her teacher is \_\_\_\_\_.  
He/she is absent because \_\_\_\_\_ and will return to school on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). I can  
be reached at \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number) for verification if needed."

You must call the attendance line to report your child’s absence. **Reporting the absence to your child’s teacher is not the same as reporting it to the attendance line.**

During the 2024-2025 school year, the following will be regarded as an excused absence:

- A. Personal illness of the student - A student who has demonstrated a pattern of absences due to illness may be required to present medical verification to the principal.
- B. Court appearance of the student
- C. Medical appointment of the student - A note from a health care provider may be required
- D. An approved school activity - Absences will be recorded but not reported.
- E. Emergencies that are acceptable to the principal
- F. Other absences as approved by the principal  
A written request from the parent/legal guardian is submitted to the principal at least three days prior to the date of absence. The parent will be notified of the decision.
- G. Attendance at a center under Children and Families Services supervision
- H. Accident resulting in injury to the student
- I. Significant community events with prior permission of the principal  
When more than one school is involved, the Area Superintendent will determine the status of the absence.
- J. Observance of an established religious holiday
- K. Death of a close relative

Absences not included in the excused absences listed above are considered unexcused.

- A daily computer generated phone call will be made if your student arrives after the 8:45 a.m. bell.
- A computer generated phone call will be made to the parent when the student accumulates 5 absences throughout the year.
- Students who are absent more than 5 days in a marking period will receive a check mark on the Report Card.
- A referral will be made to the Child Study Team (CST) when a student accumulates 10 or more absences throughout the school year.
- Students who are excessively absent, tardy or leaving early will be tracked. Parents will be contacted and a conference will be scheduled.
- All absences, tardies and early dismissals will be considered unexcused unless the school is notified by phone, in person or by note.

**Bus Discipline/Information**

Students riding a school bus are required to comply with appropriate bus behavior rules at all times. Students are not allowed to bring glass containers or animals of any kind on the bus. Parents will be notified of behavior problems that occur on the school bus. Continued disruptive behavior will result in suspension of the student’s bus riding privileges.

Bus Rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Follow the bus driver’s directions.</li><li>• Remain seated in your assigned seat.</li><li>• Follow safety procedures and wear seatbelts, when available.</li><li>• Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself.</li><li>• No prohibited school items are allowed on the bus.</li></ul>
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**Questions or concerns pertaining to buses should be directed to the district Transportation Department at 982-5569. Please take a moment to program this number into your cell phone.**

**Car Riders / Walker Procedures**

Students that are transported by private automobiles in the afternoon must be picked up at dismissal time. Failure to pick up students on time causes undue anxiety and difficulty for all concerned. **Please be prompt.** For maximum safety of each student, the following procedures must be followed:

➤ **Morning Drop off Procedures:**

Just a reminder, we are a closed campus. **All students must enter campus using the EAST side gate.** Student car drop-off is on the East side of the school. Enter the campus from Riverhills Dr. and remain in the single file traffic lane. Students must exit the vehicle using the left side door only once you are in the drop off area and stopped.

**Do not let students out of the car on Riverhills Dr. - this is not a drop-off and is unsafe.**

➤ **Afternoon Pick Up Procedures:**

1. Car pick-up is on the East side of the school. Enter the campus from Riverhills Dr. and remain in the single file traffic lane for dismissal. Display "Pick Up Tag" in window. Students will be loaded into the cars as they pull forward.
2. Walkers are dismissed via the gate on the WEST side of the school by the Pre-K playground/community playground. Park in designated parking spaces ONLY at the community park. Do NOT park in the spaced designated for boats as you may be towed. Walk to the pick-up point with hang tag in hand. Students will NOT be sent to parked cars.

**For maximum safety of ALL students, please remember the following during the morning and afternoon.**

- Parents driving through the car line to pick up students should have Pick Up Tag visible for students to be called to the car.
- Drop off & pick up in the designated area only
- Always let students out and load on the left side of the vehicle
- Drive slowly and do not exceed 5 m.p.h.
- Be patient and courteous
- Always pull all the way forward to maximum the effectiveness of this process

**IMPORTANT!**

For safety reasons, parents WILL NOT be able to park anywhere near the bus ramp. There is ample space in the parking lot for parents to park should you choose to walk your child(ren) across safely.

**\*\*Pick up Tags will be available in the front office when needed\*\***

**Cell Phone Policy**

**Civility**

In order to provide a safe, caring and orderly environment, Hillsborough County Public Schools expects Civility from ALL who engage in school activities. Mutual respect, professionalism and common courtesy are essential qualities that ALL need to demonstrate in promoting an educational environment free from disruptions, harassment, bullying and aggressive actions.

**Unacceptable Behaviors include:**

- Behaviors which interfere with or threaten to interfere with school activities
- Using loud offensive language or profanity
- Intimidating, harassing, bullying and inappropriate display of temper
- Threatening verbal or physical harm
- Threatening, abusive, or obscene telephone conversations, written communication, electronic mail or voice mail

## **Communication**

One of our goals is to communicate with parents regarding their child's academic progress and behavior, as well as keeping the lines of communication open between the home and school. Some of the ways the staff and parents will meet this goal includes:

- Student planner (students should write assignments and due dates; also used for parent/teacher written communication)
- Interim Reports will be sent home mid-nine weeks for students who need improvement in academics and/or behavior
- Report Cards will be available to parents via Edsby at the end of each nine weeks [Hillsborough County Public Schools \(reportcards.sdhc.k12.fl.us\)](https://reportcards.sdhc.k12.fl.us)
- Daily/weekly/or monthly reports may be sent home from teachers
- PTA meetings and FLN: Family Learning Nights will be held throughout the year, etc.

## **Conferences**

Conferences are an effective means to communicate with your child's teacher. We ask that you arrange conferences with the teacher prior to and after the student day. Please call ahead for a conference so that it can be scheduled at a convenient time for all.

## **Discipline/Rules/Expectations/Zero Tolerance Policy**

Students are expected to observe all school rules and to behave in a respectful manner to teachers, staff members, bus drivers and fellow students. Many interventions are used at our school to help students demonstrate appropriate interactions and assist them in making correct choices. We make every effort to contact you when your child has been involved in a severe behavior incident. Our staff has high expectations regarding the behavior of our students. Misbehavior at the bus stop, on the school bus, on school grounds, or at school related activities may result in time out, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension or other appropriate consequences. Parents, please take an active role in speaking with your child today about appropriate behavior while they are not under your supervision.

## **District Student Code of Conduct**

The district student handbook can be found on the district website → [Student Code of Conduct - Welcome - Hillsborough County Public Schools \(hillsboroughschools.org\)](https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/student-code-of-conduct)

## **Early Release of Students**

We encourage you to schedule your child's doctor and other appointments after school hours. Early release of students is very disruptive to the student involved, as well as all the other students and school personnel. If this is not possible, the child must be signed out in the main office. For your child's safety, he/she will only be released to authorized individuals that are listed on the student's Emergency Card. If there is no other alternative and **you must sign your child out early, please do so 30 minutes prior to dismissal as there will be NO dismissals permitted after this time.** Special instructions on who may or may not pick up your child must be submitted in writing to the office. If legal documents, such as custody papers support your request, they should also be submitted.

## **Emergency Card**

An emergency card will be sent home the first day of school. Please update any pre-printed information that is incorrect and complete all blank spaces. **Please update these cards throughout the school year as information changes.** In the event of an emergency, it is important for us to make contact with you or your designee. Remember to sign and date the card. Only names listed on the emergency card may sign children out from school, if more space is needed for emergency contacts, please use the back of the card. All others will require parent permission prior to release of the child. A driver's license or state ID will be required for any person, including parents, to sign a child out of school.



### **Fundraising Activities**

Throughout the year, our school may participate in several fundraising activities. The money raised from these activities will be used to support educational activities/materials for students. To promote the safety of all children, Hillsborough District policy does not allow “door to door” selling. We feel that it is important that the school and home work together to ensure the safety of every child.

### **Health Concern**

Please notify our health assistant and your child’s teacher of any special health problems with your child. Some conditions require a physician’s statement; please refer to the student handbook for more information.

### **Illness or accident at school:**

In case of illness or accident at school, parents will be notified immediately. No child with a fever will be allowed to remain at school nor will they be allowed to be transported on the school bus. The school clinic is not equipped or staffed to handle ill children for long periods of time. Emergency telephone contact numbers must be up to date to ensure we may contact you in the event of illness, accident, or emergency. Please contact the school to update your child’s Emergency Card whenever you have new information to add for yourself or your emergency contacts.

### **Medication Administration Guidelines**

These are established by the School Health Services per Florida Statute 232.46.

Authorized school personnel will assist students in the administration of prescription(s) when the following conditions have been met:

- Only prescription medication will be administered at school.
- Over-the-counter medication WITHOUT orders from the physician are NOT permitted.
- Cough drops are not permitted.
- Over-the-counter or sample medication must be accompanied by orders from the physician. Without these orders, the medication will be returned to an adult and will NOT be administered.
- Parents must deliver the medication to the school office in the container it was purchased. At no time should a child transport medication of any kind.
- Parent authorization forms must be completed in order for the student to take medication.

### **Photograph/Video Consent and Web Site Release**

At our school, there may be instances in which pictures/videos are taken of our students while they are engaged in activities in their learning environment. Sometimes these pictures/videos are used for photo and slide presentations to students, staff and parents. At other times, we have requests for student activity pictures/video from the news media. In such cases, pictures/videos are released only in accordance with the Hillsborough County School Policy.

### **Personal Property**

Please label your child’s clothing (jackets, sweaters, lunch boxes & back packs) so they will be easily identified if misplaced. The school is not responsible for personal items, including toys, money, games, calculators, etc. Please return any found merchandise to the front office. Any item not claimed after 90 days will be given to a local charity in the area.

Candy, gum, toys, radios, MP3 Players/Gameboys/Ipods, fanny packs, skateboards and trading cards, etc. should not be brought to school. Possession of these items may lead to disciplinary action. Students shall not possess, handle or transmit weapons including guns, knives, razor blades, ice picks, explosives, chains, pipes, brass knuckles, Billy clubs, Chinese stars, mace, tear gas, any type of shocking toy, etc. or any dangerous instruments such as toy guns/knives or anything that resembles or could be considered a weapon on school grounds. This is to include possession of such items up to 500 yards within school grounds, on school buses, at school bus stops or at school related activities. Possession of weapons is a major violation of the Code of Conduct and will lead to suspension and/or expulsion from school.

### **SAC – School Advisory Council**

Every school has a School Advisory Council, which is comprised of members from all stakeholder groups. The role of SAC is to: conduct an annual needs assessment, develop a plan and budget based on that assessment, implement the plan through timely reports, and revise the plan on the basis of either the success or lack of success of the original plan activities. SAC generally meets once a month to conduct their business and report on the progress being made on the various targeted activities. If you are interested in being involved with the School Advisory Council, please complete the enclosed SAC interest form.

### **School and Breakfast Lunch Program**

Riverhills Elementary will continue participation in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) option for the 24-25 school year. All students enrolled at Riverhills Elementary Magnet School may participate in the breakfast and lunch program at NO CHARGE and without a meal benefits application.

### **School Uniform Policy**

Riverhills Elementary has a mandatory School Uniform Policy. The basic school uniform will consist of khaki/navy/black shorts, pants, skirt, skort or jumper and collared polo-style (long or short sleeves) in white/red/navy. Shoes shall be worn and be securely fastened to the feet and must be closed toed. Footwear must be suitable for outdoor physical education classes. Jackets and hoodies are to be white/red/navy in color and have NO logo on them.

Research supports that a uniform dress code focuses the student on the learning process, provides a sense of pride and belonging, emphasizes education & not fashion, sets the tone of the school family, and saves time and money in buying school clothing. No student shall be denied participation in the school dress code policy due to financial hardship. If such a situation exists, please contact the school office.

### **Student Internet Access Permission**

Access to the Internet is designed solely for educational purposes and Hillsborough County Public Schools has taken reasonable precautions to supervise Internet usage and to filter inappropriate information. Students must be responsible users and violators will be punished. Please keep in mind that Internet related lessons provide valuable reference and research skills that would benefit your child's education. Our county has very strong security programs which will not allow users to access questionable or unacceptable websites.

### **Tardy Policy**

We realize that there will be instances when your child may be tardy, but please avoid this from happening whenever possible. Tardiness interrupts not only your child's instructional time but that of all the other students and the teacher in the classroom. **At 8:45 a.m., if your child is not in his/her classroom seat then your child is tardy and must be signed in by an adult at the front office.**

### **Textbook and Library Book Information**

Students are responsible for damage or loss of library books or textbooks assigned to them. Students who lose or damage school books or school property will be required to pay for the damage or replacement cost of the item.

### **Visitors**

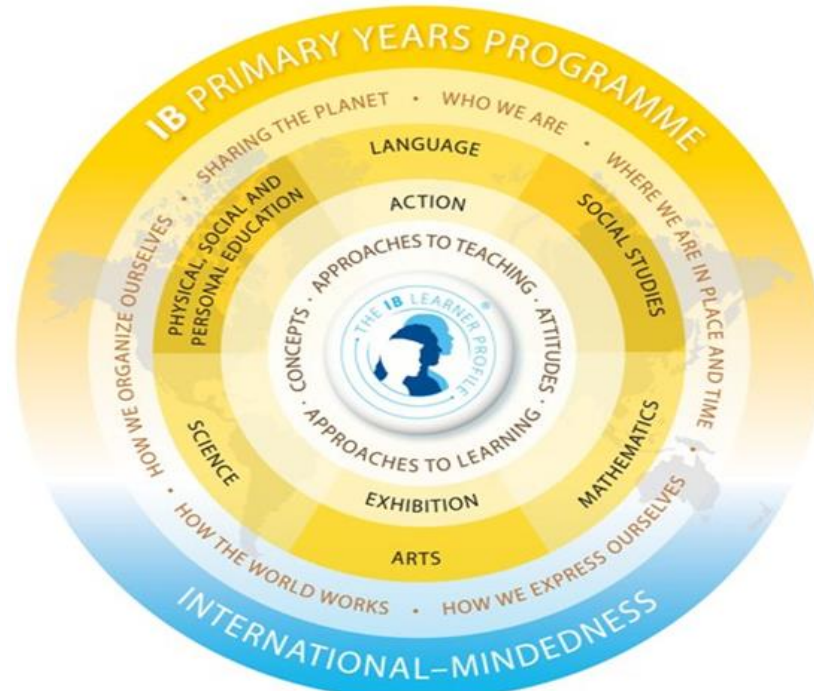
All visitors to our campus must sign in on the computer in the front office upon arrival with a government issued photo identification, wear a visitor's badge while on campus and sign out upon departure. Hillsborough County Public Schools has a policy in place stating that visitors must be identified while on school grounds. Visitors must receive approval from the principal in advance to observe in a classroom. Instructional time is valued and visitations cannot take away from learning time nor can teachers stop classroom activities to hold a parent conference.

### **Volunteers**

For our children's safety, all volunteers and community partners must complete or reactivate the online Volunteer Application each school year. The application is located online at [Volunteer Services / Overview \(hillsboroughschools.org\)](https://www.hillsboroughschools.org/volunteer-services/overview). Please make sure you allow 2 weeks for your application to be processed so that you are cleared to be a volunteer. **Your application must be approved before you may start volunteering on campus, chaperoning fieldtrips, assisting in classrooms or eating lunch with your student.**

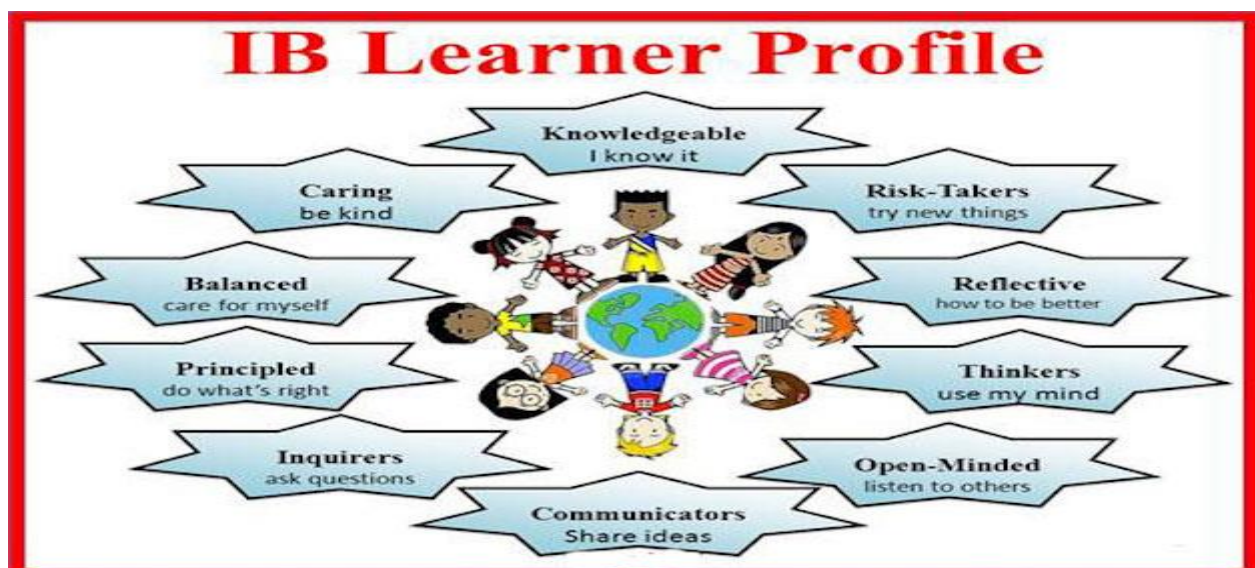


# PYP At Riverhills Elementary Magnet



## What Is IB?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is recognized as a global leader offering a continuum of high quality international educational programmes to students aged 3 to 19. The Primary Years Programme, one of four, is designed for students aged 3 to 12. It focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world. It is a framework guided by six transdisciplinary themes of global significance, explored using knowledge and skills derived from six subject areas, as well as transdisciplinary skills, with a powerful emphasis on inquiry. IB students learn to embrace their own cultures and are open and responsive to other cultures and views. At the heart of all of four programmes is the IB Learner Profile. The Learner Profile is the IB mission statement in action and provides a set of learning behaviors (attributes) which aims to inspire, motivate and focus students, teachers and the entire IB School community, uniting them in a common purpose.



## **What Does PYP Look Like At Riverhills Elementary Magnet School?**

Riverhills Elementary Magnet School has been an authorized IB World School since 2016. Our teachers and staff are committed to the mission of the International Baccalaureate Organization to provide an international education through programmes that have been developed using experiences and expertise from across the world. What distinguishes the learning environment of Riverhills Elementary Magnet IB to the apart from a neighboring schools is our approach to teaching and learning. The approaches are centred on a cycle of inquiry, action and reflection—an interplay of asking, doing and thinking—that informs the daily activities of teachers and learners.

## **What Can Parents Expect?**

An IB education fosters international-mindedness by helping students reflect on their own perspective, culture and identities, as well as those of others. By engaging with diverse beliefs, values and experiences, and by learning to think and collaborate across cultures and disciplines, IB learners gain the understanding necessary to make progress towards a more peaceful world. All IB programmes require students to study, or study in, more than one language. This is because we believe that communicating in more than one language helps students to appreciate that his or her own language, culture and world view are just one of many. International-mindedness is also encouraged through a focus on global engagement and meaningful service with the community. These elements challenge students to critically consider power and privilege, and to recognize that they hold this planet and its resources in trust for future generations. They also highlight the focus on action in all IB programmes: a focus on moving beyond awareness and understanding to engagement, action and bringing about meaningful change to make a more peaceful and sustainable world for everyone.

## **How Can Parents Become Involved?**

IB emphasizes the importance of making connections, exploring the relationships between academic disciplines, and learning about the world in ways that reach beyond the scope of individual subjects. They also focus on offering students authentic opportunities to connect their learning to the world around them. Throughout the year, students will be engaged in units of inquiry. There will be a variety of ways for families to become involved at Riverhills and connect our students to their local and global communities. These opportunities would include but not limited to: serving as a speaker or mentor; participating in a grade level service learning project/5<sup>th</sup> Grade Exhibition, volunteering as a chaperone, hosting a educational booth at our annual multicultural celebration (RiverFest), and supporting inquiry at home. In addition, please consider joining our PTA or SAC.

## **IB Mission Statement**

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right To learn more, visit: [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)