



# HEADLINES

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## Success is no accident

It is not often that we start out a new school year by looking backwards, but sometimes, a little reflection on the past can have a great and positive impact on the future.

Two weeks ago, I got a late night phone call from Julia Watson our MYP Division Head. She was bursting with the news that we had just been informed that every one of our M5 graduates from last June had been awarded International Baccalaureate MYP Certificates. This was the first time in Somersfield's relatively short IB history that we have hit this target.

Included in the mix were individual scores that were higher than ever before, top ranking marks in high level extended Mathematics, and a series of commendations on outstanding student personal projects.

So, what does all of this mean?

To begin with, universal success in meeting the IB's exacting international standards is no small accomplishment. In order to graduate, not only must our students have their work sent to the IB in Cardiff for validation; but our teachers must submit their assignments, rubrics, and sample assessments to ensure that the demands that they are placing on our students are rigorous enough and that our evaluation is accurate and conforms to IB's benchmarks. That is why, after submitting our students' final assessments in June, we had to wait over two months to find out how they actually did.

At the end of August, when IB coordinator Jeneba O'Connor received the word of our success from IB, it sparked not just a celebration of the accomplishments of fifteen exceptional young people, but was also a validation of the hard work and dedication of their teachers as well.

So, why was this year any different from the past?

The reason, was a result of the reflection that I mentioned at the outset. Last September the MYP faculty sat down and discussed what they could do to ensure that all of our

students made the grade.

MYP teachers at all levels, and not just in M5 made a commitment to support, coach, encourage, nag, harass—you name it—to do anything it took to keep our students focused, productive and successful. And it worked! But, this is another school year, and so, last week after we finished patting ourselves on the back, the staff sat down again to assess what we could do even better this year!

Somersfield has a well-established and highly deserved reputation for its outstanding programme of Montessori education. Building on that solid base has been the on-going goal of our Middle School programme and we are definitely getting there.

To be honest, when a school is full of bright, motivated students, whose families are so committed to their education that they are willing to make financial sacrifices to support them, to be much less than 100% successful is a breach of trust. Schools in Bermuda like ours with selective admissions, small classes, and bright kids should never be satisfied with success rates in the 70-75% range. Our students and their families deserve a better performance from their school than that.

September is my favourite time of year. Every child, teacher, and parent approaches the new school year with a sense of optimism and hope. The halls and classrooms are full of smiling and positive faces, laughter is everywhere, and everyone plunges into each lesson and task with a fresh sense of purpose and determination.

Our job as a school is to make every month September. To keep that positive attitude and love of learning alive and well through the darkest days of February and the hot and languid weeks of June.

Success in school, like life, is no accident. It requires a new commitment every single day. Last year's graduates showed us that it could be done.

Can the rest of us settle for any less?



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Back to School Barbeque!

September 24th

### Somersfield Golf Tournament

October 15th

### Budding Chef

October 16th