



Bridgeport International Academy

School Profile

Description

Bridgeport International Academy (BIA) is a private, nonsectarian, college preparatory, boarding and day high school with an international student body and faculty. Located adjacent to the seaside campus of the University of Bridgeport, the Academy offers a strong college preparatory curriculum for grades 9 through 12, with the opportunity for students to take college courses and use university facilities. The four pillars that form BIA's identity, mission, values, and climate are academic excellence, creativity, character development, and global citizenship.

Accreditation and Approvals

BIA is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), the nation's oldest accrediting body for public and independent schools, colleges and universities. BIA also has state approval as a nonpublic school by the State of Connecticut. In addition, the Academy has approval from the Department of Homeland Security of the U.S. government to issue I-20 forms in order for international students to obtain F-1 non-immigrant, student visas.

Enrollment

BIA has a diverse, coed student body with students from throughout the world and various states in the United States, as well as from the Bridgeport, CT area. In any given year, between one-third and 45 percent of the student body attends from nations outside the US. In the past four years, students have attended BIA from 18 countries in Asia, Australia, Africa, Europe, the Caribbean, Central America, Middle East, and South America.

Forty percent of the student body currently resides on campus, being housed in the boys and girls dormitories and thus part of a residential life program. Some students stay with a host family as part of the homestay program.

BIA is a small, selective school. Admission is competitive with entrance examinations, multiple recommendations, and demonstration of solid academic performance among the application components. Since 1997, eighteen classes consisting of 315 students have graduated from the Academy (as of May 30, 2017).

Curriculum

The BIA academic year consists of two semesters. BIA offers a challenging college preparatory curriculum, highlighted by the opportunity for qualifying students to take college courses in their junior and senior years. In addition, in order to support those international students who lack sufficient proficiency in English, BIA offers a specialized instruction program to develop English language competency to where such English Language Learners can fully participate in mainstream classes. BIA conducts midyear and final examinations in most subjects.

Accelerated Courses

Qualified juniors and seniors may take courses either at the University of Bridgeport (UB) or at Housatonic Community College (HCC). This is a dual credit system in which a student may receive credit simultaneously from college and from high school. The taking of college courses is noted on the high school transcript. College courses are available in lieu of AP or honors courses.

Graduation Requirements

Students must complete a minimum of 23 credits in order to graduate (24 credits for those graduating after 2018). Required courses include four years of English, three years of social studies, three years of mathematics, three years of science, and two years of a foreign language. A variety of electives are offered. One credit is the equivalent to a one-year course that meets 200 minutes per week.

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Grading

Grade point averages indicated at the end of the transcript are calculated on a 4.0 unweighted scale. (College course grades are not currently weighted on our high school transcripts.)

Grades are awarded according to the following scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent	Letter Grade	Percentage Equivalent
A	93 to 100	C-	70 to 72
A-	90 to 92	D+	67 to 69
B+	87 to 89	D	63 to 66
B	83 to 86	D-	60 to 62
B-	80 to 82	F	Below 60
C+	77 to 79		

Ranking

BIA does not rank students.

Community Service and Character Education

Preparing students for college is just one component of the BIA mission. BIA also places an emphasis on developing character, leadership, and an international perspective. All students attend nonsectarian and/or inter-religious character education classes. As a small school, administrators and teachers are able to provide individualized attention to the personal growth and maturity of each student, and students find available diverse opportunities to develop their leadership skills.

The Academy is international in its mission, core values, policies, learning environment, programs, activities, curriculum, leadership, faculty, staff, student body, global studies program, and culture and climate. It strives to advance cross-cultural, international, and inter-religious awareness and understanding.

Each student is required to perform a minimum of 75 hours of community service prior to graduation. Students have worked with Habitat for Humanity to help build houses, tutored at head start programs, volunteered in hospitals, visited homes for the elderly, assisted with local neighborhood cleanup projects, and so forth. Once a month, BIA makes available a school-wide community service project. These have been coordinated with early learning centers, a nonprofit specializing in building neighborhood gardens, the Beardsley Zoo, the Discovery Museum, the YMCA, the University of Bridgeport, and others.

Clubs and Activities

National Honor Society, Student Council, digital arts, fine arts, actors studio, music, band, drama, mentoring (at a nearby elementary/middle school), soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming, yearbook, dance, yoga, fishing, and other clubs and activities are available. The BIA drama department annually presents a major production (comedy, drama, musical), and the Connecticut Academy of Art and Design is an international art program developed by BIA.

Post-High School Education

Over the years, BIA has gained a growing reputation as an outstanding college preparatory school, preparing students for success both in college and in an increasing globalized world. BIA administrators and teachers provide personal attention in helping students with their career goals, often reaching not only beyond the classroom but even beyond graduation.

About 99 percent of graduates go on to college, including some of the finest universities in the United States and abroad. Many students also take a gap year to perform public service. SAT scores of BIA students are above the national and CT average, well above the averages in local public schools, and competitive with the best private schools in the area.