



Curriculum in a cage: MYP mandated

By MAYO OU AND CAROLINE WARREN
HEAD EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AND ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

With a simple vote, the fate of thousands of future CHS freshmen and sophomores was decided—and they didn't know it was happening.

On Monday, January 13, 2025, teachers at CHS held a vote on the future of the role of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB MYP) in most freshman and sophomore classes. Spoiler alert: they have made MYP classes mandatory.

The CUSD School Board decided that regardless of any backlash against MYP, El Roble and CHS must continue to teach MYP classes. The only question was to what extent the schools should become "MYP schools." Whereas El Roble is already on its path to having a wall-to-wall MYP program, the teachers decided the future of MYP at CHS just last month. In short, the teachers had three options. With a required vote of 55% or higher to select one option, they chose the third.

- 1) A cohort model, where students are either in MYP or not, and the curricula are strictly divided.
- 2) A blended model, where teachers teach both MYP and non-MYP classes during one period.
- 3) An MYP-titled model, where general freshman and sophomore classes are "MYP-titled" and taught with MYP teaching styles and rubrics.

When the Wolfpacket inquired about the specific percentages of votes for each option, Dr. Mitchell declined to provide exact statistics. However, a teacher shared the results: 12.3% voted for cohort, 27.4% voted for blended, and 60.3% voted for MYP-titled, a close win.

Based on these results, the teachers have decided that taking MYP classes is mandatory for all current and incoming freshmen. There are plenty of benefits to this. Carolyn Lee, who teaches AP and MYP Chemistry and a college-prep Anatomy class, administered the teacher vote.

"All students will receive collaboratively designed instructions the teachers are working together a lot more consistently," Lee said. "From what I've seen the last couple of years, I think it makes certain subjects easier to grasp and understand for students. But it's a change. Fact of the matter is, this is what our district is moving towards. So we had the 'freedom' of deciding what would be the best way to implement this."

Many teachers who voted for MYP courses did so because, although they might have preferred teaching only honors and regular classes, that option wasn't available, and teaching solely MYP became the next best alternative. While the majority may have voted in favor, the decision still has consequences for teachers opposed. Eric Tucker, who teaches general and AP Biology, spoke of the vote.

"Well, I am vehemently against forcing someone's ideology on someone else," Tucker said. "You're telling me how to think. You're telling me what to think, and you're telling me that my students should just fit into this nice little bubble of what MYP defines as a good student. And I think that's wrong to the core."

Essentially, all teachers who teach freshman and sophomore classes will be forced to teach and grade using MYP guidelines, whether they approve of them or not—the curriculum that teachers have relied on for years must be redone. A large controversy lies in the

fact that the vote included teachers who do not teach freshmen or sophomores and counselors who do not teach classes—all not affected, yet having the same input as the ones who are.

"I don't understand why teachers who support MYP want to force their colleagues to do it," Tucker said. "Why do you care if I do it or not? I've been teaching for 20 years and I'm a good teacher. Why do I need to do it your way?"

However, teachers are not the only ones who have mixed feelings. Rising discontent among students and parents has also been evident.

Freshman Pearl Haney heard about the vote before winter break. Having taken both MYP and non-MYP classes, she has found MYP courses less rigorous than others. She is now one of the leaders of a growing freshmen movement protesting the recent decision.

"We're all pissed off because we want it to be a choice," Haney said. "I have no problem with them offering, but I don't think everyone should be forced to take it. Even my friends who love MYP believe it should be a choice. They already got rid of the honors program, and now they're going to try to get rid of the regular program to give us all MYP stuff."

Haney has created a petition and a Google form, which has already received over 54 responses from CHS freshmen. They plan to attend one of the open-session CUSD school board meetings in early March, argue their case, and, if necessary, hold a peaceful protest.

The idea of going to the school board is not new, though. Last year, a group of parents tried to get answers from the board about the origins of MYP but were not met with the answers they were looking for. Padma Rangarajan, a parent of a current junior and eighth grader, explained her experience fighting against MYP.

"No one, none of them could even identify who had brought about the idea, who had come up with the idea in the first place," Rangarajan said. "So its very origins are very murky."

She then further elaborated that the lack of answers from the board has led to parents questioning CUSD education.

"We happen to know several people, several families with kids the same age, who have now opted to send their kids to private school," Rangarajan said. "And MYP is definitely one of the reasons that's pushed them to make that switch."

However, the school board may have decided to implement the new wall-to-wall MYP for the opposite reason. The rigorous IB Diploma Program for upperclassmen has historically attracted students from outside the district. Allison Evans, the IB coordinator, told the Wolfpacket that making CHS more of an IB school could further promote that.

"I think that Claremont is doing everything it can to be a destination district," Evans said. "I think the Diploma Program, Middle Years Program, and potentially even having a Primary Years Program is just a piece in our overall vision."

From protests calling for "M-Y-Please stop existing" to controversies over the voting process, from the impact on teacher curriculums to its influence on school enrollment, only time will tell how MYP will impact future CHS students.

What is MYP? Scan here!



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

art | Annabelle Brusky, Andrea Dorantes, & Samuel Kim

Petition for the right to choose MYP!



A dose of double-standards: Opinions page 3



Boyfriend™ for hire Satire page 10



Nominations shine at Golden Globes: A&E page 9



LaVar ball 3 for 3 Sports page 11



art | Isabelle Shie

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Claremont, California
Permit No. 303

Return Service Requested