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New study links participation in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme to college success among Chicago Public School students

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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University of Chicago study finds CPS students completing the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme are better prepared for college

Bethesda, Maryland, IB, March 22, 2012 – The University of Chicago study released today shows that Chicago Public School students enrolled in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) are 40 percent more likely to attend a four-year college, 50 percent more likely to attend a more selective college and significantly more likely to persist in four-year colleges for at least two years, compared to similar students who did not enroll in the IB Diploma Programme. The Diploma Programme is an academically challenging programme for students in their junior and senior years of high school.

This study looked at high achieving students in CPS high schools who graduated from 2003 through 2007. It included 1,888 students who enrolled in an IB cohort in the ninth grade, 62 percent of whom went on to enroll in the IB Diploma Programme in the eleventh grade. The DP students come from 12 neighborhood high schools, and are predominantly first-generation college students; 67% were female, 33% were male, 37% were African American, 38% were Latino, 14% were Asian/Pacific Islander, 15% were white, and 77% were eligible for free or reduced price lunch. The non-IB students in the study had the qualifications necessary to be eligible for the Diploma Programme.

IB students interviewed felt they were academically well-prepared to engage and succeed in college coursework and described strong analytical writing and math preparation, motivation, work habits, organization and time management as strengths. "The University of Chicago's research provides evidence for what we have known all along – that the Diploma Programme prepares students for college success," Drew Deutsch, Director of the IB Americas, said. "These findings have important implications for districts across the US interested in implementing IB programmes. We hope that this study will help policymakers and practitioners better understand how to successfully promote college readiness in high schools."

The report authors note that "never before in our work in Chicago have we seen coursework have an effect on college persistence. The fact that it has an effect two years after students graduate speaks to the kind of powerful impact the IB Diploma Programme can have on students' trajectories." Indeed, there is considerable cause for optimism about the power of the IB experience to prepare students with the skills necessary to thrive in college.

This study is part of the Chicago Postsecondary Transition project, a multi-year research project tracking the post-high school experiences of successive cohorts of graduating CPS seniors.

The complete study, and others on the impact of the IB programmes, can be downloaded at: www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/diploma/.

About the International Baccalaureate

The International Baccalaureate is a not-for-profit foundation, which offers four high quality and challenging educational programmes for a worldwide community of schools. For over 40 years, IB programmes have gained a reputation for their high academic standards, for preparing students for life in a globalised 21st century, and for helping to develop the citizens who will create a better, more peaceful world. The IB currently works with over 3,353 schools in 141 countries. To learn more, please visit www.ibo.org/iba.