

The Pan American School of Bahia

Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) Guide

For the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program

December 2013

PASB Mission Statement

The Pan American School of Bahia prepares students to face challenges as confident, principled global citizens. Our outstanding American and Brazilian programs, offered in a safe and nurturing environment, empower students to reach their fullest potential.

PASB Beliefs Statement

As an International School Community:

- **We believe** that each student is a valued individual with unique intellectual, social, creative, emotional and physical qualities.
- **We believe** that students learn best in a nurturing multi-cultural community where achievements are recognized.
- **We believe** that students become life-long learners when they take charge of their own education and communicate effectively.
- **We believe** that highly qualified teachers and administrators who continuously develop and demonstrate their expertise are the foundation on which quality educational programs are built.
- **We believe** that a curriculum should challenge and inspire, creating authentic learning experiences that require students to synthesize new constructs and realities.
- **We believe** that an actively involved school community positively impacts learning..
- **We believe** that everyone has the right to a physically and emotionally safe environment.
- **We believe** that learning environments should empower students to be principled risk-takers.

PASB Values Statement

The spirit of community is greatly strengthened by shared values and common goals. Joining our school community means behaving in an ethical manner by accepting and supporting the following principles:

Kindness	Acting in a compassionate and caring manner; practicing courtesy and acceptance.
Integrity	Being consistently honest, principled and trustworthy.
Respect	Valuing diversity and the rights and opinions of others while treating them and one's environment with dignity.
Leadership	Embracing challenges with flexibility and creativity, persevering to positively influence change.
Responsible Stewardship	Being accountable to self, community, and the environment, managing resources effectively to build a sustainable future.
Collaboration	Working together constructively to achieve a common mission, objective, or goal.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization 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 IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

Knowledgeable They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

CAS

CAS is a framework for experiential learning, designed to involve students in new roles. The emphasis is on learning by doing real tasks that have real consequences and then reflecting on these experiences over time.

The experience and interaction is what counts, not hours. CAS is about real commitment, being involved with others, and giving of your time and talents. It provides a counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Program and provides a personal journey of self-discovery while being challenging and enjoyable.

Universities want to see a wide range of activities on your application. Students who are active in CAS gain a considerable advantage since they have solid documentation on a variety of activities, prove commitment to helping others, and include reflection and self-evaluation. CAS leads to maintaining a healthy range of activities in adult life.

Students undertake the CAS program throughout their junior and senior years with the expectation that each student will devote the about three to four hours per week during these two years. A minimum of 150 hours during the two years is required, with time distributed evenly among the three areas: creativity, action and service. You will keep track of your experiences and reflections in an electronic portfolio that your CAS coordinator will be monitoring.

Aims

CAS allows you to:

- Be a reflective thinker – you develop an understanding of your own strengths and limitations, you identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth
- Be willing to accept new challenges and new roles
- Be aware of yourself as a member of communities with responsibilities towards others and the environment
- Be an active participant in sustained, collaborative projects
- Be balanced – you will enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

The nature of creativity, action, service

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Program. The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

Creativity: arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Action: physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the Diploma Program.

Service: an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

CAS should involve:

- Real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- A personal challenge – tasks must extend you and be achievable in scope
- Thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting
- Reflection on outcomes and personal learning.

All proposed CAS activities must meet these four criteria. CAS activities must extend over a minimum of 18 months. Students may begin to accrue CAS hours beginning from the first day of school of their junior year. No activities prior to the start of the junior year may be counted for CAS.

CAS is required to be eligible for the IB diploma.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of your CAS experience as a whole, including your reflections, there should be evidence that you have:

1) Increased your awareness of your own strengths and areas for growth

You are able to see yourself as an individual with various skills and abilities, some more developed than others, and understand that you can make choices about how you wish to move forward.

2) Undertaken new challenges

A new challenge may be an unfamiliar activity, or an extension to an existing one.

3) Planned and initiated activities

Planning and initiation will often be in collaboration with others. It can be shown in activities that are part of larger projects, as well as in small student-led activities.

4) Worked collaboratively with others

Collaboration can be shown in many different activities. **At least one project involving collaboration and the integration of at least two of creativity, action and service is required.**

5) Shown perseverance and commitment in your activities

At a minimum, this implies attending regularly and accepting a share of the responsibility for dealing with problems that arise in the course of activities.

6) Engaged with issues of global importance

You may be involved in international projects but there are many global issues that can be acted upon locally or nationally. (For example, environmental concerns, caring for the elderly)

7) Considered the ethical implications of your actions

Ethical decisions arise in almost any CAS activity. Evidence of your thinking about ethical issues must be shown.

8) Developed new skills

As with new challenges, new skills must be shown in activities that you have not previously undertaken, or you must increase your expertise in an established area.

All eight outcomes must be present for you to complete the CAS requirement. Some may be demonstrated many times, in a variety of activities, but completion requires that you have **some** evidence for each outcome.

This focus on learning outcomes emphasizes that it is the quality of a CAS activity (its contribution to your development) that is most important. The

guideline for the minimum amount of CAS activity is approximately the equivalent of half a day per school week (three to four hours per week), with a reasonable balance between creativity, action and service. It is the experience and reflection upon the experience that counts. CAS is not a logging of hours exercise.

Responsibilities of the Student

The CAS program is your responsibility. You will receive guidance. However, the CAS experience is personal and only you can build a program that meets your needs. There are requirements that must be met.

You are **required** to:

- Self-review at the beginning of your CAS experience and set personal goals for what you hope to achieve through your CAS program.
- Plan, do and reflect (plan activities, carry them out and reflect on what you have learned).
- Communicate with the CAS coordinator throughout the process over 18 months. You should discuss your plans and progress at least monthly.
- Take part in a range of activities, **including at least one project involving teamwork, some of which you initiated. It must include two of the three CAS components (creativity, action, service).**
- Keep records of your activities and achievements, including a list of the principal activities undertaken.
- Show evidence of achievement of the eight CAS learning outcomes.

Guiding Questions for CAS Project Planning

- Is this activity a new role for me?
- Am I challenging myself?
- Is it a real task that I am going to undertake?
- Does it have real consequences for other people and for me?
- What do I hope to learn from getting involved?
- How can this activity benefit other people?
- What can I reflect on during this activity?
- Does this activity involve collaboration or teamwork?
- Will I develop any specific skills doing this project?

If you would like some ideas for student led projects browse through Do Something.org (www.dosomething.org) for some suggestions.

You may use the goal setting guide below to help you plan your specific project:

SMART Goal Guide

SPECIFIC

Have you answered as many of the six “W” questions as possible? Who? What? When? Where? Which? Why?

MEASURABLE

What concrete, measurable criteria will help you know whether you have reached your goal?

ATTAINABLE

How do you know this goal is attainable, yet challenging?

REALISTIC

Why are you both willing and able to work toward this goal?

TIMELY

What is the time-frame, including steps along the way, you need to follow in order to reach this goal?

ETHICAL

Does this activity further the goal of a more just society?

RECORDED

Is this activity evidenced in your CAS Portfolio or diary?

Planning

- Answer these questions:
- What do I plan to do? Describe your activity.
- Where will it occur?
- When will I participate?
- How will I be involved?
- Why am I going to be involved in this activity?
- What are my measurable goals?

Choosing an activity

- You must choose carefully considering the CAS guidelines presented in this Handbook.
- All activities must have new, measurable goals.
- You must learn new skills and meet new challenges.
- A project/activity must continue for a minimum of six weeks.
- Each project must be documented and verifiable.
- CAS is more than just volunteering. You must have a plan.

What isn't CAS

Donating clothes, or volunteering for activities without a plan or reflection, anything you get paid for, political activities which are divisive, a course for a grade, a religious activity involving only your own religion, a family responsibility, other activities deemed inappropriate by the CAS advisor. A CAS activity should be approved by your CAS advisor before you begin the activity.

Political activity

The IB has no view on whether or not it is appropriate for students to be involved in political activities as part of their educational experience. Views on this vary considerably in different cultural contexts, so it is a matter for decision at local or school level. However, where such activity is locally sanctioned, there is a question about whether or not it may qualify as CAS. It may be relevant to consider the following factors.

- Is the activity safe and secure, given the local circumstances?
- Is it an activity that will cause, or worsen, social divisions?
- Where are the learning opportunities for the students involved?

Religious activity

Some of the same concerns apply here as with political activity. For example, in some parts of the world religious observance is illegal in the school curriculum; in others it is compulsory.

It is recognized that this is a sensitive and difficult area. Nevertheless, the general rule is that religious devotion, and **any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing, does not count as CAS**. Some relevant guiding principles

are that CAS activities should enlarge students' experience, encourage them towards greater understanding of people from different social or cultural backgrounds and include specific goals. By these criteria, work done by a religious group in the wider community, provided that the objectives are clearly secular, may qualify as CAS.

Another key issue is whether students are able to make choices and use their initiative. In contrast, service (even of a secular nature) that takes place entirely within a religious community can at best only partially meet the aims and learning outcomes of CAS, so there would need to be evidence from students' other activities that all the required outcomes had been met.

CAS advisers who are faced with difficult questions in this area may find it helpful to ask students which of the CAS learning outcomes their proposed activity would meet, and how it might be possible to strengthen it in terms of CAS requirements. Activities may be very valuable to students as members of a religious community but nevertheless contribute little in terms of experiential learning.

Evaluation

The most important aspect of evaluation is your self-evaluation. You will be provided feedback on your progress by your CAS supervisor and offered advice on your activities. The school makes the final decision on your completion of CAS and reports the completion to the IB regional office. You **MUST** meet the minimum requirements in order to be eligible to receive the IB diploma.

Reflection

Reflection is a skill that must be developed. Just as the kind of reflection that a critic applies to a work of art or literature, it is something that develops with time and experience. It requires guidance and practice.

Guiding Questions for Reflections

(address at least 5 of the questions below in each reflection)

- Was this activity a new role for me?
- Did I challenge myself?
- Was this a real task that I undertook?
- Did this activity have real consequences for other people and for me?
- What did I learn from getting involved?
- How did this activity benefit other people?
- What new skills did I learn during this activity?
- What did this mean to me?
- Did I plan sufficiently for this activity? What were my strengths and weaknesses in planning this activity?
- To what extent did this activity involve collaboration or team work? What did I learn about working in a team?

- What did I learn from the activity and how might this learning be applied more widely?

Writing is only one possible way to reflect. You may also choose to make scrapbooks, photo essays, or web logs. You may use journals or other varied portfolios.

Recording and reporting

You must document your CAS activities, noting in particular reflections upon the experiences. This documentation may take many forms. Its extent should match the significance and depth of your involvement of the particular activity. You and your CAS Advisor will decide how to document your program.

Volunteer Resources

PASB has formed continuing relationships with several community organizations. Below are the names of the organizations and a description of the community service.

- Lar Harmonia Foundation and Creche Escola Teresa Cristina (Piatã): These entities serve 242 children from ages 2 to 12 year olds that live in Bairro da Paz. Our PASB students participate in weekly activities with these children. In groups of 30, they come to PASB for enrichment activities, such as reading, art and physical education. Our students go to their campus to teach English two times per week. For Christmas we provide shoes, clothes and a toy for each child and invite them to our school for a Christmas celebration. We take them on field trips in Salvador with PASB students as guides in an effort to have them learn about their community, such as a trip to Forte São Marcelo and to the Childrens Museum (located behind Colegio Anglo-Brasileiro). www.larharmonia.org.br
- Lar da Criança Orphanage (Lauro de Freitas): PASB students have worked with approximately 28 orphans in providing necessities and toys and spending time reading with them approximately four times per year.
- Ajuda Social a Criança Orphanage and Day Care Center (Itaigara): This orphanage serves approximately 27 orphans and 30 children as a day care center. PASB students regularly visit the orphanage, play with the children, donate toys and books and raised money at PASB. They were able to raise enough money to replace the broken playground equipment of this orphanage.
- Irmã Benedita Camurugi Orphanage (Baixa de Quintas): There are 42 children at this site with many needs that PASB has tried to address. The children have visited our campus on several occasions

and have been taken on a field trip to the Children's Museum.

www.larimabenedita.org

- Cidade da Luz (Patamares): This orphanage close to PASB takes care of approximately 48 children between the ages of 1 and 10. Our students have visited these children to read to them and play games.
- NACCI (Nucleo de Apoio ao Combate do Câncer Infantil) (Saude/Nazare): Our seventh and eighth graders have led a school wide campaign to collect receipts to benefit NACCI. They visited the NACCI which serves 45 children during their cancer treatment, played games with them donated food and clothing and R\$500 that they raised at PASB.
- Children of Haiti Project: National Honor Society has sponsored a Run for Haiti in to raise money for victims of the earthquake in Haiti.
- Community Service Trip to Jussari: During the Thanksgiving break in November, 15-20 PASB high school students travel to the interior of Bahia, to Jussari, to help needy communities there such as the municipal day care center or the public schools. Students also learn about the reality and challenges of this community by interviewing the mayor and other community leaders. Students are accompanied by 2-3 high school teachers.
- PASB Environmental Project: PASB runs an environmental project educating teenagers from our community about environmental issues. This takes place at PASB on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:00-5:00p.m. It is taught by Professora Neuza Aquino, our Brazilian program geography teacher.
- Habitat for Humanity: PASB students can participate in an annual community service trip to Recife to help in an project to build homes.

Bibliography

Creative, action, service guide: For students graduating in 2010 and thereafter
Vanguard High School CAS Guide