

IB programme expanding horizons

By Jackie Appell

There are many upcoming and recently passed events as well as newly instated ideas related to the IB Programme that are approaching our high school and community. They include a performance by the Buglisi Dance Theatre, new IB courses, and the IB parents group.

According to former high school English teacher Mrs. Schwan, the Buglisi Dance Theatre performed a three-part dance extravaganza exploring different musical genres and choreographic techniques in the Howard A. Schmock Auditorium on March 22nd. After being involved with the art and the “behind the scenes” of dance herself, Mrs. Schwan decided to bring this Theatre to our high school, “the first school where this extravaganza is taking place.” This event was sponsored by three IB school districts – Locust Valley, Northport, and Commack – and served to “encourage students to recognize the connections between their studies and the world of the performing arts” and, according to Mr. Buonaspina, “integrate students from all three schools and allow them to compare their schools’ IB academic programmes.”



Photo courtesy of Kristin Lodoen

Dance company performs: “Acapelorus” (A Walrus Tale) is one of Buglisi’s dances presented above.

According to senior Chris Louie, the performance was amazing. He says, “I liked how they portrayed their themes in their dance, and their movements were very expressive.”

Morgan Dalis stated that the music was cool. She stated that since it was in different movements inspired by different things, the many themes were expressed in a variety of ways.

Following the performance, the audience participated in a question-answer session during which students storm questions that deal with concepts such as the creative process, musical choices, the use of technology, lighting, scene arrangement, and careers in the performing arts.

As a finale, any students who had taken dance classes outside of school or are currently taking a performing arts course were allowed to volunteer to join the Buglisi Dance Theatre members on stage to learn and perform for their peers a small portion of their dance presentation.

After seeing the Theatre members perform at Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre in New York City, Mr. Buonaspina regarded them to be “a very talented and very riveting group of dancers.” Mrs. Schwan reflected that “modern dance is a form of art that most people do not recognize. However, it integrates many forms of media, and I want the students to get a taste of this.”

As a result of a desire for parents and other members of the school community to know more about the IB Programme, the IB Parents Group has been created. According to Mr. Buonaspina, it was formed in September when letters were sent to parents of IB students in 11th and 12th grade, notifying them of this group. It is now open to parents of students in 10th grade also. These parents meet monthly, and while they were initially just sharing information about the IB Programme, their present purpose is to find ways to improve upon it, and one of the ways in which they do so is through visitation of other schools. “They are currently in the process of making an IB parents guide book for all parents, IB or not,” which will inform parents of curriculum terminology and other aspects unique to IB. “Because after all,” he states, “IB almost has its own language.”

With Board approval, IB Standard Level Music and IB Higher Level Math are to be introduced in September 2007. According to Mr. Buonaspina, the music course is based on 50% music theory and 50% analysis and appreciation of music and performances. “This two-year course will be flexible in terms of the performance criteria and will have a heavy concentration of theory.” The math course, he explains, “will be introduced for those students who are looking to go into the field of math or who want to obtain the IB Diploma with emphasis on math and the sciences.”



