

# Raisinville program linked to enrollment spike

By Caitlin Taylor

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Administrators say a new global program is responsible for a boost in enrollment at a Monroe Public Schools elementary school.

Enrollment is up more than 5.5 percent within the last year at Raisinville Elementary School after it recently was authorized as an International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization, according to district officials.

Raisinville is the only school in Monroe County that offers the IB's Primary Years Programme (PYP).

"We experienced increases in both our older

and younger grade levels," Principal Scott Hoppert said. "The International Baccalaureate has generated interest in Raisinville and our programs. As our students express excitement about the activities they are engaged in, our parents and community are taking notice."

Raisinville was authorized by the IB in May after an extensive four-year process that included teacher certification, school visits and other candidacy requirements.

The IB is a worldwide organization that aims to

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**Raisinville Elementary School third-graders Mason Schilling, Quinn Wisniewski, Chloe Lawson and Isabella Jewell stand with one of the bluebird houses they built last spring. The bird houses are placed around the perimeter of the school property. [COURTESY**

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# PROGRAM

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nurture knowledgeable and caring young people to create a more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect, officials said.

It works with schools, government and international organizations to develop challenging programs focused on international education, while also encouraging students to become active, passionate and lifelong learners who are accepting of difference.

The IB's primary program, which is offered at Raisinville, is designed for students 3 through 12. Using a

transdisciplinary framework, the PYP focuses the development of the whole child by encouraging curiosity and inquiry, while promoting confidence and self-motivation, officials said.

"We are proud to provide the International Baccalaureate program as an educational option for Monroe Public elementary students," said Supt. Julie Everly. "I am incredibly pleased that families in our community recognize the value of this learning approach and are making the choice for their children to be part of this innovative program."

Following IB's inquiry-based learning model, Raisinville has been working to create curriculum that's centered on student questions

and exploration. As part of the PYP, students are challenged to not only learn information, but also to understand context, officials said.

Beginning last spring, one of Raisinville' first PYP-inspired activities included planting cattails and building bluebird houses, which now adorn the school's campus. The project aimed to teach students about animal habitats.

Sixth-graders also held a Dog-Walk Backyard Carnival to support Project Second Chance Monroe, an organization that pairs at-risk youth with abandoned pets.

As students planned activities and created items to sell, teachers said they were focused on inquiry-based, cross-discipline learning while

also making a positive impact on Monroe County.

Another aspect of the school's IB program is foreign language study. Raisinville chose to offer Spanish, which connects to middle and high school curriculum offered through Monroe Public Schools.

Students will leave Raisinville and enter a middle school program with seven years of experience in Spanish under their belts.

"We appreciate the time, effort and collaboration of the Raisinville staff that has made this program possible," said Matthew Bunkelman, board of education vice president. "I know it will benefit our students, and we look forward to hearing more about their educational experiences."



**Elements of the International Baccalaureate program include world flags hung at the school.** [COURTESY PHOTO]