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Longtime Customer Celebrates Exclusive Agreement between Follett and the IB

Stuart Crouch, who works at the International School of Düsseldorf, Germany, knows a thing or two about International Baccalaureate® (IB) education. A teacher for more than 30 years, Crouch has served as an IB librarian in many countries and at different educational institutions for more than 20 years, and he has served in his current position as Head of Senior School Libraries for the past 11 years.

At the International School of Düsseldorf, Crouch covers two IB programmes – Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP) – which allows him to articulate the IB curriculum to the entire senior school and to promote the school's belief in the IB learner profile. He offers instruction in academic writing, which prepares students in Grades 11-12 for the rigors of the DP curriculum. "In particular, we prepare students for the extended essay, the theory of knowledge essay, and their internal assessments. Further, our dedicated DP library stocks Diploma Programme study guides, some of which can be accessed digitally as Follett eBooks," Crouch said.

In recent years, there have been big changes at the International School of Düsseldorf. Frank Tschan took over as director in 2019. He is devoted to promoting the conditions in which high-quality learning can thrive. "One of these conditions is ensuring that students and faculty have the resources they need for teaching and learning," Tschan said. "Indeed, the COVID pandemic demonstrated how the school could pivot from face-to-face to digital instruction from one day to the next – helped by our diverse range of electronic resource suppliers such as Follett. As schools grow and develop to meet the challenges of the data revolution, trusted educational resources and vendor partnerships become even more important."

Crouch also supports students in Grades 6-10. “In MYP, I work with our students in Grades 9 and 10 over the course of their personal project work. This takes nine months, and my work in the library guides students through research and resource skills, documentation style, and appropriate writing styles.”

Any librarian tasked with these responsibilities needs a quick and reliable place to turn for IB teaching and learning resources. As Crouch points out, the agreement between the IB and Follett School Solutions just makes sense to educators like him. “This collaboration between Follett and the IB is a natural synergy between two world-class organizations. It brings resources into a single one-stop platform and puts students and teachers first.”

When he learned of the collaboration between Follett and the IB some years ago, Crouch said he was relieved and happy to hear a “meeting of the minds” was imminent. “This relationship has brought together a premier information service on the world stage with a world-class educational organization,” he explained. “Both are committed to education and to the continued success of those they serve. By joining with the IB, Follett has helped to shape educational outcomes and most importantly been

instrumental in delivering resources to students and staff around the globe.”

Mostly, according to Crouch, it’s the basics – the nuts and bolts of the collaboration – that made him happy to hear of the news. IB World Schools now benefit from diverse advantages when buying IB products through Titlewave®, including:

- Exclusive access to IB materials and merchandise as well as premier IB publisher content
- Expert-picked titles and lists supporting IB’s specific programmes
- Top-notch customer service

Crouch believes the last item was most important. “The customer service provision at Follett is fantastic. We can look forward to ease of use, simple navigation, no-fuss billing, and quick turnaround times. Having a single platform for IB and non-IB resources is a huge step forward for us, making our jobs easier and more efficient.” He goes on to point out how Follett is “second to none in terms of customer service. With our dedicated European team, we receive same-day feedback and excellent technical support, and the people at Follett are ready to listen. I have been very satisfied over the years, for example, to see suggested enhancements to Follett products

included in updates. That’s really listening to the customer!”

Crouch has made use of the advantages the collaboration affords educators and students and recognizes how diverse and expanded his selection of resources has become. “There is a huge crossover for schools in terms of educational resources. Not only does this save time for me, but I also now have a richer selection of resources for students and teachers.”

After years as a librarian in Germany, Botswana, Indonesia, Turkey, South Africa, and elsewhere, Crouch has high expectations of his vendors, but he feels confident this collaboration will only enrich his library and his service to his school. “Decades of experience in the field of educational resources are the cornerstone of Follett’s business. It’s simple to choose among paperback, hardback, eBooks, audiobooks, Lightbox™ books, digital audiobooks, and teacher resources. Librarians who use Follett Destiny® Library Manager, like me, have a one-stop search engine to ensure all resources are readily available to all patrons. This collaboration with the IB is great news all around.”

In 2015, the International Baccalaureate announced an exclusive distribution agreement with Follett School Solutions. Educators around the world can purchase IB products through state-of-the-art Follett eCommerce platforms, which will enhance the shopping experience for all IB customers and schools. To best serve the IB community, Follett has created titlewave.com/ib, which will be maintained in close agreement with the IB to ensure a seamless transition and the best customer experience.

Founded in 1968, the IB is a not-for-profit foundation, which offers four high-quality and challenging education programmes for a worldwide community of schools. For more than 45 years, the IB programmes have gained a reputation for rigor and high academic standards, for preparing students for a rapidly globalizing world, and for helping to develop citizens who will create a better, more peaceful world.