IB CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS 2014
WASHINGTON, DC  •  10–13 JULY
Math Conversations
Accuracy, Efficiency and Flexibility with Numbers

Genta Branstetter and Leah Palmatier
Washington International School, Washington DC
Central Idea:
Math conversations build accuracy, efficiency and flexibility with numbers.

An inquiry into…
- teacher facilitated math conversations (form)
- the six steps to improve number sense (function)
- how math conversations enrich the PYP classroom (connection)
What are the benefits of having conversations about math thinking?
What is a Math Conversation?

- Daily routine
- 5-15 minutes
- Teacher is facilitator
- Promotes a community of risk takers
Why Math Conversations?

To Improve Computational Fluency and Number Sense

- Builds students’ repertoire of a variety of strategies
- Allows students justify their thinking and explain their understanding, and therefore clarify their own thinking and reasoning
- Help students learn to produce accurate answers efficiently
- Promotes oral language development and listening skills
- Encourages students to make mathematical connections
- Reinforces meta-cognition and reflection
Six Step Math Conversation Process

1. Teacher presents the problem
2. Students figure the answer mentally (wait time)
3. Students share their answers
4. Students share their thinking - justify answers
5. Class agrees on “real answer”
6. Steps are repeated for additional problems
Examples of Math Conversations

• Video removed
Genta- Pre-k to Grade 2 teachers
Leah- Grades 3 to 6 teachers
Making Connections

- Constructing meaning (60%)
- Applying with understanding (15%)
- Transferring meaning (25%)
Resources & Contacts

Genta Branstetter
Branstetter@wis.edu
Leah Palmatier
Palmatier@wis.edu