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Research Report

**How schools evaluate the success of the
International Baccalaureate Primary Years
Programme (PYP)**

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Executive summary

The study

The aim of the study was to investigate how schools define and measure the success of the IB Primary Years Programme. The study was conducted between October 2012 and May 2013 and was designed for use within the IB to inform programme development and school and professional development services. The study provides an understanding of those aspects of the Primary Years Programme (PYP) that are most valued by stakeholder groups within schools and seen as contributing to the success of the programme in the school context, and the indicators that these groups use to explain successful programme implementation. The study asked schools to suggest areas for future programme development and give recommendations on how this development could be approached.

Research questions

The following guiding questions were used.

1. What are schools' definitions of the "success" of the PYP? Do schools' definitions of "success" vary by school type or geographical location?
2. How do schools evaluate their definitions of the "success" of the PYP? Specifically, what evidence is identified, collected, interpreted, and recorded to provide indicators of "success" in the following areas?
 - school leadership
 - teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices
 - parent satisfaction with the PYP
 - student learning outcomes
 - how students demonstrate the attributes of the IB learner profile
 - development of international-mindedness within the school community
 - school ethos and culture.

3. What do school stakeholders (including teachers, PYP coordinators, school leaders and parents) perceive is needed for future development and to ensure the continued success of the programme?

Research design and method

The study used a two-stage qualitative mixed method design. An electronic questionnaire was sent to all PYP schools that had undergone a programme evaluation visit. The questionnaire used open-ended questions that focused on perceptions of programme success and on suggestions for future development of the programme. Each school was requested to convene three focus groups—administrators, teachers and parents—to respond separately to the questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire was analysed using qualitative techniques—coding and sorting—to provide answers to the research questions. Six volunteer schools were selected to provide case studies. Case studies were constructed to gain an in-depth understanding of schools’ journeys to successful programme implementation, to place the perceptions of success in the context of the school, to understand how context influenced perceptions of success for different stakeholder groups in the schools, and to examine the effects of school type (public and private) and geographic location. Cross-case analysis was used to look for patterns in the case study data, which was also used to confirm, explain and add depth to the patterns that emerged from the analysis of the questionnaire data.

Key findings

School indicators and measures of success

School communities that consider the PYP successful note the following indicators and measures of success.

1. Enhanced student learning outcomes and demonstration of the attributes of the IB learner profile in schools, specifically the following student outcomes.

- Students showed an enjoyment of learning demonstrated by their willingness to be involved in school activities.
 - Students demonstrated confidence in assemblies, class presentations and discussions.
 - Students demonstrated mastery of inquiry learning skills through questioning and problem solving.
 - Students were willing to take control of their learning, and to take action
 - Students demonstrated moral and ethical decision-making when interacting with the school community.
 - Students showed an awareness of local and global issues, and the links between the two.
2. Enhanced school community, the programme is perceived to be successful in creating a shared vision of learning that extends from leadership to teachers, learners and their parents and beyond into the larger community—a community of learners. The indicator of success in this area is a sense of unity, coherence, common purpose and ownership of the programme among all stakeholder groups in the school. Specifically, schools note the success of how the PYP supports the following.
- The use of the learner profile to guide all aspects of school action and decision-making, and provide a defining ethos for the school.
 - The use of common PYP terminology and vocabulary by all members of the community, extending the ability to communicate about the programme with the larger IB community.
3. Enhanced international-mindedness in the school community, the PYP's international-mindedness focus is seen as successful by the case study schools in challenging the schools to make connections with the wider community and bring global issues into the schools.

4. Enhanced teacher pedagogical beliefs and practices, the programme is viewed as successful because it allowed teachers to:
 - have a direct input into curriculum design and delivery as measured by the school's programme of inquiry and curriculum documents
 - improve their teaching through targeted professional development and reflection on practice, as measured by classroom observations and teacher evaluations
 - collaborate with other teachers throughout the PYP programme in the development of the programme of inquiry
 - demonstrate their own enjoyment of learning and an improved confidence in their approach to teaching
 - gain direct help from the programme coordinator leadership in finding resources and providing feedback
 - see enhanced learner outcomes in student approaches to learning and social interactions, as measured by indicators of academic achievement and daily behaviour.
5. Enhanced school leadership, the PYP is perceived as successful because it ensures school leaders can:
 - focus their decision-making regarding the allocation of financial and human resources. This includes the hiring of teachers with PYP or inquiry learning experience, the provision of appropriate professional development opportunities, the allocation of school time for planning and collaboration, and the development of school facilities, such as the library, to support the programme. Thus, the programme contributes to more efficient use of school resources.
 - meet parent expectations, as evidenced by positive feedback from parent surveys
 - attract students to the school, as shown by parents and students choosing the school above others.
6. Enhanced parent involvement, the programme is regarded as successful by and for parents because they can:

- see their children's pride in their work and confidence in their ability to demonstrate their learning
- see their child wanting to share school experiences with them, to work on school projects at home, and to have their parents involved in school activities
- feel satisfied that their children are being well-prepared for future.

School context

The study looked for different definitions of success in schools sharing common contextual features and found that school context interacted with programme implementation in influencing success in complex ways. Some factors common to several case study schools include the following.

- The need to accommodate state or national curriculum requirements that required students to learn specific content or educators to prepare students for tests.
- Availability of financial resources increased or limited the experiences that could be provided for children and the professional development opportunities for teachers.
- Geographic isolation from other members of the IB community limited access to seeing the implementation of the PYP in other school contexts.
- Previous teacher training and teacher mobility affected schools' abilities to develop a common understanding of inquiry learning.

No consistent pattern of interaction of the PYP and school context was found with regard to school type or geographic location.

Recommendations for future programme development

Flexibility, innovation and simplification in the curriculum framework

Schools seek the flexibility to adapt and innovate within the curriculum framework and made the following recommendations.

- Allow “master schools” to have the flexibility to experiment and innovate with different numbers of units and time allocation to specific inquiries.
- Review number of units for schools integrating other curriculum models.

Align the IB programmes and language

The following recommendation was made regarding current differences in the programme models and terminology between the three programmes for students.

- Consistency in terminology and approach across all programmes would help IB World Schools to create a seamless curriculum sequence.

Enhance professional development

Schools want to improve teaching and learning in their schools and seek exemplars of curriculum development and delivery. The following recommendations were made.

- Set up regional centres, designate “schools of excellence” for live or virtual visits.
- Annotated videos of experts teaching whole units would provide useful in-school training materials and a focus for in school discussions as well as giving all schools a common understanding of best practice with regard to PYP instruction.

Build community

Schools value and seek more interaction with IB staff, and want to connect with other PYP schools in different contexts for guidance and support. The following recommendations were made.

- Develop helplines staffed by professional trainers.
- Use scholarships to help teachers from schools with limited funds to visits to other schools

Conclusion

This study offers strong evidence that the PYP operates successfully across all PYP school contexts. In keeping with the research literature of successful schools as learning communities focused on enhancing student outcomes, the PYP schools in this study based their assessment of the success of the programme on developing student understandings of attitudes, values and skills seen as equipping them for lifelong learning, involvement and contributions to local and global communities. The schools acknowledged the important relationships that exist between teaching and student outcomes, and the contributions of leadership and parents in creating a favourable climate and culture for learning. The enhancement of all of these relationships through the PYP framework and requirements made it a successful programme for the schools in the study.

The PYP schools in the study offered insight into the areas they perceive as needing additional support from the IB. The schools' recommendations provide a "jumping off point" for further development and innovation in the IB community. Schools define the success of the programme in terms of building a successful learning community and placing their learning community within the context of the larger IB community. Schools are focused on the continual cultivation and enhancement of their learning communities and the suggestions made are concerned with building on successful aspects of the PYP, rather than changing the PYP.

Chapter 1 introduction and overview

Research overview and purpose

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation, motivated by its mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. Founded in 1968, the IB currently works with more than 3,100 state and privately funded schools in 140 countries to develop and offer three challenging programmes to approximately 892,000 students worldwide.

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) for students aged 3-12 started in 1997 and is now offered by 784 IB World Schools. To bring about better understanding of the benefits of implementing the programme in diverse educational contexts worldwide, this research study aimed to investigate how schools define the ‘success’ of the PYP and accordingly identify, collect, record and interpret evidence demonstrating the ‘success’ of the programme.

In defining the approach to the study the researchers worked from the understanding that the PYP is regarded as a highly successful programme by schools that use it, but that schools and school stakeholder groups could have very different perceptions of why the programme was successful for them. These differences could well reflect unique differences in school context given that the PYP is used by schools worldwide, both state and publically funded. A further understanding that grounded the study was that there might well be differences in the interpretation of success, or the understanding of what contributed to it in a school setting within different stakeholder groups – school leaders and administrators, teachers, and parents– within each school. More difficult to capture, but also recognized, was that perceptions of success could well change over time, the result of changing school or contextual factors.

Thus the study focuses on capturing schools initial reactions to reflecting on what makes the programme successful for them, and how they know it is successful. What does ‘success’ mean to schools when they are prompted to describe it? What, from the schools’ perspectives, are the strengths of the programme, the challenges they have overcome to make the programme

successful for them, and the ways in which the programme has enabled the school to overcome challenges inherent in their culture and context.

Given that the PYP is now entering its 15th year of implementation with a planned programme review, a further purpose of the research was to provide schools with an opportunity to reflect on how the success of the programme could be sustained and improved in coming years. The schools in this study had been implementing the PYP for a minimum of four years. As such they could be expected to have reached a level of comfort and expertise with PYP implementation in their schools that allowed them to usefully contribute to a discussion of approaches to future development.

Finally, the study drew on the research literature of successful schools, primarily developed in the US, but now widely used to underpin ‘good practice’ by all stakeholder groups in schools worldwide. The accepted model of a successful school is one where all stakeholder groups are aligned in their endeavours to enhance student learning, and share a common understanding and vision of the methods by which this goal can best be achieved. The researchers sought to examine if this alignment of stakeholder understanding was present in PYP schools and contributed to their perceptions of success, in addition to identifying the practices individual stakeholder groups perceived as being the best indicators of success.

Guiding questions

The guiding questions for this research focused on how schools defined success in their school context:

1. What are schools’ definitions of the ‘success’ of the PYP?
 - a. Do schools’ definitions of ‘success’ vary by school type or geographical location?
2. How do schools evaluate their own definitions of the ‘success’ of the PYP? Specifically, what evidence is identified, collected, interpreted, and recorded to provide indicators of ‘success’ in the following areas?

- a. School leadership
 - b. Teacher pedagogical beliefs and practices
 - c. Parental satisfaction with the PYP
 - d. Student learning outcomes
 - e. Student demonstration of the attributes of the IB Learner Profile
 - f. Development of international mindedness within the school community
 - g. School ethos and culture
3. What do school stakeholders (including teachers, PYP coordinators, school leaders and parents) perceive is needed for future development to ensure the continued success of the programme? Which aspects of the PYP require future development (and what kind of development?) to ensure the continued success of the programme?

Research design and method

The study used a two-stage qualitative mixed method design. An electronic questionnaire with open-ended prompts focused on perceptions of programme success and on suggestions for future development of the programme, was sent to all PYP schools that had undergone a programme evaluation visit. Each school was requested to convene three focus groups – administrators, teachers and parents – to respond separately to the electronic questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire was analyzed using qualitative techniques – coding and sorting - to provide answers to the research questions. Six volunteer schools from those responding to the questionnaire were selected to provide case studies. Case studies were constructed to gain in-depth understanding of school's journeys to successful programme implementation, to place the perceptions of success recorded by schools into the context of the school, to understand how context influenced perceptions of success for different stakeholder groups in the schools, and to examine the effects of school type (public and private) and geographical location in particular. Across case analysis was employed to look for patterns in the case study data, which was also used to confirm, explain and add depth to the patterns that emerged from the analysis of the questionnaire data.

Significance of the study

The study was designed for use within the IB to inform programme development as well as school and professional development services. It provides an understanding of those aspects of the PYP that are most valued by stakeholder groups within schools, and the indicators that they use to explain successful programme implementation. In addition, the study highlights areas for future programme development suggested by the schools, together with their recommendations regarding how this development could be approached.

Outline of the study

There are five chapters in this study. In this chapter, a brief overview and outline of the study is presented. Chapter 2 provides a review of literature that frames the study around effective and successful schools and defining success in schools. Chapter 3 is the research methodology and describes the research design and methods used. Chapter 4 is the findings chapter that offers school definitions of success along with indicators and evidence of success. Chapter 5 is the concluding chapter and includes a discussion and conclusion of the study.

Chapter 2 Review of related literature

Introduction

In developing an approach to this study of how PYP schools and their stakeholders define the success of the programme, the researchers examined research literature from a number of different sources. The literature search sought sources that addressed the definition of a successful programme, and in so far as the PYP is all encompassing with regard to school operation, the definition of a successful school. The sources included the literature around effective schools, school improvement, contextual influences on successful school outcomes, schools as communities of learners and professional learning communities, successful practices of school stakeholder groups, IB definitions of successful PYP implementation, and the problems of defining successful programmes. In keeping with the qualitative nature of the study, the review of the literature was undertaken to establish the relevance of the research questions, to give guidelines regarding research design, and to allow for comparison between the finding that emerged from this research study and previous research (Maxwell, 2005).

Research into successful schools

How to define school success has been a question that has occupied researchers since the 1970s when interest in the US focused on establishing why some schools were able to achieve student outcomes far superior to those of others with similar characteristics and contexts. Edmonds (1979), among others, conducted a series of studies of schools judged to be successful, developing from them a list of common characteristics with a view to enabling school improvement in less successful schools. As both research designs and statistical techniques developed during the 1980s, a second wave of ‘effective schools’ research followed the same pattern of identification of characteristics shared by successful schools (Creemers, 1996; Mortimer et al., 1988). These characteristics included site management and leadership; staff stability; parental involvement and support; collaborative planning and a sense of community; clear goals and expectations commonly shared; and curriculum and instructional articulation and organization. Summarizing the findings of this work, Prazer (1984) noted *“Every major research*

study on successful schools has noted the organizational phenomenon of collective action, agreed-on purpose, and belief in attainment” (p.20).

A third wave of studies shifted the focus of research to school improvement. School improvement research has as its focus the processes by which schools improve over time by changing school culture and organization (Fullan, 2002; Harris, 2002). However, school improvement research continued to add to the list of characteristics that influence a schools' ability to be successful in improving student outcomes. New additions to the characteristics of schools that enhance student learning included continuous analysis; reflection and growth by teachers; a consideration and adaptation for individual school context and culture; and varied sources of leadership, including teacher leadership (Davies, 2002; Johnson, Johnson, and Gilhiam, 2005).

Context and successful schools

The research into successful schools was criticized for ignoring differences between schools that may influence a school's perception of effectiveness and the methods adopted to achieve desired student outcomes (Hannaway and Talbert, 1993). Contextual differences may include location, the socioeconomic status of the community the school serves, students' race and ethnicity, and the financial and human resources available to the school. Context studies of successful schools in the US as defined by their ability to improve academic outcomes for low income students and underachieving ethnic groups, suggest common characteristics that account for their effectiveness including respect for racial pluralism; a culture of caring; shared governance involving leaders, teachers, parents and students; and professional development to help teachers address student diversity (Stedman, 1987; Pierce, 1991; Scribner, 1999).

Successful practice and school stakeholders

While Vescio and colleagues (2008: 84) warn of the dangers of simplifying and compartmentalizing what is actually complex and contextual, and the need to honor the multifaceted interweaving of factors that create a climate of success. The research literature defines successful practices for stakeholder groups within schools. These are:

Leadership: Current understanding of leadership for successful schools charges leaders with setting directions for the school (identifying and articulating a vision, creating shared meaning, creating high performance expectations, fostering the acceptance of group goals, monitoring organizational performance and communicating); developing people (offering intellectual stimulations, providing individualized support, providing an appropriate model) and developing the organization (strengthening school culture, modifying organizational structure, building collaborative process, managing the environment). In addition, successful school leaders create and sustain a competitive school, empower others to make significant decisions, provide instructional guidance, build powerful forms of teaching and learning, and create strong communities in school (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003; Riehl, 2000). Sergiovanni (1996) states:

“Leaders in focused communities are committed to the principle that form should follow function: they strive to embody this principle as decisions are made about organization, staff, time, money, space and other resources, curriculum focus, content implementation and assessment, teacher development, supervision and evaluation, and other matters that impact the quality of teaching and learning” (p.184).

Teachers: A research synthesis of successful teacher practices (Goe, Bell and Little, 2008) noted the following five characteristics as influencing student success; holding high expectations for all students: contributing to positive academic, attitudinal, and social outcomes; using diverse resources to plan and structure engaging learning opportunities and monitoring progress; contributing to the development of classrooms and schools that value diversity and civic-mindedness; and collaborating with other teachers, administrators, parents and education

professionals to ensure student success. Goe, Bell and Little (2008) suggest that definitions of teacher effectiveness must go beyond teachers' contribution to student achievement gains to include how teachers impact classrooms, schools, and their colleagues as well as how they contribute to other important outcomes for students.

Parents: Research about parent involvement in their child's education at home (Fan and Chen, 2001), note the positive effects on student outcomes at school, specifically that children go farther in school when their parents are involved in school, and provide a home environment that supports learning. These factors are more important to student success than income, education level, or cultural background. Leithwood and Riehl (2003) state *"Student learning is enhanced when it is supported by both the school and family. For that to happen, learning goals must be acceptable to families and families must have the resources, knowledge and inclination to help"* (para 50). Some of the results of parental involvement noted by Fan and Chen (2001) include enhanced student achievement, reduced absenteeism, and improved behavior.

Schools as communities of learners

A new focus on successful schools has come with Sergiovanni's (1999) proposition that schools are communities rather than organizations, an approach further developed by Furman (1998), envisioning the school as *"an interconnected, interdependent web of persons engaged in global community"* (p.132). The National Study of School Evaluations (NSSE) (2008) noted *"successful schools are distinguished by the coordination, coherence, and alignment of their daily instructional practices and organizational conditions with the mission of their school and the goals for improving student achievement"* (p.113).

School culture and climate have come to be seen as important determinants of successful schools. Alton-Lee (2003) states:

The intellectual climate is demonstrated by activities that support and challenge students including a rich, rigorous and engaging curriculum and a powerful pedagogy for teaching it, rules and policies that hold all school members accountable to high standards of learning and behavior: traditions and routines, built from shared values, that honor and reinforce the school's academic and social standards; a voice in, and shared responsibility for solving problems and making decisions that affect the school environment and their common life, ways of effectively partnering with parents to support student's learning and character growth, and norms or relationships and behavior that create a professional culture of excellence and ethics (para 4).

The Character Education Partnership (CEP) suggests “*A positive school culture is the cornerstone of all good schools. It is the foundation for school improvement*” (para 1). An extension of the concept of school as an integrated learning community is the ideal of the school as a professional learning community. Bolam, McMahon, Stoll, Thomas, and Wallace (2005) suggest that an effective professional learning community has the capacity to promote and sustain the learning of all professions in the school community with the collective purpose of enhancing student learning. Developing this theme further, Hord and Sommers (2008) examined the concept of successful schools being professional learning communities, defining these as “*communities of professionals working to improve student learning together, by engaging in continuous collective learning of their own*” (p.ix). Characteristics of such communities are shared beliefs; values and norms; trust; supportive leadership; collective learning; deprivatization of teaching; a focus on student learning; and collaboration (DuFour, 2005; Vescio, Ross and Adam, 2008). Examining the methods to build such professional learning communities, McLaughlin and Talbert (2006) note “*We know much less about the process – how teacher*

learning communities get started, how they develop, and how requirements for their development and markers of maturity change” (p.129).

Defining school success

Despite the continuous theory-development and research undertaken in the field, definitions of school success and how it should be measured continue to diverge widely. Glickman et al. (2010) ask:

“What do we mean by school success, and how do we measure it? Is the measure of school success short term – higher achievement scores on standardized basic-skills tests? Is school success measured by improved student attitudes toward learning, social behavior, displays of creative work, critical writing or thinking, attendance, grades, promotion, retention, or community or extracurricular participation?” (p.38).

Glickman concludes *“a successful school is foremost an organization that defines good education for itself, through its goals and desired practices, and then engages in collective action to achieve that vision” (p. 38).* The theme of individual school definitions of success is further explored by Poulin, Harris, and Jones (2000) who return to the theme of school context when they note that definitions of programme success may well vary from organization to organization as a result of informal goals, organizational structure, and specific features of the population the programme is designed to serve. Coulling (2000) further suggests that stakeholders within an organization can all be working towards the same purpose ‘success’ but see the means to achieving it and the vision of what it looks like, quite differently. Building on this theme of honoring the different perspectives of stakeholders, Mosconi and Emmett (2003) suggest that regardless of programme goals, factors such as ingrained cultural considerations, the diverse ways people have chosen to find meaning in their lives, and evolving expectations may lead to definitions of success that change over time and between different stakeholders engaged in the same endeavour.

Defining successful PYP implementation

The review of relevant literature also included an examination of IB documents that define a successful Primary Years Programme (PYP) and successful implementation of programme components (IBO Website). These included programme guides and the self-study document. In these documents, the IB provides a series of standards for different aspects of the program as a guide to a school's progress towards successful implementation. These are used by schools in developing the self-study required for authorization and re-authorization to offer the programme, and is assessed for accuracy by a visiting IB team who look for evidence of the progress indicated by the school. Feedback to the school is provided after an authorization/evaluation visit including suggestions or requirements for improved implementation.

Summary and influences of the review of literature on the study design

The following points emerged from the literature review and were taken forward in the design of the study and the interpretation of the data. The first was the need to remain open to different stakeholders' perceptions of success and how it is achieved. Definitions of successful schools and programmes have been based on studies of schools, or theoretical constructs, with few seeking the perceptions of stakeholders of what makes their school or programme successful.

The potential effect of context on definitions of success was also noted. Contextual issues anticipated to have an impact on the perceived success of the PYP in the light of existing literature included school type (public or private) that might influence the resources available to a school, the socio-economic status of the students it serves, and willingness of parents to be involved; the ethnic mix of students and teachers that might influence local and global awareness and international mindedness; and the demands made on the school with regard to state or national curriculum.

A final point was the understanding that a unified and coherent community of learners that included all constituents in the school community, and which was focused on the enhancement of student outcomes, was an important indicator of successful schools. While the literature

indicated that different stakeholders may well see the approach to the success of a programme from different perspectives and give different weight to individual components of school operation that contribute to a successful programme, all stakeholders would be united in their vision of successful outcomes, and in successful schools would have a common understanding of the methods of achieving this outcome.

Chapter 3 Research methodology

Introduction

This chapter will present the choice and rationale of the research design and methodology selected to explore the following research questions:

1. What are schools' definitions of the 'success' of the PYP?
 - a. Do schools' definitions of 'success' vary by school type or geographical location?
2. How do schools evaluate their own definitions of the 'success' of the PYP? Specifically, what evidence is identified, collected, interpreted, and recorded to provide indicators of 'success' in the following areas?
 - a. School leadership
 - b. Teacher pedagogical beliefs and practices
 - c. Parental satisfaction with the PYP
 - d. Student learning outcomes
 - e. Student demonstration of the attributes of the IB Learner Profile
 - f. Development of international mindedness within the school community
 - g. School ethos and culture
3. What do school stakeholders (including teachers, PYP coordinators, school leaders and parents) perceive is needed for future development to ensure the continued success of the programme? Which aspects of the PYP require future development (and what kind of development?) to ensure the continued success of the programme?

Decisions around research design were shaped by themes emerging from the review of the related literature, namely, that stakeholders within a school, while endorsing the success of a programme, may well attribute the success to different programme components; that a successful programme may be defined in relation to its ability to produce desired outcomes in a specific

context; and that in schools that build professional learning communities there is a shared understanding of desired student outcomes.

Research design

A qualitative mixed-method sequential study (Creswell & Plano Clark 2011), was adopted and was the most appropriate method to address the above research questions because it allowed for gathering a wide range of perspectives as well as to gain a deeper understanding of success in a particular school setting. The sequential design of the study meant first gathering data (via the online electronic questionnaire) and then conducting in-depth case studies to deepen the findings from the electronic questionnaire responses and provide contextual data.

Stage one

The first stage of the research involved the distribution of an electronic questionnaire through the PYP coordinator to all PYP schools that had undergone an evaluation visit. Responding schools were asked to form three focus groups – one each of administrators, parents and teachers– with a suggested three to six participants in each group. Each group would discuss the prompts on the questionnaire, and submit a single response for the group. All three groups would thus present their perceptions of the success of the programme and the indicators of this success in their school context. In addition, administrators and teachers were asked to indicate their suggestions for future development of the programme to ensure continuing success. The responses were entered into an electronic database (NVIVO) for analysis.

Stage two

The second stage of the design involved the development of six case studies to provide an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the questionnaire responses from the school regarding their stakeholder groups' perceptions of success; to examine the influence of each unique school context on perceptions of success; and on their suggestions for future development of the programme. The schools were selected from those responding to the electronic questionnaire. To capture differences in school context, three were private schools and three

were public schools. To further examine the effect of potential differences in location we chose schools in different geographic areas.

Schools were visited, either by a researcher conducting a field visit of two to three days, or by virtual interviews. During the visits supporting evidence for the focus group indicators of success were collected, school documents reviewed and the effects of context on the success of the programme discussed.

Rationale for selection of the research design

The choice of an open response questionnaire for the first stage of the design was to gain schools perceptions of why the PYP was successful for them, as opposed to asking schools to select from pre-determined indicators of success. The researchers believed that this would provide a better picture of those components of the programme that schools most directly attributed to the success of the programme for them. By requesting the participation of three stakeholder groups, and using a focus group format, the researchers sought to give all stakeholders in all PYP schools that had been operating the program to first evaluation stage, an opportunity to reflect on the success of the programme, to contribute to an understanding of it, and to have a voice in the research with its potential to influence future development of the programme.

Electronic questionnaire as the instrument

The literature on success in educational organizations and professional learning communities (see Chapter 2) informed the development of the final open-ended electronic questionnaire instrument that included the school's definition of success, strength of the PYP programme, student learning, structure of the PYP, and suggestions for the IB to support continued success. The questionnaire prompts (see Appendix 1a, 1b, 1c) explicitly focus on success rather than a general impression of the PYP programme, to draw respondent's attention to how the school in its particular school context defined, measured, and evaluated success.

Pilot

Prior to administering the electronic questionnaire, the questionnaire prompts were piloted with 50 administrators and teachers in small focus groups and individual interviews at the regional Africa, Europe, and Middle East IB Madrid, 2012 conference, and a PYP school. We analyzed the data from the pilot and refined the electronic questionnaire instrument and interview guides. Participants of the pilot were from both private schools and public national schools.

To facilitate school participation, consent forms (see Appendix 2a, 2b, 2c), invitation letters (see Appendix 3a, 3b, 3c), and the electronic questionnaire were prepared in the three official IB languages. In addition, all supporting documentation was available in all three languages. Lastly, the research team used the three IB languages to communicate with schools about the project.

Data collection

The electronic questionnaire was sent out to all 545 eligible schools through the PYP coordinator, with the request to organize the three stakeholder groups, administrators (including PYP coordinator and school board members), teachers, and parents. The research team communicated with schools by email and phone several times to encourage participation, and adjusted questionnaire dates for those schools taking long school vacations (see Appendix 4 for timeline).

Table 1. Schools by IB Regions		
	Total	Received
Regions	545	121
Africa, Europe, and Middle East	126	31
Asia and Pacific	144	24
The Americas	274	66

A total of 121 completed responses were returned from schools. Table 1 shows a comparison of the total schools by IB region and the number of schools who submitted responses by region. In

the Africa, Europe, and Middle East (AEM) region 31 responses were received, from the Asia and Pacific region 24 schools responded, and from the Americas region 66 schools responded.

Table 2. Schools by Regions		
	Total	Received
Region	545	121
Africa	18	7
Middle East	22	4
Europe	86	20
North America	241	48
South America	33	18
Australia	43	3
New Zealand	5	0
Fiji	2	0
Southeast Asia	39	10
East Asia	34	7
South Asia	21	4

Table 2 provides a comparison of the total IB population with the sample population across broader regions. The distribution of school responses mirror the overall IB population with the largest number of responses from the schools in North America (48) followed by schools in Europe (20).

Table 3. Schools by School Type (number of schools/percentage of schools)		
	Total	Received
School Type	545	121
Public	200 (37%)	39 (32%)
Private	345 (63%)	82 (68%)

Table 3 displays a comparison of IB schools and the sample of IB schools by school type. The distribution of response schools is similar to the overall IB schools. In the IB population 63 percent of schools are private schools and private schools represent 68 percent of the sample respondents.

Case studies

To dig deeper into the question of how schools’ defined the ‘success’ of the PYP, the research team combined school focus group questionnaire responses with the construction of six case studies of PYP schools. To examine whether school context – the community a school serves, the larger community in which it is located, the human and financial resources of the school, and the school’s organizational structure – would result in modifications and adjustments to the PYP, and different indicators of success. Schools who had responded to the survey, and who met the context criteria previously determined to provide maximum variation, were approached to participate as case study schools.

Of the schools that expressed interest in participating in as a case study, schools were purposefully selected from different contexts. The six schools chosen included three public schools that were state or nationally funded and operating within the context of national or state curriculum requirements, and three private schools that included one owner-operated school, and two community-operated schools. The three public schools were in the USA, Canada and the UK. The three private schools were located in W. Africa, Mexico and China.

Table 4. Case Study School by Type and by Region

Region	Schools					
	Public			Private		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Americas		x	x		x	
Africa, Europe, and Middle East	x			x		
Asia and Pacific						x

Table 4 presents the case study schools by school type and the location of the school. For each school case study, the researcher/s reviewed documents related to the PYP programme in the school, collected data on the context of the school and local community that was influential in the delivery of the PYP, and observed in classrooms and at school events. School responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts were discussed with members of the school community to provide greater understanding and depth. On completion of each case study write-up it was returned to the school for a member check (Maxwell, 2005) and adjustments made by the school were incorporated into the case study.

Analysis of data

Electronic questionnaire

Research questions 1 and 2

Electronic questionnaire responses were downloaded and entered into NVivo. The first 50 responses were read by the three members of the research team for common themes regarding the success of the programme (Cresswell & Plano, 2011; Maxwell, 2005). A comparison of the themes identified by individual team members led to adjustments in the final list. When this was complete, a sample of answers was coded by theme by each member of the research team and checked for inter-rater reliability. This completed, all respondents' answers were coded by theme. Themes were then sorted by the stakeholder groups to which had relevance as defined in Research question 2. The responses in each theme were then re-read to identify sub-themes and organized to provide answers to the research question (See Appendix 5 for the coding schema). Uncoded data was examined for themes not previously included.

Research question 3

Research question 3 followed the same procedure and coded data were grouped according to the components of the PYP (professional development, curriculum development, IB community, and alignment). Each coded group was then re-examined within each component to identify sub-themes.

Case study

Case studies were first analyzed for the explanations and supporting evidence they provided for the themes around perceptions and indicators of success found in the questionnaire responses. To provide supporting evidence of the analysis of the electronic questionnaire, a cross case analysis was also undertaken to compare the six schools definitions of success and the examples they gave of the interaction of context and PYP implementation in terms of influence on school definitions and indicators of success.

The detailed case studies of the six schools are presented into four sections (see Appendix 6). The first gives a description of the school context and history of the PYP in it. The second examines the interaction of school context with PYP implementation. The third section provides the school responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts posed to during the focus group discussion of administrators, teachers and parents that had participated in the online questionnaire. The fourth section provides a list of their suggestions for ongoing development of the programme.

Definition of terms used in this chapter

1. *Purposeful sampling* is a qualitative sampling procedure in which researchers intentionally select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomenon
2. *Member checking* is a qualitative process during which the researcher asks one or more participants in the study to check the accuracy of the account.
3. *Context* is the setting, situation, or environment that surrounds the culture-sharing groups being studied
4. *Focus group* interview in survey research involve the researcher locating or developing a survey instrument, convening a small group of people – typically 4 to 6 – who can answer the questions asked on the instrument, and recording their comments about the questions on the instrument.

5. *Coding* process is a qualitative research process in which the researcher makes sense out of text data, divides it into text or image segments, labels the segments, examines codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapses these codes into themes.
6. *Patterns* can emerge from this qualitative data and is dependent on interpretation and capturing perceptions and attempts to order to create patterns involve the interaction between researchers and own understandings of schools and programmes.
7. *Themes* in qualitative research are similar codes aggregated together to form a major idea in the database.

Researchers

There was no attempt to quantify the findings by the researchers. Throughout the research, the researcher's intention was to capture patterns in the qualitative data around school perceptions of success and relied on their own experience with schools and the PYP programme to provide credibility to their interpretations. The researchers triangulated the data by perceptions of school success from different sources, the electronic questionnaire, case study interviews, and document analysis. Member checks with participants were conducted during data collection as well as after the data were analyzed.

Chapter 4 Findings

Introduction

In this chapter, the results of the analysis of the focus group electronic questionnaire to which 121 PYP schools responded, and of the in-depth case studies constructed for six purposefully selected schools from among those responding to the electronic questionnaire, are presented. This chapter has three sections, including:

Section 1: Definition, indicators, and evidence of success (Research questions 1 and 2) presented as follows:

- a) The overall success of the PYP (Research question 1)
- b) The indicators and evidence of the success of the PYP for school stakeholder groups—administrators/leaders, teachers, and parents (Research question 2)

In this section, the findings are drawn from an analysis of school responses to the electronic questionnaire and from an analysis of the six case study schools that includes quotations and supporting evidence.

Section 2: School context and perceptions of PYP success (Research question 1a.)

This section draws from the case study data, collected from schools that provided an opportunity to examine the different effects of school context, including school type (public or private), geographic location, historical development, school community characteristics, and school human and financial resources.

For the purposes of this study, the case studies schools will be referred to by number, with school 1-UK, school 2-Canada, school 3-USA, school 4-W. Africa, school 5-Mexico, and school 6-China.

Section 3: Future development (Research question 3)

This section presents analysis of the responses to the electronic questionnaire data and the case study data grouped by the programme components the PYP that schools referenced for future development.

Section 1: Definition, indicators and evidence of success

Part A: The overall success of the PYP (Research question 1)

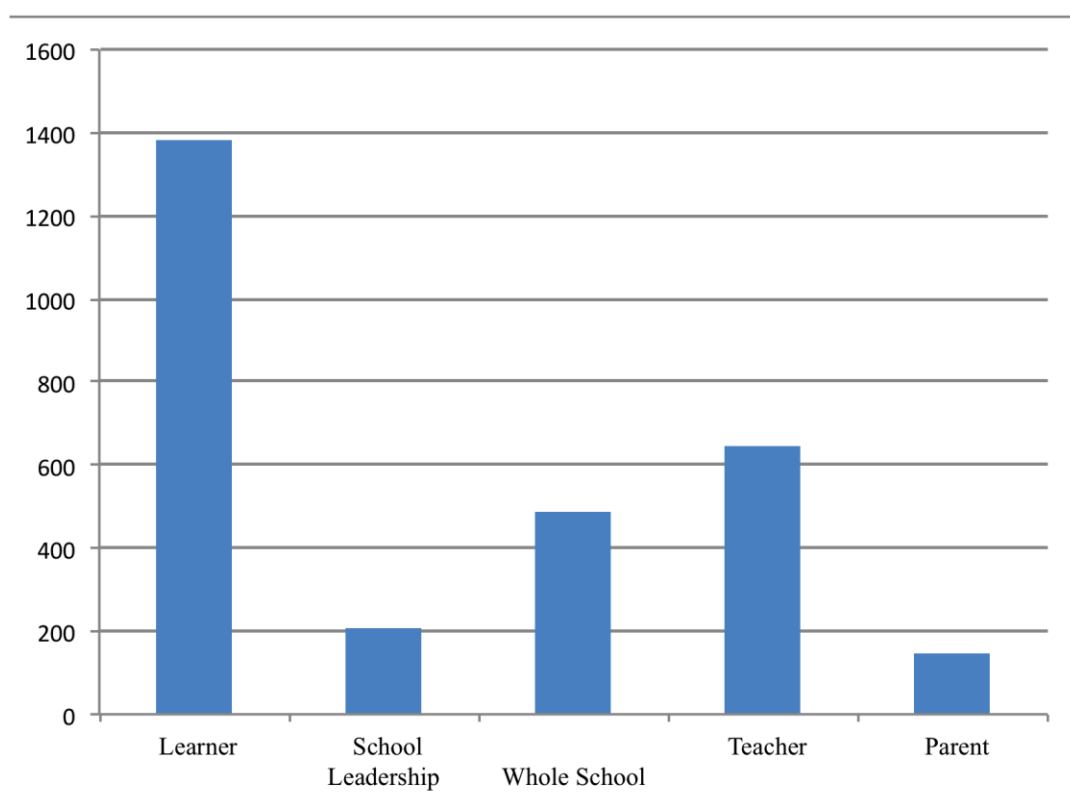
This section presents the indicators of the overall success of the PYP in schools. Analysis of the electronic questionnaire responses (prompts 1-4 on the questionnaire) for all responding stakeholders (administrators/leaders, teachers and parents) were used to develop the indicators of success most important in contributing to perceptions of the success of the programme in respondent schools. These indicators were grouped by the stakeholder groups most directly involved in the indicator of success (school leadership, learners, teachers, parents and the whole school community).

Table 5. List of Indicators by Stakeholder Categories	
Stakeholder Categories	Indicators
<i>School Leadership</i>	Financial and Human Resources Positive Parent Feedback Marketable
<i>Learner</i>	Learner Enjoyment Learner Confidence Learning Skills Learner Motivated and Engaged Learner's Own Learning and Action Learner Attitudes and Behaviors: Learning Profile Learner International and Local Awareness
<i>Teacher</i>	External Assessment Comparisons Teacher Input in Curriculum and Design Teacher Confidence and Enjoyment Teacher Training and Reflection Support from PYP Coordinator and Leadership Collaboration Among Teachers Accountability Standards
<i>Whole School Community</i>	Coherence and Unity Positive School Ethos and Culture: Learner Profile
<i>Parents</i>	Child Pride in Work Preparation for Secondary Child Collaborating with Parents in the Home

Table 5 shows the list of indicators clustered within the stakeholder group most involved in the indicator of success. For example, for the Parent indicator of success included a) child's pride in their work, b) good preparation for school transitions, and c) children sharing and collaborating with parents at home. Parents are the stakeholder group most involved in the indicator and the three areas mentioned above emerged to create the parent category.

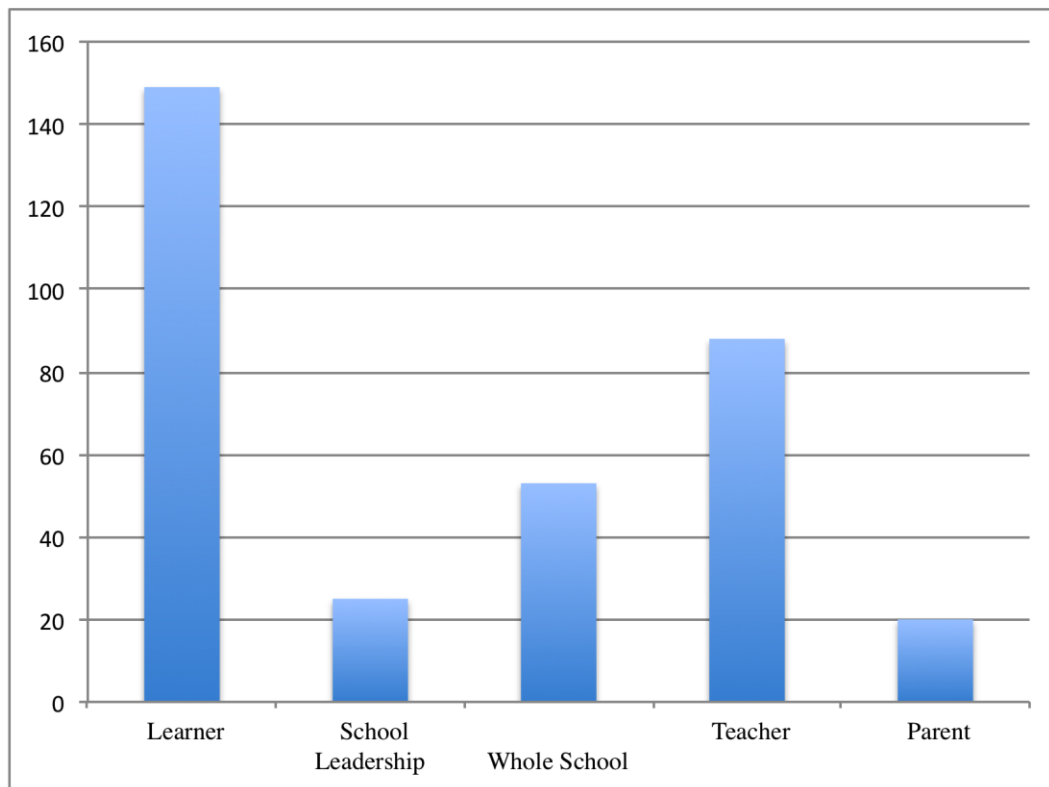
When the numbers of references for each indicator were compiled for all respondent schools, the primary indicator of success for schools of the PYP concerned learner outcomes followed by those connected to teacher, whole school community, school leadership, and parent (see Figure 1)

Figure 1. School Indicators of Success by Stakeholder Category



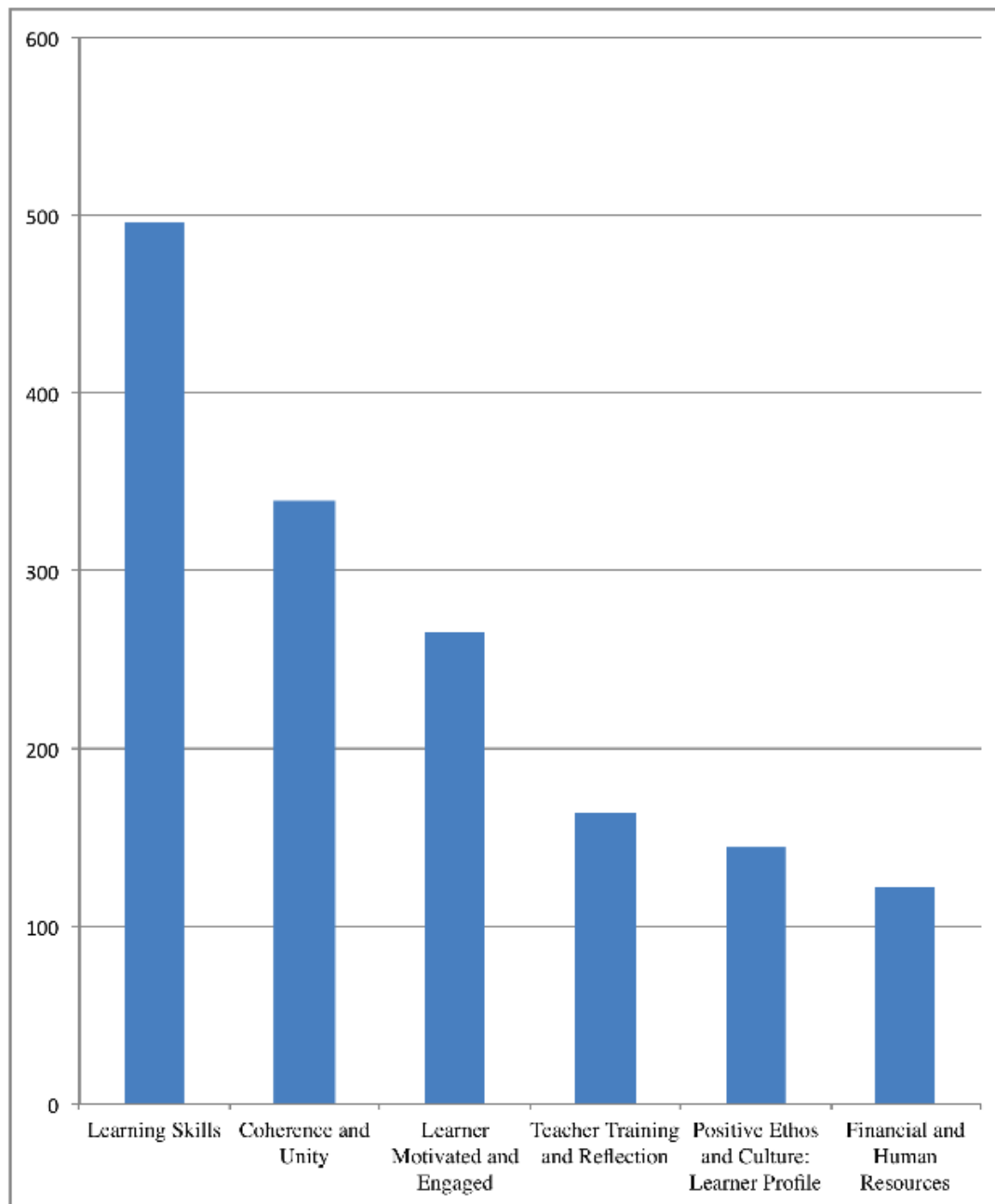
This pattern was confirmed by a similar analysis of responses for the six case study schools (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Case Study School Indicators of Success by Stakeholder Category



When all indicators are considered, schools perceive the six most important indicators of success as a) student demonstrations of the learning skills (both academic and social) promoted by the PYP, b) the unity and coherence of the school community c) the motivating, child centered nature of the programme, d) the teacher training and reflection as part of the PYP, e) positive school ethos and culture created by the Learner Profile, and f) focusing financial and human resources (see Figure 3).

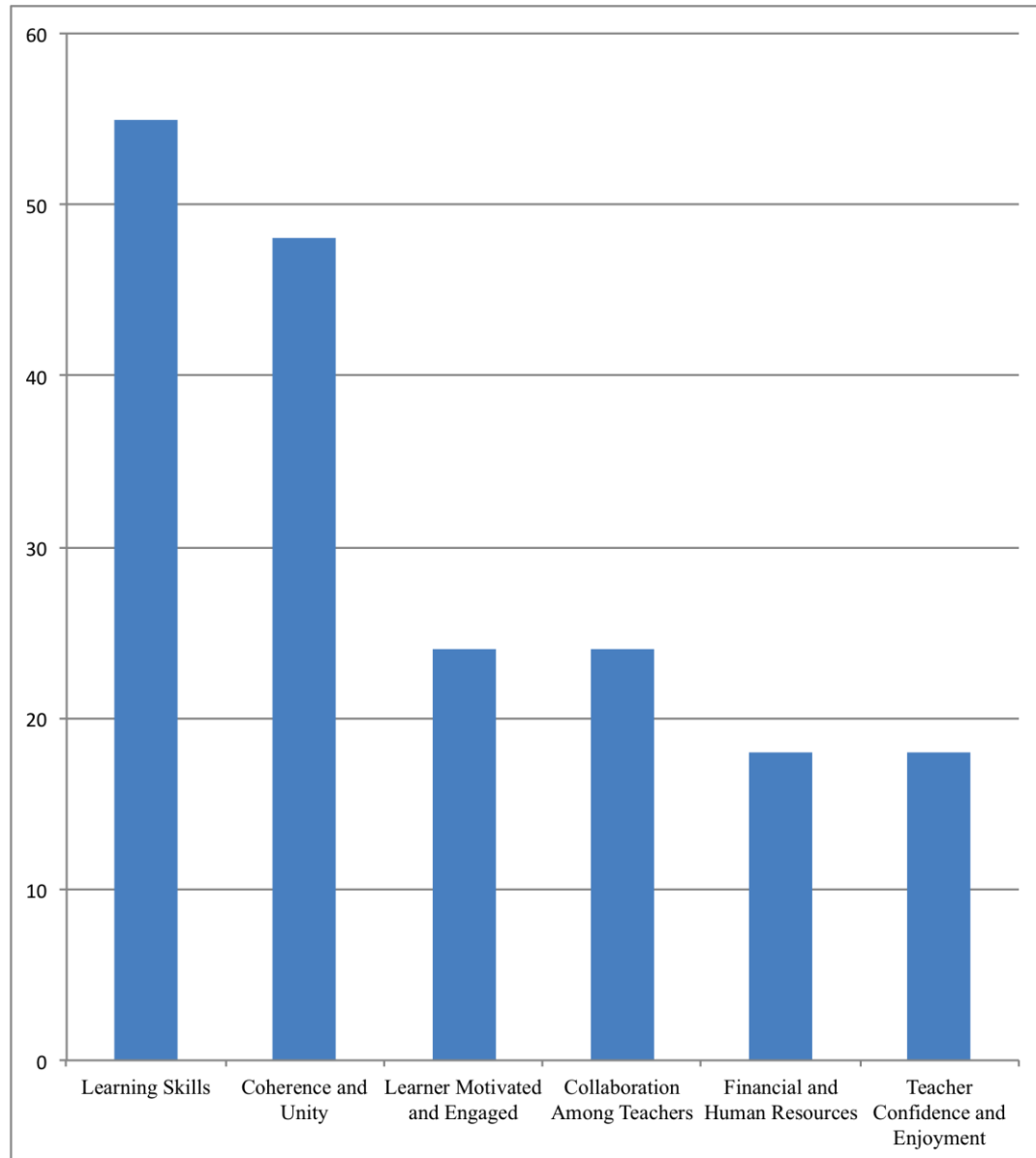
Figure 3. Most Referenced School Indicators of Success



When the same analysis was conducted for the six case study schools a similar pattern was found. Figure 4 shows that the first three indicators mirror those in Figure 3, a) student demonstrations of the learning skills (both academic and social) promoted by the PYP, b) the

unity and coherence of the school community, and c) the motivating, child centered nature of the programme.

Figure 4. Case Studies Most Referenced School Indicators of Success

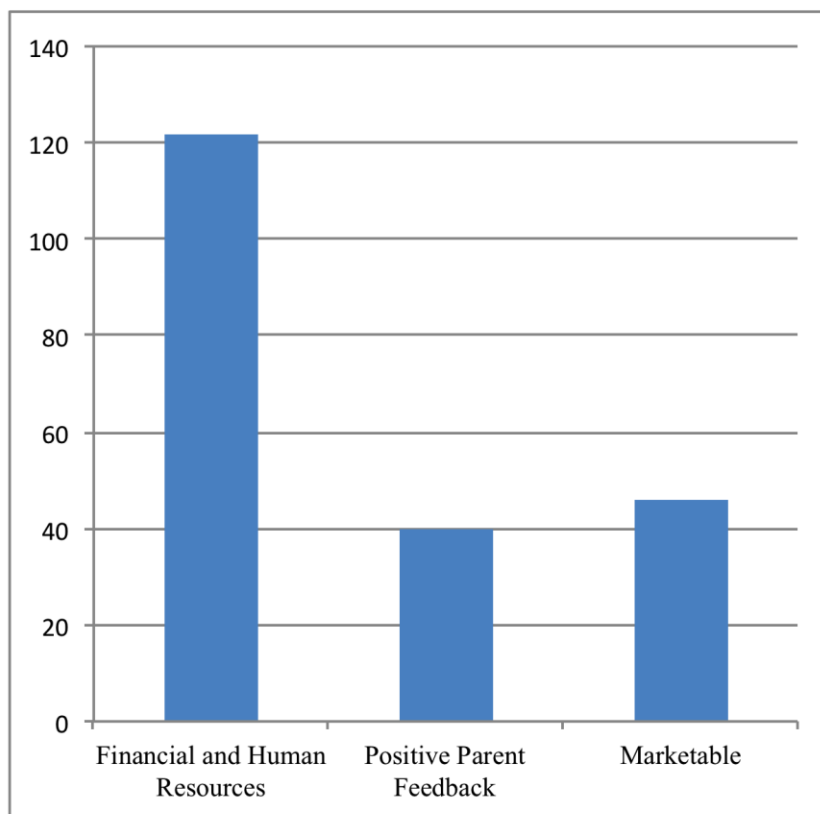


Part B: The indicators and evidence of the success of the PYP for school stakeholder groups– administrators/leaders, teachers, and parents (Research question 2)

School Leadership (Research question 2a)

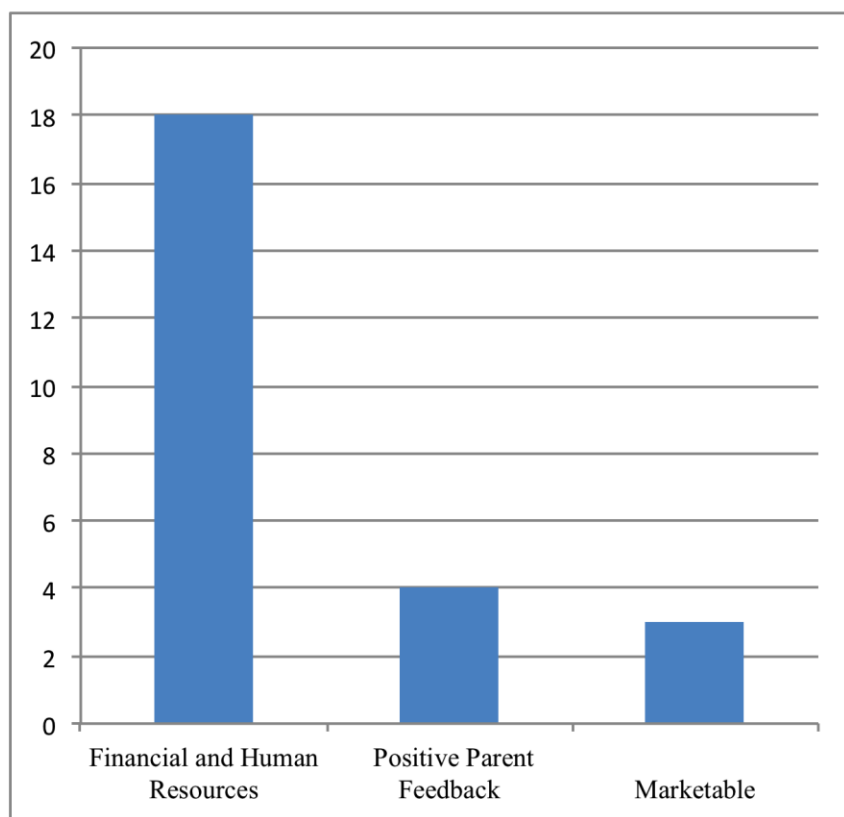
Schools identified three indicators of success of the PYP for school leadership as focusing financial and human resources, positive parent feedback, and the PYP being marketable (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. School Leadership Indicators of Success



A similar pattern was found in the case study schools (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Case Study School Leadership Indicators of Success



Examples of the school leadership indicators are presented below with a brief commentary

Focusing financial and human resources

Financial resources

Schools described a success of the PYP as having focused and clarified leadership decisions around the use of financial resources to support the programme and buy additional services to enhance its delivery. A number of schools noted the restructuring of their libraries, integration and improvement of ICT, and redeveloped classroom space to better support the programme:

- PYP....has significantly changed the structure and organization of our school at all staffing levels and budgetary level as well. As facilities are upgraded and added, IB program delivery and enhancement are key guiding factors. There is a coherent and

consistent approach to providing student support, teacher professional development and establishing professional dialogue for teachers.

- The PYP has changed the structure of the school by providing additional staffing for foreign language teachers as well as a technology teacher.
- Budgeting is more aligned and supports professional development and resources.

Additional administrative changes perceived as successful outcomes of the PYP for school leadership included scheduling to include planning time and flexible class time, and redevelopment of student/parent reports:

- The administration has provided common planning time during the day and meeting time with single subject teachers after school.
- The schedule has been modified to allow the work of collective planning.
- Report cards give feedback on children's strengths, challenges and provide recommendations for improvement.

Many schools noted the success of the PYP in focusing decision-making about school resources, to support of the programme of instruction. One school replacing another programme with the PYP described what they regarded as successful changes:

- The administrative team changed to include the PYP coordinator. The schedule is built upon the desire/need for collaborative planning. The collaboration with local PYP schools has increased (school visits, sharing session, coordinator meetings). PYP initiative, such as the Exhibition, influence the structure and organization of the school calendar and encourage participation (mentors, consultants, audience) for all divisions. The me impacts the timetabling of teachers across the divisions and what courses are offered. In order to support the programme there must be a degree of board financial support and specific recruitment. As a school that offers all three programmes, there must be collaboration and communication between the divisions, usually through the coordinators. Having the PYP in a school which also supports the MYP and DP means

that there is a common understanding of structural and organizational needs of the programmes, which heavily influences administrative discussions.

Focusing human resources

A key aspect of the management of human resources for school leadership focused on the recruitment and retention of teachers and their professional development. In schools with no clear instructional programme across the school, this can be a piecemeal process, with teachers hired for particular positions and professional development driven by the personal preference of the teacher or by changing perceptions of what is needed to support new programmes. Schools testified to the ‘success’ of being able to target recruitment for the PYP and provide financial support for professional development offered by the IB. This made for a unified approach that was transparent for the whole school community. School comments speaking to this as a success of the PYP included:

- Adopting the PYP has allowed our school to attract effective, like-minded teachers with similar values and aims.
- Resources and the infrastructure have changed according to the needs of the PYP – training of teachers happens regularly and teachers are recruited according to program needs.
- Adopting the PYP has meant that we need to work towards putting into place the standards and practices. This has helped us to establish appropriate resources, including facilities, physical resources as well as human resources in order to effectively implement the program. The PYP’s stance on pedagogical leadership also has a positive influence as it supports an administrative team that should be less about administration and more about pedagogy.

Parent feedback

Positive parent feedback was a marker of success for school leadership. The success of the PYP for school leadership was also connected to positive parent feedback on the programme. The comments regarding parent feedback included:

- The inquiry method of teaching has unified the school in a common way of learning. This has pleased our parent community.
- Parent involvement is also high and contributes to our success.

Schools noted the importance of having parents understand the PYP programme and become positively involved in the programme. Schools worked hard to reach out to parents via online bulletins, parent workshops, and open-door classroom policies. Schools and parents described:

- Parents have also learnt to use the language of the PYP and understand the programme better.
- One success is when parents come into our school and they can immediately recognize the curriculum.

Marketable

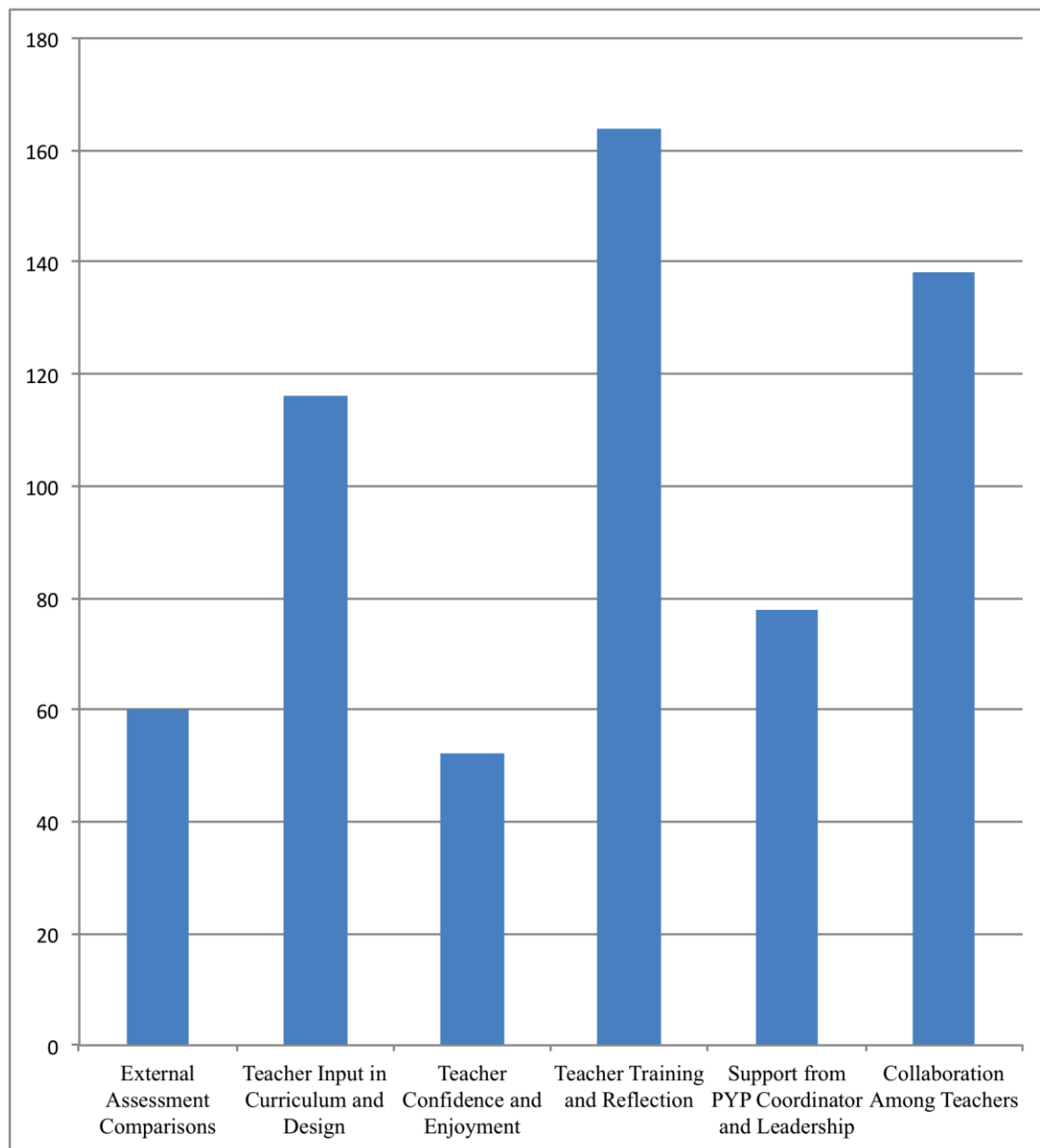
An indicator of success for school leaders also included marketability of the programme to recruit and attract new learners and families to the school. In the electronic questionnaire responses focused on the marketing aspect that the PYP offers for the school such as:

- We like that the PYP gives our expat community the option for a known and transferable education and some clout in the competitive international schools market in our location.
- We feel IB PYP is a marketing strength for us.

Teachers (Research question 2b)

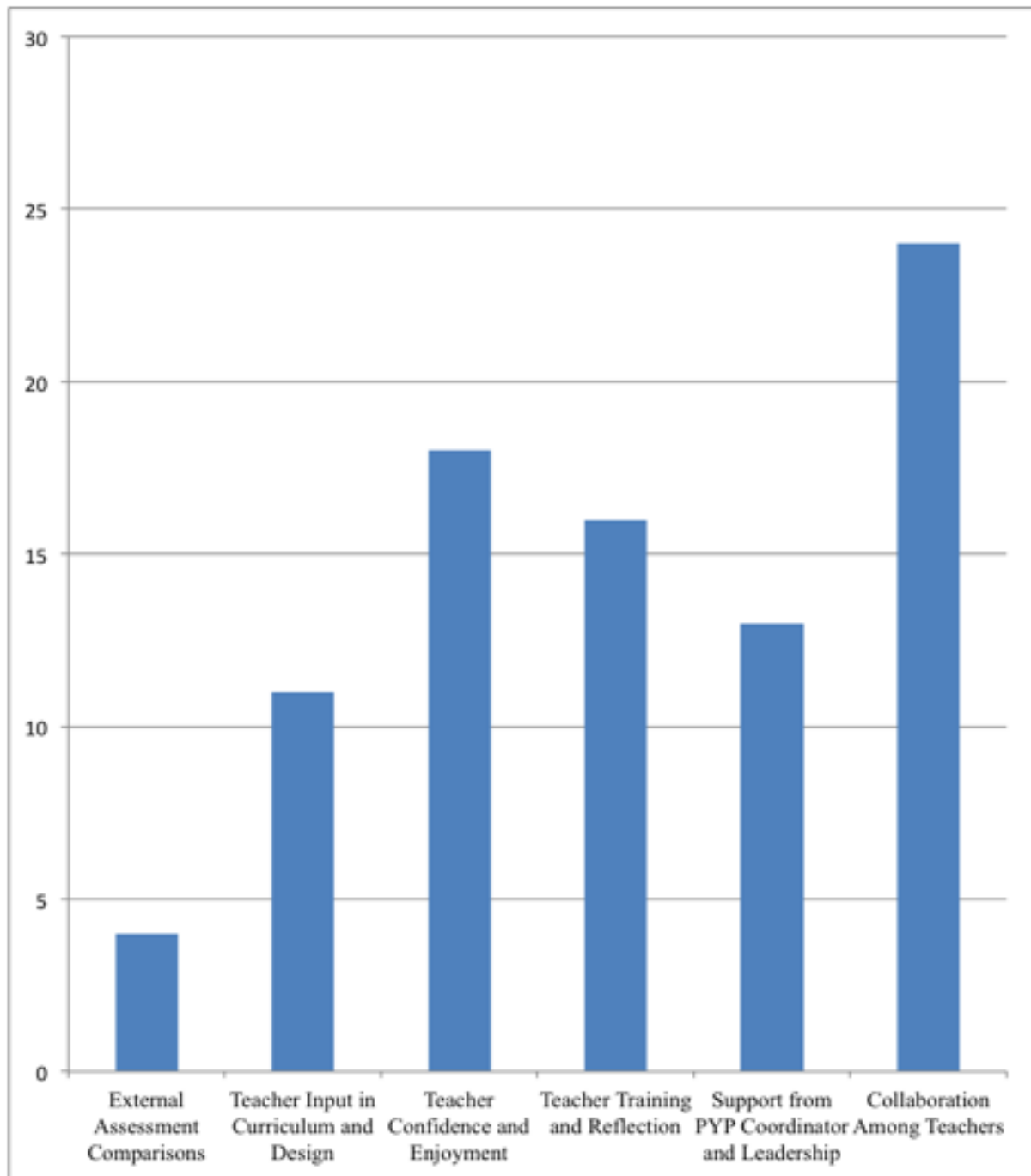
Schools identified six indicators of success of the PYP for teachers as a) teacher training and reflection, b) collaboration among teachers, c) teacher input into curriculum design, d) support from the PYP coordinator, e) external assessment comparisons, and f) school leadership. The strongest indicator of success for teachers was teacher training and reflection (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. Teacher Indicators of Success



For the case study schools, the strongest indicator of success was collaboration among teachers (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Case Study Teacher Indicators of Success



Examples of the teacher indicators are presented below with a brief commentary

Teacher professional development

The schools in the electronic questionnaire reported that teacher professional development and reflection was an important indicator of success. School comments about professional development and reflection were:

- We actively encourage staff to participate as IB evaluators and workshop leaders. The school encourages staff to submit articles in professional journals.
- The fact that we have had a low turn over and all the current teachers have had training makes it more successful because we are all the same page and have had the training.
- Inquiry-based learning instruction has increased and has become part of the classroom pedagogy.
- We feel part of the success is that the POI is continuously evolving and strengthened each year through reflection. In that sense, it is organic and keeps moving to reflect students and their learning.
- The success of the school has been ongoing – the school keeps making changes to continue to improve the process. The process of reflection takes place amongst teachers, students and parents – successful process. Schools in [this city] tend to be very static, however, the PYP in our school tends to promote continuous change.

Teacher collaboration

Most schools referenced teacher collaboration as an indicator of success for teachers. School commented:

- The common unit planner and revision of the POI have changed since the adoption of the PYP. The teachers also meet in weekly professional learning communities and the Inquiry Cycle has also been adopted. This allows for built-in collaboration time.
- We like the common language of the PYP Program. Staff collaboration on unit planning allows for consistency throughout grade level.

- One major success of the PYP is the level of collaboration it has engendered by giving staff from different countries a common language to discuss pedagogy.
- Although there was a strong level of collegiality prior to us being authorized as a PYP school in 2004 teachers tended to work in greater isolation from each other and there was no clearly articulated or understood curriculum. Curriculum was documented because it was felt it had to be rather than because it was played a crucial role in whole school improvement. The collaboration between teachers especially, and also the collaboration among and between other sections of the community, has resulted in a more coherent curriculum both vertically and horizontally and a better understanding of the needs of students at all grades.

Teacher input into curriculum development

Many schools described the success of the PYP in their school in terms how PYP included teachers into curriculum development, most often in terms of the planners. Schools reported:

- The PYP challenges us to extend the curriculum to the next step all the time. We are now working on designing stand-alone units using curriculum design outside the Unit of Inquiry. It is forcing us to blend discrete subjects into our Units of Inquiry where appropriate, thus helping students link concepts through disciplines.
- Due to the nature of the PYP, the teachers have the flexibility to be creative and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of their students.
- We use the transdisciplinary themes to unify and make sense of our state-mandated and common core curriculum and make cross-curricular connections.
- Working on planners put teachers in a position to define why we teach what we teach. Being concept driven the PYP puts teachers in a position to focus first on the concepts rather than the content.
- One way that PYP has changed the way we operate is that we focus our planning around the PYP planner. Our meetings are more focused on creating this “living document.” The planner allows us to work closely with our colleagues at our grade level, and to know where our students are coming from and going.

- By developing our own planners and curriculum, it provides us with a sense of ‘professionalism.’

Instructional leadership/distributed leadership

The addition of a PYP coordinator to the school leadership team is seen as a successful innovation by many of the schools in the electronic questionnaire:

- Learning and teaching is a focus of the leadership. The leadership structure of the school is one of a Director and Principal and a Head of Primary Years who is also PYP Coordinator, Head of Middle Years and DP Coordinator. By having the Head of Primary and Coordinator roles combined it is made clear that delivery of effective learning within the PYP is the key role of this person.
- We greatly value the position of PYP coordinator and without the PYP might not have had the role of curriculum coordinator defined in this way.
- There is now one person whose role is largely focused on curriculum, which has come about through the introduction of the PYPC job. This has led to more dialogue with teachers and with students about how to move curriculum forward and how to create coherence across the whole school.
- A success of the program has been the coordinator working in tandem with the PYP Coordinator and the Principal.

External assessment comparisons

The responses about learner external comparisons typically described a general sense of the success of the PYP in schools and were often included along with other indicators of success. Schools commented that:

- Our students score well in state achievement assessments and continually show growth.
- One measure of success is the ranking of our school in the standardized and state testing. The school performs very, very well.
- On par with other schools in terms of external assessment.

- Overwhelmingly teachers at our school confirmed that PYP has been highly successful. An increase in test scores, better behavior, and an overall sense of community were some of the comments teachers made about the PYP.
- Use of external diagnostics (ISI, Parent Surveys, NEASC, EYFS, ISA and MAP results) to measure our success and in using these measure and others to define our success. Students know and can demonstrate the attributes of the learner profile.
- Other evidence of success if that our evaluation visits by the IB and other external accreditation teams have been extremely successful.

Fostering enjoyment and confidence

Teachers exhibiting improved confidence, comfort, and enjoyment in their teaching was noted as an indicator of success by schools. The language that the school community used to describe success included:

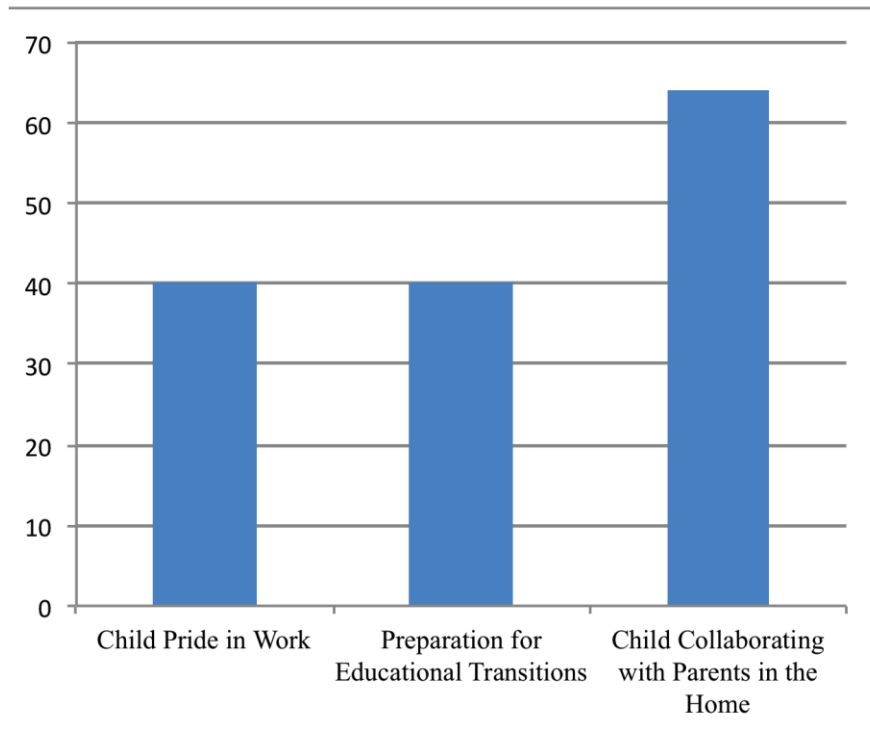
- Success can be described like this: it is a program in which all education stakeholders are involved (parents, teachers, students, etc.). We are internationally minded students (developing profile attributes) is driven collaborative work, we are innovative teachers, critical, reflective, learning mediators. We work to make learning meaningful and enduring.
- Another way to define the success is how comfortable teachers are with teaching the elements of the units of inquiry not just spelling, math, etc. The teachers who are using the planner as planned are indicators of success.
- Teacher willingness to be learners themselves.
- We feel part of the success is that the POI is continuously evolving and strengthened each year through reflection. In that sense, it is organic and keeps moving to reflect students and their learning.

Parents (Research question 2c)

Schools identified three indicators of success of the PYP for parents as a) parent-child collaboration in the home, b) child pride in their work, and c) good preparation for educational

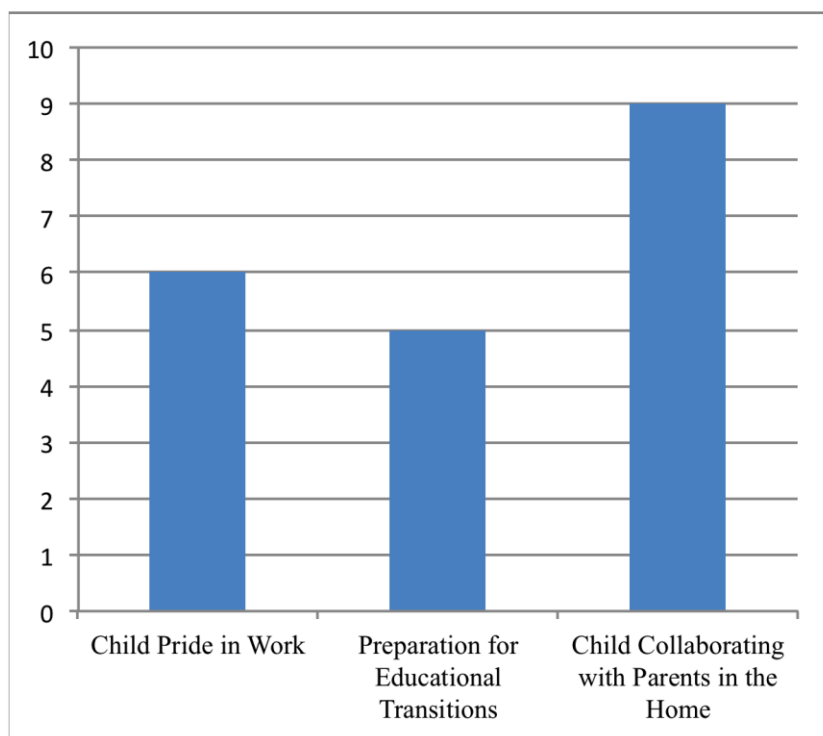
transitions. The strongest indicator of success for parents was parent-child collaboration (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Parent Indicators of Success



For the case study schools, parent-child collaboration was also the strongest indicator of success for parents (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Case Study Parent Indicators of Success



Examples of the parent indicators are presented below with a brief commentary

Child collaborating with parents in the home

Improved Parent-child collaborations and interactions in the home was an indicator of the programme success for parents. Parents reported students returning home talking about their in-school learning, which offered parents a better understanding of student learning in the school. Parents shared that:

- My child wants to show me what she has learned during the day.
- Parents are also becoming more involved and knowing what their child has been learning about.
- A strength of the school that I see every day in our home is that kids who learn in different ways are able to demonstrate their understanding by coming at projects in different ways. I have two very different children, one who is more ‘traditionally’ a good

student, and one who is not. Each of my children are offered many ways to express what they've learned – and wow, they've both learned a lot and they've learned it differently.

- I use the IB learner profile at home. I like the fact that it's reinforced in the classroom and linked to the learner.
- PYP terms have become familiar and spoken at school and home.
- Parents feel excited to learn the PYP together.

Pride in work and ability

Parents in the electronic questionnaire stressed that their children were living examples of the learner profile and proud of their children and their ability. This came through in the words that parents used to describe their children, which included:

- Children have become awake and eager to learn, come home asking, inquiring, wanting to know more about the world around them.
- With three children who have gone through the program, I've noticed that they do not regurgitate their lessons. They take things a step further. My children ask real questions in life. Often these questions that I can't answer, so we go off and research things
- My kids think better than I do! I am so impressed with their critical thinking skills.
- It makes my child bring out his own strengths and abilities and also be a risk-taker and try out the things he has never explored before.

Preparation for educational transitions

The school community indicated the PYP was successful in preparing children for further study and transitioning to other contexts. The transitions described by the school community were:

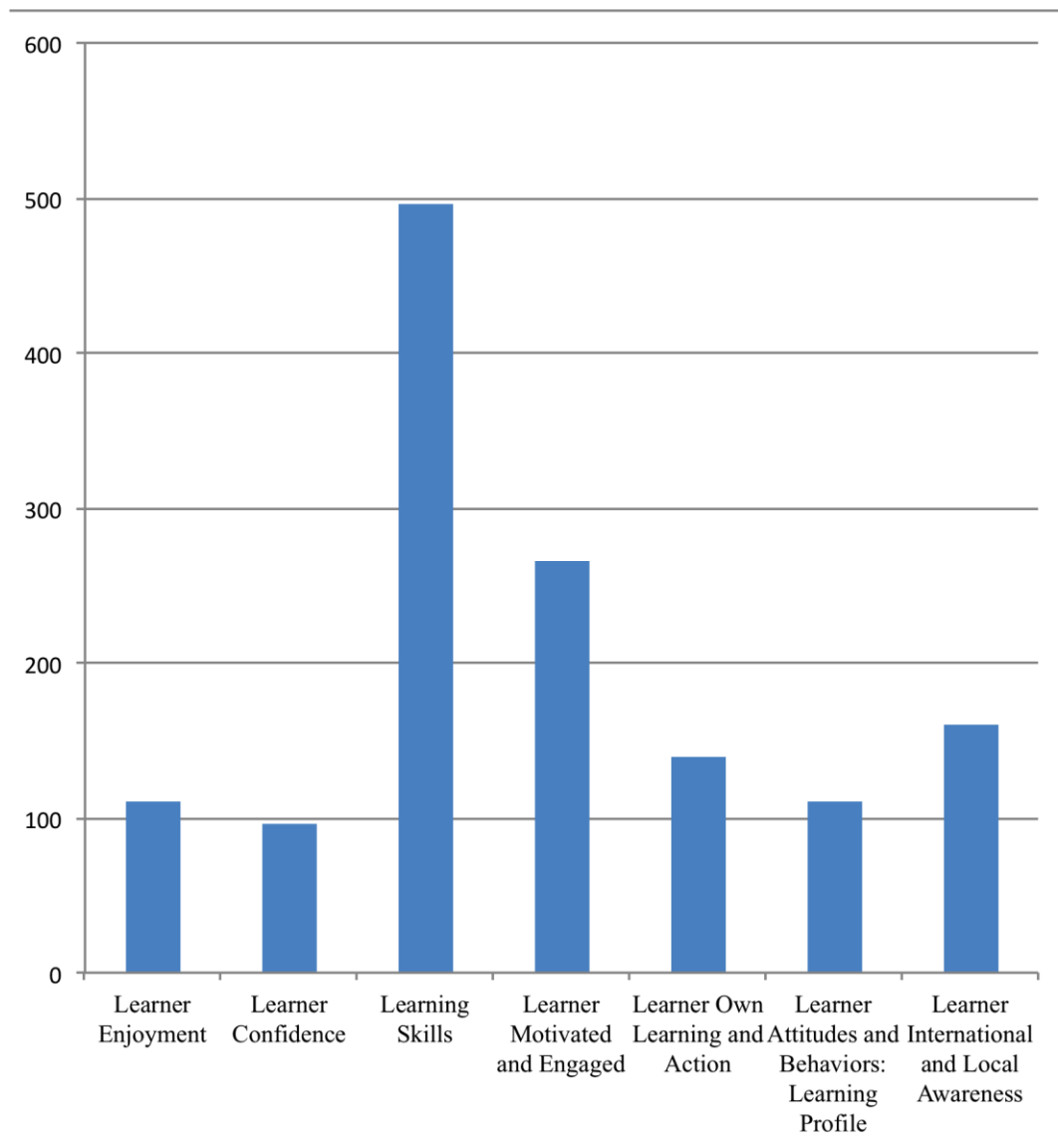
- Parents do see that their older children who have moved onto middle school have classmates who did not attend a PYP school and they do see the difference in their ability to work in groups, think for themselves.
- It [PYP] builds a foundation for the children to take into the MYP and later out into the world.

- Success of students continuing to MYP and them [students] reporting how experiences prepare them well for the MYP.
- Preparing the students with skills in readiness for the Middle and Senior School, as well as now ten years later, we can see these PYP students shine in other senior curricula.

Learner (Research question 2d/2e)

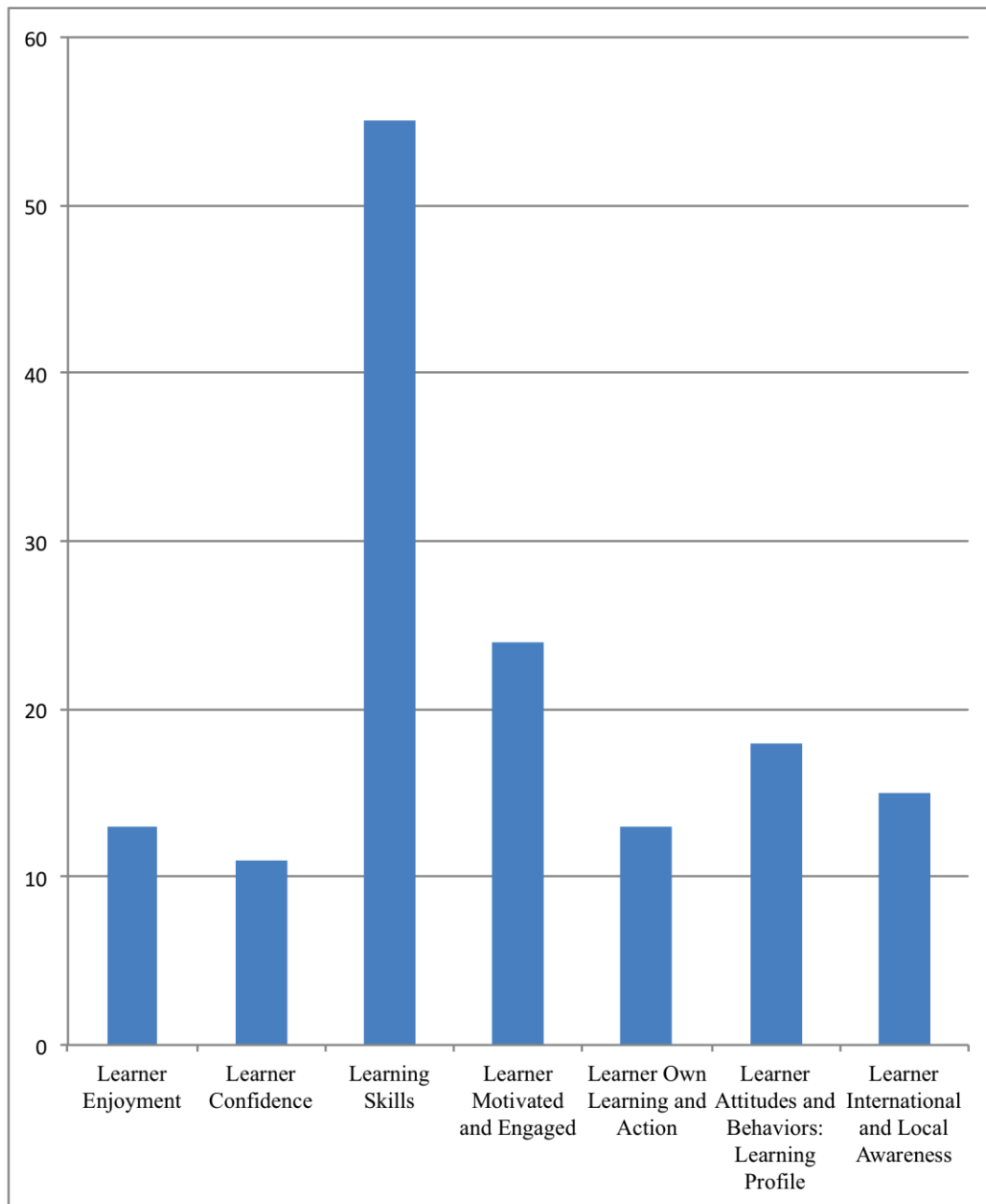
Schools identified seven indicators of success for learners as a) learning skills, b) learner motivated and engaged in learning, c) awareness of local and global, d) learners taking charge of their learning, e) learner displaying positive attitudes and behaviors reflecting the learner profile, f) enjoyment of learning, and g) improved confidence. The dominant indicator of success for learners was learning skills, both academic and social (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Learner Indicators of Success



Focus on improved learning skills, both academic and social, was also the primary indicator of success for learners in the case study schools (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Case Study Learner Indicators of Success



Examples of the learner indicators are presented below with a brief commentary

Learning skills

Schools identified learning skills, academically and socially, as a primary indicator of success for learners. The school community described learning skills in the following ways:

- Our students are good thinkers and questioners. They are compassionate and caring children about self and the environment.
- Students benefit from learning experiences planned around meaningful big ideas, giving opportunity to explore concepts in depth, make connections and retain understanding. Finally, the PYP has positively affected our student in that they are really getting to understand and experience the importance of taking action.
- Children are walking (or running) through corridors to investigate the response to a question.
- The PYP has developed more teamwork amongst the students as well as allowing them to become more open-minded to new ideas that can lead to action.
- On field trips with the older kids many of the places we have visited have commented that the kids ask very good questions and never stop asking them. Students make connections across disciplines. It's a very powerful when this transfer happens – when students relate seemingly unrelated knowledge – WOW!

PYP exhibition

Schools in the study referred to the PYP Exhibition as concrete evidence of success of the PYP in their school. In most of the schools surveyed, the PYP Exhibition was the clearest example of student achievement of the skills and attributes expected of success of a PYP learner. Schools described this in the following ways:

- The PYP Exhibition is very successful, the students display their development in the Learner Profile.

- The PYP Exhibition matures students and has helped them become agents of change in the school and community.
- The grade 5 project is an example of success as this prepares the students to use research skills, work within a team develop higher order thinking skills.
- The year 6 Exhibition is of high standard and the students excel at presenting their work and communicating their knowledge.

Motivated and engaged learner

A child's motivation and engagement in school is often a simple indicator of school climate and success. Children who are eager to learn build the continuity between the home and school. The school community in our study noted that:

- Success of the program would be described as the child being happy, comfortable, looking forward to going to school, learning values and morals, growing more aware of the meaning and forms of implementation of values in daily life, self-expressive, adaptable, imaginative, courageous, sociable and inquisitive.
- A student attitude taught at school is reflected at home...it is important for a parent to know that a child is happy at school.
- Students are developing in their understanding that research doesn't mean finding out about something because they are told to do so by a teacher, but that meaningful research takes place in the context of a bigger inquiry and involves them finding out answers to their own questions and wonderings. This has had a profound impact on their level of engagement and therefore on student learning in general.

International mindedness/ local and global awareness

Schools in the electronic questionnaire described international mindedness and international awareness as a key feature of the PYP programme, "delivery of the PYP is very successful and it promotes internationally minded learners." In a wide-range of settings, the focus on international mindedness focused on developing an awareness of the world, beyond national borders, and the interconnected relationship among citizens, but also promoted tolerance and

difference. The context in which the PYP creates and promotes internationally minded learners was referenced by a number of schools:

- A success of the PYP program is the emphasis on the global community. Located in a predominantly white, Christian neighborhood, our school is refreshingly diverse with many students who are first generation Americans. Their ethnic backgrounds span the globe and our students have learned to accept and embrace people who are different from themselves.
- By helping to develop their awareness as global citizens, the PYP promotes tolerance throughout the school.
- One of the most important strengths, I personally see from this program is that it constantly challenges each learner at his/her own level to become an internationally minded person.
- It has allowed the student to develop the idea of an interconnected world, with the awareness that their decisions affect others and the world around them.
- Students are more focused on the world around them and understand that others may have different perspectives.

Students take control of their own learning and initiate action

Students in the PYP programmes exhibited ownership and took action for their own learning, which influences learning and engagement. In the questionnaire the school community noted:

- We would define success as the ability to cope better with different educational opportunities. They become independent learners who can take responsibility for different challenges.
- Students want to take action – they know their voices will be heard.
- When students take action on their own, we know that students are engaged and it is a powerful learning framework.

Positive effect on attitudes/behaviors (learner profile)

Schools described the learners in their schools as evidence of success of the PYP. As the heart of the PYP, learners embody the success:

- The general shared opinion is that success (of the PYP) is reflected in our students and in the type of learners they are becoming, their attitudes towards learning, and the way in which they are taught to be enquirers. Also, success is measures in the way they are able to work really well towards social responsibility; in the way they become powerful communicators.
- We can see the difference between the students when the program started and with new ones. The way they learn, research, interact, the independence they show, the way they work and how they are more secure in what they are doing and what they want and how they do it. You can see the difference in what they see.
- Our students are being strengthened academically, emotionally, and socially as we develop using the IB curriculum. Our student-driven activities and teacher collaboration activities have also paved the way for growth for all of us.
- We feel the PYP is successful because our students really do use the Learner Profile, are good inquirers and think about global issues.

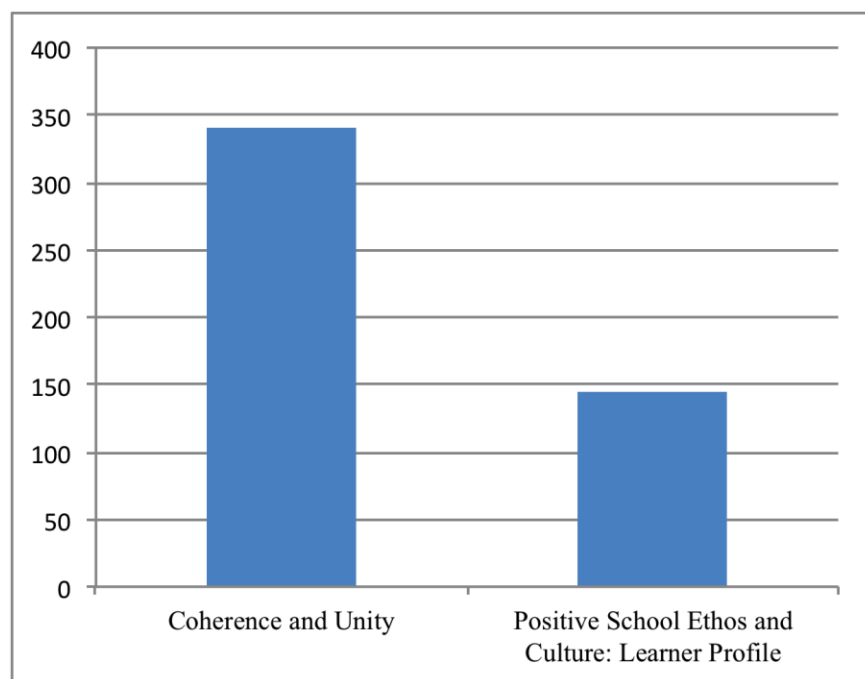
Development of international mindedness within the school community (Research question 2f)

There was very little reference to developing international mindedness as an indicator of success of the PYP for the school community. Schools noted that the development of global awareness and international mindedness for learners as an indicator of success (mentioned above), but for the school community it was referenced more as a component of the PYP programme that permeated the school. It is viewed as a foundation of the IB program.

Whole school community (Research question 2g)

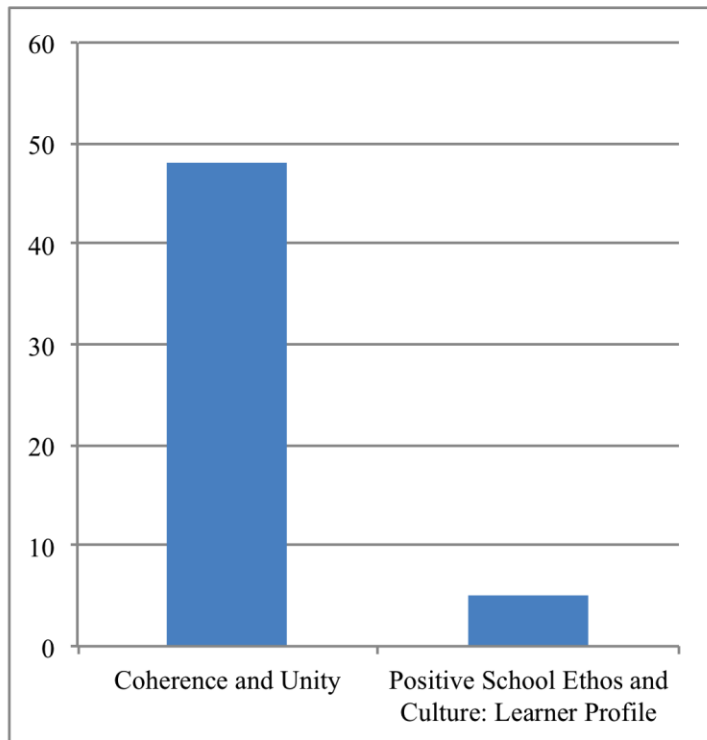
Schools identified two indicators of success for learners as a) coherence and unity and b) positive school ethos and culture. The primary indicator of success for the whole school community was coherence and unity (see Figure 13).

Figure 13. Whole School Community Indicators of Success



The same analysis for the case study schools yielded the same pattern with coherence and unity as the main indicator of success for the whole school (see Figure 14).

Figure 14. Case Study Whole School Community Indicators of Success



Examples of the whole school community indicators are presented below with a brief commentary

Coherence and unity – A common vision of enhanced student outcomes

A vision of the PYP learning community is defined by their vision of a well-educated student from their school, which is articulated by the learning profile. Schools in the electronic questionnaire testified to the success of the adoption of the Learner Profile in contributing to school unity and cohesiveness:

- The whole school community understand that the PYP student profile represents qualities that are important and that can guide behavior, decisions and interactions within the school community. The success of the PYP is that the IB learner profile stands strong in the hearts and minds of our students, parents, teachers, administrators, and district and community leaders.

- The attributes of the Learner Profile are infused throughout everyone's experience in our building. The PYP is also becoming part of our physical landscape in the ways that we display our Program of Inquiry and the 'rules' that are posted throughout our school.
- The Learner Profile, attitudes and action are powerful resources to bring the school community together as global citizens
- The focus on the Learner Profile helps develop dispositions, which helps keep the social/behavioral side of school in focus alongside the academic.

Common language

Schools described how having a common language promoted by the PYP documentation strengthened cohesiveness and alignment in the school community. Schools noted:

- There is a common language amongst the students, parents and teachers.
- It has unified us as a school – common language and teaching practice.
- Provides a common language that facilitates communication within the school and with teachers in other schools.
- Students and parents are actively using the PYP vocabulary.
- There is strong and yet ever deepening understanding in the faculty of the same ideas are seen in our curriculum, collaboration, and goals. The conversations parents have had with us show that they too have a good understanding of what we are trying to achieve in our PYP curriculum and community. The PYP is the centre of who we are, and what we do. It has made us think of ourselves as part of a global community and as global citizens.

Cooperation and collaboration

Another aspect of the PYP learning community that school emphasized was the cooperation/collaboration between all stakeholders that it encouraged:

- The biggest strength that we see is that it brings everyone together to work towards a common goal.
- The whole school is viewed as a cohesive, collaborative unit with Board/teachers/parents acting together for the students.
- Success can be described like this: it is a program in which all education stakeholders are involved (parents, students and teachers).
- One of the key areas that PYP has influenced in the structure/organization of our school is collaboration.

Development of a defining ethos and culture for the school

The PYP programme provided a strong sense of coherence and unity in schools and the learner profile served to define a positive ethos and culture in the school. In the electronic questionnaire, comments from the schools relating directly to the defining of the school ethos and culture included the following:

- PYP is truly ingrained in everything that is said and done. At every opportunity, you will hear faculty, staff and students alike reinforcing the IB principles whether in the classroom, the playground or walking down the halls.
- A main strength of the PYP at our school is that the philosophy and structure of the PYP is truly embraced and put into practice by staff, students and the community.
- The whole school is viewed as a cohesive, collaborative unit with Board/teachers/parents acting together for the students.
- The success of the PYP in our school can also be seen in the outcomes of successful collaboration at different levels of the community.

Part C: Across case study indicators of success

1. **School leadership:** in exhibited in the ways the schools focused financial and human resources to support the PYP in schools, incorporated feedback by parents, and marketed the program:
 - Decision-making regarding the allocation of financial and human resources to best meet PYP needs
 - Positive feedback from parents
 - PYP as a marketable program
2. **Enhanced teacher outcomes:** providing teachers opportunities to extend their own teaching skills and have a direct input into the organization of the school through curriculum development. All schools noted this came from:
 - Required professional development to support inquiry learning
 - Involvement in collaborative planning and leadership of the program
 - Distributed leadership through the PYP coordinator acting as instructional leaders or the program
3. **Enhanced parent involvement:** Each school served a very unique community, differing by socio-economic status and mobility, yet all schools talked to the success of the PYP in the direct involvement of parents in their child's learning at home, their involvement in school activities, and the level of parent satisfaction this engendered.
 - Parents in all the schools were involved through sharing of student learning at home, parent information sessions given by the schools, and direct involvement in school events and trips.
 - Schools serving communities where there was previously limited parent involvement (1, 5) spoke to the improvement in student motivation resulting from the adoption of the program and its requirement that schools reach out to parents.

- Schools serving privileged communities (6, 4) spoke to a more focused rather than critical involvement of parents and community using the PYP language and upholding PYP ethos and values.
4. **Enhanced student outcomes:** reflected in the ways schools saw students develop an understanding of inquiry and a love of learning, while making decisions and taking action. These included:
- Enjoyment of learning
 - Confidence to demonstrate learning
 - Mastery of inquiry learning skills
 - Willingness to take action and an understanding of moral and ethical decision-making
 - Awareness of local and global issues
5. **International mindedness:** Case study schools noted improved global awareness and international mindedness for learners and the school community as indicators of PYP success. Schools noted:
- Given that the majority of the staff and students are English speaking and Canadian born, the school sees an important success of the PYP as creating a need for the school to provide opportunities to expose students to the wider world.
 - The strong sense of school community and the demonstrated commitment to international mindedness and global citizenship
6. **Enhanced school unity, coherence and common vision:** a shared vision that extended from leadership to teachers, learners and their parents and beyond into the larger community. This was reflected in:
- Use of a common PYP language by all members of the community extending the ability to communicate about the program into the wider IIB community

- Working together to become internationally minded and develop global connections

In summary, the PYP has been successful for schools in providing them with a vision of learner outcomes that can be adopted by every member of the community, strong leadership in guiding the school resources, uniting them in a mission of modeling the elements of the profile for the students and enabling student adoption of them. The provision of a common language enables communication between all members of the learning community so formed, further increasing the perception of unity and coherence that the schools see as an indicator of the success of the PYP for them. In addition to the overarching theme of creating a learning community, schools also addressed the successful features of the PYP in terms of school functioning.

Section 2 School context and perceptions of PYP success

Cross-case analysis

A cross-case analysis of the six case study schools indicated that contextual factors influenced school definitions of the success of the programme for the school in many different ways. For some schools, the factors had been challenges to overcome in order to make the PYP a success for the school. In others, the PYP was a success for the school because it addressed challenges from the school context.

School contextual issues identified by the case study schools are indicated in Table 6. Table 6 provides a snapshot of the many contextual issues across private and public schools.

Table 6. Case Study School Context Factors and PYP Success

	Schools					
	Public			Private		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Integration of national and state curriculum/testing	x	x	x		x	
2. Geographic isolation from IB school/community	x	x	x		x	
3. Constrained financial resources	x	x	x		x	
4. Mobility of students and teachers				x		x
5. Language support provision	x			x		
6. Community/parent culture and development	x		x		x	
7. Constraints on access to resources/technology						x

The following three examples drawn from the case studies indicate the complexity of defining the effect of context on school definitions of success:

Geographical isolation from other IB schools combined with financial constraints that restricted travel to overseas training and conferences made four of the case study schools (Schools 1, 2, 3 and 5) view themselves as less successful than others in developing international mindedness in the whole school community. However, these same schools noted the development of global awareness and international mindedness as important indicators of the success of the PYP at their schools.

Teacher mobility was another context factor that operated in different ways for different schools. The three public schools with restricted ability to recruit teachers had stable teacher populations who had together successfully developed a clear vision of PYP outcomes and methodology. However, two of the private international schools with unrestricted hiring potential faced the challenge of highly mobile expatriate teacher populations and the competition of other schools for PYP trained teachers. This presented the challenge of providing training of new faculty and

maintaining a common understanding across the school of PYP outcomes and methodology if the programme is to continue to be successful.

A third context factor that is one of geographical location rather than school type is that of the need to meet requirements of national or state curriculum and testing. Four of the schools noted this was a reality for them, however, their perceptions of the effects of meeting external curriculum requirements differed. In two of the schools the requirements were seen as reducing the success of the PYP because of the time involved in preparing students for content based tests that detracted from inquiry learning activities. In the other two schools the PYP was viewed as successful for the school because student learning was enhanced by the programme to the point where students did well on the external tests without additional coaching and could excel in areas not addressed by the national/state curriculum.

Cross-case analysis summary of findings

Challenges of context

1. **Accommodating state and national curriculum:** All schools noted that a key success of the PYP for the school was the flexibility provided in the programme allowing them to meet external state and nation requirements and raise teaching and learning above those mandated locally.
 - Both public and private schools were required to meet national curriculum standards and other requirements but to different degrees of prescription.
 - Where the state requirements are highly prescriptive in terms of content and standardized testing, as in case study school 3 and school 5, a school has more difficulty balancing PYP and local curriculum, and measured success by the ability to do this.
 - In the schools where national or state requirements are less prescriptive or simply require the school to address specific context, schools reported no difficulty in incorporating local requirements into their PYP units.

2. **Developing a common vision of inquiry learning:** All schools saw the need to align teaching practice to Inquiry Learning as a key success of the programme but varied in the extent to which teachers shared a common understanding of what this involved.
 - The public schools (case study schools 1, 2, and 3) with stable populations of teachers who had worked together since the introduction of the PYP at their schools had a shared understanding of what ‘inquiry’ looked like in their school, and saw this coherence as a measure of success.
 - The private schools, with less homogeneous and stable teacher populations, including mixes of expatriate teachers on short term contracts, and local teachers, reported the challenge of developing a common understanding of Inquiry Learning.
3. **Accessing the global IB community:** All schools noted a success of the PYP for them was the connection it provided to a global professional learning community, but the ease of making this connection varied by school context:
 - In all the schools, teachers who had opportunities to travel to conferences and training sessions outside their local region were inspired and invigorated by the experiences of interacting face to face with other IB teachers and hearing about other schools.
 - Four of the six schools (case study schools 1, 2, 3, and 5) noted that limited financial resources constrained their ‘global’ interaction.
 - Schools highlighted the importance to them of IB feedback about their progress in implementing the programme in relation to the global PYP community.
 - All schools spoke to the importance of the provision of opportunities for teachers to visit schools and conferences to reduce the sense of developing the PYP in isolation.
4. **Allocating resource:** The schools differed widely in the financial resources they had at their disposal, and the control over recruiting and retaining teachers. This required thoughtful decision-making at the leadership level regarding the best use of the resources available.

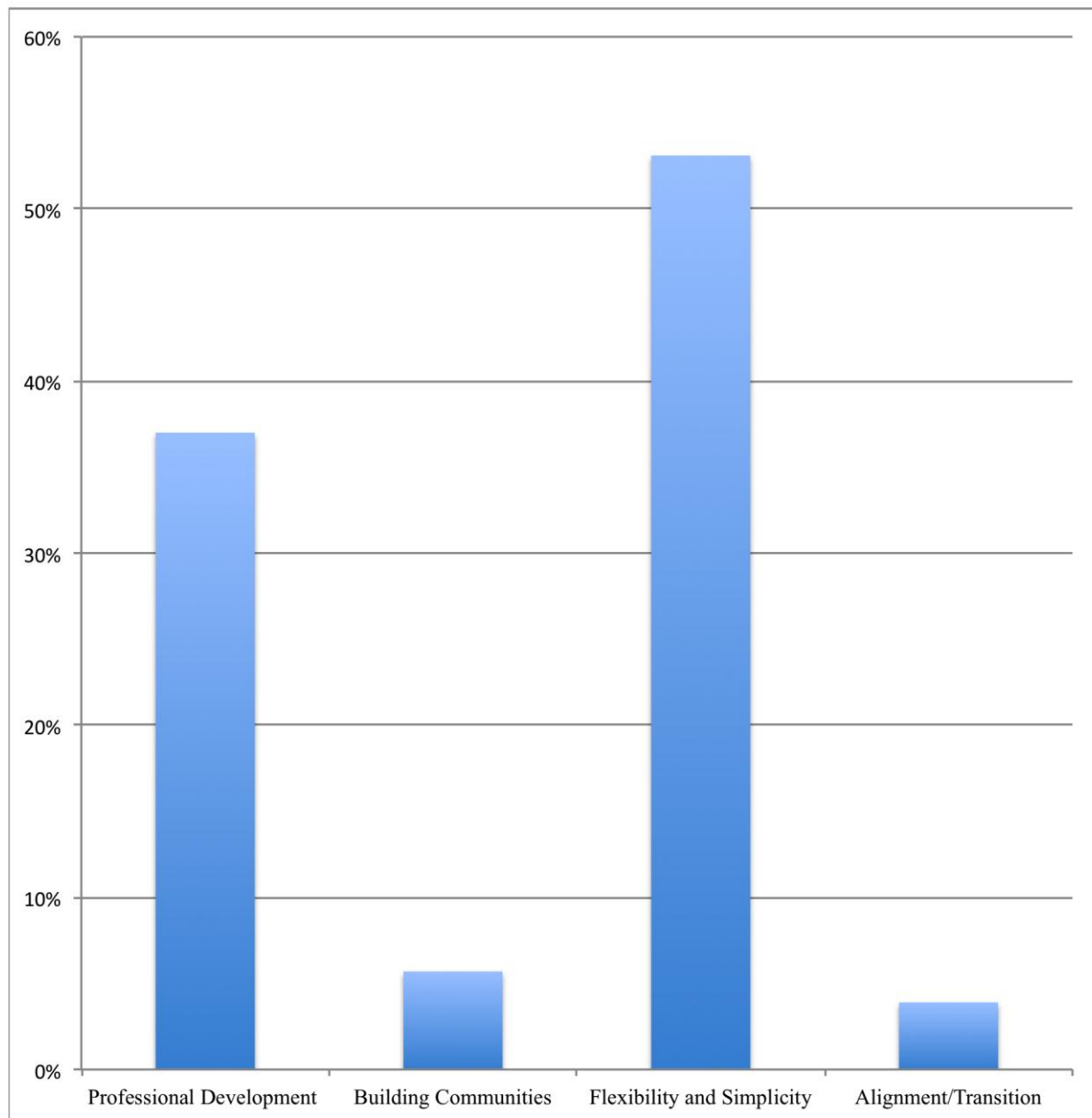
- Schools with limited financial resources could not offer teachers professional development opportunities that would develop their international connections and given them insights into the workings of other PYP schools (case study 3).
- Schools with high teacher turnover spend money on PYP training for teachers but may get limited benefit from this (case study school 4).
- Schools with no direct choice in teacher hiring (case study school 2) cannot seek out teachers with previous PYP experience.

Section 3 Future development

School comments and suggestions from both the electronic questionnaire and case studies were then grouped into the areas of the PYP to which they referred. These groups and the subgroups within them are (see Figure 15):

1. Flexibility and Innovation, and Simplification: a) flexibility to adapt to context, b) flexibility to be innovative, c) simplification of curriculum framework and language.
2. Alignment of IB Programme Formats and Language.
3. Aspects of Professional Development: a) cost effectiveness, b) Inquiry Learning, c) exemplars.
4. Community Building: a) improve communication and b) more interaction.

Figure 15. School Recommendations for Future Development of the PYP



Selected quotations from schools are provided here, and discussion of these school-recommended areas for development follows in Chapter 5

1. Flexibility, innovation and simplification

a) Flexibility to Specific School Contexts

- IB could support us more by realizing the province has a set curriculum that planners have to align with.
- It doesn't allow for us to integrate dual structures: IB and State/County
- Realization and understanding that that we are also a Public School that needs to pass high stakes testing.
- The IB could help by giving us more freedom in adapting our planner to our very specific situation.
- More flexibility and sensitivity to the demands of district and state programs placed on public schools.
- More understanding that the school is an individual institution with internal goals and plans and must adapt.

b) Flexibility with the PYP Framework to Innovate

- A rigid refusal to allow teachers to departmentalize in the upper grades seems to limit the possibilities for expert teaching – more room to innovate.
- The requirements of IB on teachers (rigid framework of themes, key concepts, planners, etc.) do not allow us as teachers to exist/work/plan/learn in the 'IB Way'.
- Give schools flexibility within the PYP to grow and meet clients' needs.
- Give schools some more independence and freedom to determine what is best in our circumstance.
- Accept the replacement of a module each year chosen by the students and their teacher to allow greater flexibility.
- More flexibility on units of inquiry, so you can 'flow' between concepts.

c) Simplification

- Why do we have both the PYP learner attitudes and the IB student Profile?
We think there is too much overlap.
- The model is frustratingly complex for parents, teachers and students
- Simplify the learner profile for the Early Years.
- The IB language used in the planners could be simplified.
- Reduce the number of units to 2 in early childhoods and four in elementary
- Simplicity of language across all three programs would help.
- The language of the PYP is too wordy and there is too much jargon.

2. **Alignment of programmes**

- Continued work on transition from PYP to MYP.
- Develop a clearer transition and articulation from one IB programme to another.

3. **Professional development**

a) Cost Effective

- Better, more accessible PD (easier to host/internally train).
- Cheaper trainings would be great – we find them very helpful, but very expensive.
- Making it more cost effective...allow IB training to be led by local qualified personnel.
- IB workshops are extremely expensive and even one in-school workshop, while seen as a more cost-effective way of providing professional development for all PYP practitioners in a school, can consume almost the whole annual budget for PYP staff development.

b) For Inquiry Learning

- A greater understanding and PD on inquiry and how to assess student inquiry /inquiry skills.

- More clearly defined definitions of what inquiry is – if you don't know, then the IB website doesn't really help.
- Create a developmental continuum of what inquiry looks like at different phases and grade levels.
- More explicit teaching pedagogy. The 'how' to teach.
- Videos of excellent inquiry practice with PYP schools.

d) Exemplars

- The PYP could provide more concrete examples of exemplary work.
- Give us clearer guidelines and example of things like planners. We can look on the OCC but we have no way to know if what has been posted is "good" or would pass instruction.
- Share exemplars of inquiry.

4. **Building community**

a) Improve Communication

- Make the OCC easier to navigate.
- Update materials on the OCC regularly.
- Make the OCC more user friendly, better organized.
- The OCC materials are not always relevant and helpful – perhaps a monitor.
- Overall communication could be more personalized and frequent from the regional offices.
- Greater access to contact the IB directly when IB Answers is not effective.

b) More Interaction

- May we have an opportunity to visit other schools to observe, share and learn other ideas to help us better implement the program.
- Having the opportunity of interfacing with other schools and thus have higher standards for co-evaluating ourselves and feedback.
- Help us better connect to the IB community.

- Ensure that there is further opportunity for teachers to learn from other teachers around the world.
- Visits to IB schools (near and far).
- It would be nice to have the opportunities to have physical connections and contacts with other schools and IB educators.
- Support in sending teachers to other PYP schools.
- Perhaps the IB could develop satellite professional learning centers in regions where there are a few PYP schools to allow things such as PD, job alike opportunities, etc.

Summary of case study school recommendations

Table 7 provides a summary of recommendations for future development drawn from case study schools. Below is a summary of the case study school recommendations for future development of the programme:

- Greater flexibility and opportunities for innovation in the OIP
- Training opportunities that exposed teachers to different school situations and international interactions
- Simplification of documents and planners
- Increased face to face communications between the IB and school

Table 7. Case Study School Recommendation for Future Development of the PYP

	Schools					
	Public			Private		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Building community	x		x		x	
Allowing for innovation and flexibility			x			x
Financial support for improvement	x	x	x	x	x	
Integration and simplification	x		x	x	x	x
<p>Building community</p> <p>Face to face versus online training with international colleagues; better networking and support with sending teachers/administrators to visit other international schools; regular and supportive visits from IB with feedback; more dynamic and interesting website, also available to parents</p> <p>Allowing for innovation</p> <p>Greater flexibility with the planning framework: develop professional development to stretch experienced teachers</p> <p>Financial support for improvement</p> <p>Help with funding for training new faculty; differentiated fee structure for schools; more training on site; make grants available for program development</p> <p>Integration and Simplification</p> <p>Integrate attitudes and learner profile; simplify the language of the program; more guidelines for integration of specialist subjects and assessing progress for attributes and learner; make transition to MYP more seamless</p>						

Conclusion

In this chapter electronic questionnaire responses and in-depth case study evidence of school definitions of success of the PYP, indicators of success, and school suggestions for future development were presented. The first section of the chapter addressed overall school

definitions of success. The second section of the chapter described the indicators of schools referenced by schools. The final section of the chapter focused on suggestions by schools regarding components of the PYP programme that could improve and sustain the success of the PYP in schools.

Chapter 5 Discussion of the findings

Indicators and evidence of success

The study found strong evidence that the PYP promotes a strong professional learning community for teachers, administrators, students, and parents. The findings also suggest a clear process for how the PYP successfully infuses the professional learning community into schools. The PYP schools in the study overwhelmingly focused on student learning as an indicator of success including improved learning skills, motivation and engagement in learning, awareness of local and global issues, taking control of their learning, enjoyment of learning, and student confidence in learning. To focus and build the professional learning community, PYP schools build the whole community by having a shared vision of learning that permeates through school leadership, teachers, and parents that include a feeling of unity and coherence that are guided by the Learner Profile and defining a positive school ethos and culture. Another aspect of building a professional learning community includes teachers feeling supported as professionals in PYP schools, which is an important indicator of success in PYP schools. To feel like professionals, teachers noted participating in required trainings and reflection, increased collaboration among teachers, direct input in curriculum design and delivery, support from their PYP coordinator, and improved confidence and enjoyment in inquiry learning methods. The professional learning community of parents included a better understanding of the PYP programme through discussions and interactions with their children in the home, through how their children demonstrated confidence in their work, were eager to share their school experiences, and the parental belief that the PYP programme was the best programme to prepare students for the future.

All of these components of the professional learning community together are how PYP schools define, measure, and evaluate success in their school contexts. It is important to note that the indicators of success described above are not discrete indicators and that many overlap and cross stakeholder groups.

The influence of context on schools

While differences in schools' perceptions of success might be expected, the findings of this study indicated more unity than difference in the indicators of success on which schools focused, and the evidence of success they used. The components of a school's culture worked together in different ways for different schools. Each unique combination of contextual factors appears to give it both advantages and disadvantages in implementing the programme. For example, a well financed and resourced private international school dependent on highly mobile expatriate teachers such as Schools 4 and 6 in our case studies may have a much harder time maintaining common understandings about the delivery of the curriculum than schools with far fewer resources but very stable teacher communities who have developed the programme together, share common understandings about its delivery and have a long-time commitment to the school and its community such as case study schools 1 and 2.

Those schools, both private and public whose context required them to respond to and incorporate national or state curriculum requirements were similarly divided in the way they perceived this aspect as impacting the success of the programme. Highly prescriptive curriculum and high stakes testing, as found in schools 3 and 5 challenged the schools as they strove to maintain successful PYP programmes, while schools 1 and 2 where greater alignment with national and provincial requirements and the PYP existed, saw the success of the PYP in their school in part due to the flexibility of programme with regard to curriculum content and the thinking skills emphasized in it. This also showed up in the analysis of schools' recommendations from the online questionnaire responses, in a group of comments that recommended greater empathy and flexibility of implementation for schools in challenging contexts.

However, schools frequently noted that overcoming challenges to the implementation of the programme was in itself a success for the school; school striving to meet challenges were modeling PYP values and in the process deepening the community's commitment to the programme. Teachers in case study school 1 had undertaken to learn Spanish themselves to help compensate for limited resources to supply a specialist teacher and to ensure the language was

integrated into units; school 2 takes advantage of the international connections of students and faculty to develop on-line relationships to offset the isolation of students and teachers from international contacts; school 4 has used the requirements of the PYP to retrain long term teachers previously trained in methods other than inquiry based learning as it moved to compete with other independent schools in the area and satisfy the demands of its parent community.

Recommendations for future programme development

The recommendations provided by respondent schools on the survey referred to three main areas: flexibility and innovation, and simplification; alignment of IB programs; professional development; and building community. **Flexibility of programme structure** was discussed by respondents with regard to two situations – the first where schools needed to adapt to the demands of a particular context, as discussed above in this chapter, the second referred to school choice with regard to there being choice for schools within the requirements of the PYP as offered by the IB. Comments focused on the number of units required, particularly for younger children, and the lack of flexibility of the time for each unit. These comments were echoed by case study schools 4 and 6 when ‘master teachers’ discussed the need to be able to **innovate** and experiment, pointing out that a truly student driven inquiry was not necessarily going to fit neatly into a pre-determined time scale.

Requests for **greater simplification** mostly focused on PYP Learner Profile and Attitudes and their overlap, together with what some members of the school communities saw as an unnecessary use of ‘jargon’. Several respondents expressed fears that students were back to learning ‘lists’ of descriptors rather than focuses on learning skills. These comments are in contrast with the overall endorsement of respondent schools that the success of the PYP is in part due being in part due to the unifying effect of a common language.

Greater alignment of PYP, MPY and DP programmes formed a small but clearly defined group of recommendations, presumably from schools offering more than one programme. These recommendations extended to continuing efforts to align key components of the programme, but

also to recommendations for specific training for teachers to prepare children for the transition from PYP to MYP.

Comments about the curriculum framework including the planners and units, and the Program of Inquiry formed the largest group of comments, but there was surprisingly little consensus about improvement or development with the exception of three areas – **the need for continual improvement of the OCC**, requests of **exemplars of student work and curriculum documentation**, and requests for developmental continuums with regard to **inquiry learning skills** together with more materials about inquiry learning including training. Again, the majority of the schools who responded to the survey and the case study schools found the curriculum format workable and reflective of the philosophy of the programme.

While case study schools acknowledged the IB efforts to develop online opportunities for contacts with the organization, a number of schools suggested further improvement of online information and the website for greater accessibility. In addition they sought indicators of the quality of materials posted on it. This, in turn linked to suggestions that the IB should develop more exemplars of student work and curriculum documentation to help schools judge the quality of their own materials. This latter suggestion was one that was also discussed in one of the case study schools – School 4 – where high turnover of faculty, and teachers entering the school from many different training backgrounds made it difficult to maintain a clear school vision of what inquiry learning should look like.

Professional development is clearly an area where schools believe improvement and development can be undertaken. Schools viewed one of the successes of the PYP as the improvements to teaching resulting from the targeted professional development provided and required by the IB, and also the focusing of school financial resources on this. However, issues of cost and accessibility, the provision of exemplars, and specific training around inquiry learning and the development of continuums for assessing skills and attitudes dominated the discussion of future provision as can be seen from the selected comments provided in chapter 4. Schools noted that the current high cost training favored large schools with greater resources that

could send teachers abroad with the added benefits that this provided in developing international-mindedness and international connections. More emphasis on in-school and local training, grants to enable teachers to attend international conferences, and more flexibility in the ability to have category two and three trainers coming to schools were among the suggestions put forward by schools.

Schools clearly value the provision of a continual flow of new and quality examples, and recommendations for future development of the programme included more **exemplars**, linking to the suggestions for quality control of material appearing on the OCC. A small group of schools requested materials specifically designed around a basic understanding **of inquiry learning** and teaching techniques connected to it, particularly for teachers new to the programme, where early workshops focus on the curriculum framework rather than its delivery. Several schools suggested that **yearly observation visits** from the IB or critical friends/peer schools would be a useful form of professional development in the early years of developing the programme.

Recommendations around **building community** focused on several issues. Schools clearly value more personal, face to face contact with IB staff, and suggested informal visits would be reassuring to inform schools they were progressing in the right direction. Several mentioned frustration with the IB Answers system, and the need for a specific contact person to go to for help and advice. For schools working in isolation or overcoming difficult transitions from one system to another, the need for personal, face to face contact in a non-judgmental situation is reassuring, and provides a sense of belonging to the greater PYP community.

Beyond this, our respondents sent a strong message that their engagement with the programme and their delivery of it would be enhanced by more opportunities to share with other schools and other teachers in the PYP worldwide. Teachers in the case study schools who have had the opportunity to work with others from different countries see this as an important benefit to both them and their schools by exposing them to different viewpoints and school contexts – they talked of being enthused and invigorated by the experience. At the other end of the scale, many schools are offering the programme in isolation, for example our UK and US case studies, with

no other PYP schools immediately accessible to them for visits and with limited funds for professional development, which in turn forces them to bring in trainers to the school, or to send their teachers to regional trainings, missing out on the experience of being part of an international organization that is one of the attractors of the programme. Suggestions ranged from setting up opportunities for PYP schools to share their planners and learning engagements in person or using face to face technology, to linking specialist teachers in different school contexts, to encouraging sharing experiences with other IB schools either by visiting each other or sharing videos and teaching strategies. Whereas schools see a major success of the PYP as developing unity, coherence and cooperation at the school level, they suggest the way forward for the programme would be s strengthening of that same sense of coherence and unity between PYP schools at the international level.

Conclusion

This study offers strong evidence that the PYP operates successfully across all PYP school contexts. In keeping with the research literature of successful schools as learning communities focused on enhancing student outcomes, the PYP schools in this study based their assessment of the success of the programme on developing student understandings of attitudes, values and skills seen as equipping them for life long learning, involvement and contributions to local and global communities. The schools also acknowledged the important relationships that exist between teaching and student outcomes, and the contributions of leadership and parents in creating a favorable climate and culture for learning. The enhancement of all of these relationships by the PYP framework and requirements made it a successful program for the schools in the study.

PYP schools in the study offer insight into the areas they perceive as needing additional support from the IB. These suggestions offer a jumping off point for further development and innovation in the IB community. Schools are defining the success of the programme in terms of their school building a learning community and placing their school learning community within the context of the larger IB community. As schools are focused on the continual cultivation and enhancement of the learning community within their own school, the suggestions offered by the

schools are focused on building successful aspects of the PYP program, as perceived by schools, rather than changing the PYP programme.

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Appendix 1a English Electronic Questionnaire Prompts

1. How would you define the “success” of the PYP in your school?
2. What are the strengths of the PYP in your school?
3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in your school?
4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of your school?
5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help your school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Appendix 1b Spanish Electronic Questionnaire Prompts

1. ¿Cómo describiría el "éxito" del Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP) en su colegio?
2. ¿Cuáles son los puntos fuertes del Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP) en su colegio?
3. ¿Cómo ha influenciado de manera positiva el Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP) en el aprendizaje de los alumnos de su colegio?
4. ¿Cómo ha influido en la estructura u organización de su colegio la adopción del Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP)?
5. ¿Qué sugerencia daría al IB para que este pueda ayudar a su colegio a continuar y mejorar el éxito del Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP)?

Appendix 1c French Electronic Questionnaire Prompts

1. Comment décririez-vous la réussite du Programme primaire (PP) dans votre établissement ?
2. Quels sont les points forts du Programme primaire (PP) dans votre établissement ?
3. Comment le Programme primaire (PP) a-t-il influencé positivement l'apprentissage des élèves dans votre établissement ?
4. Comment l'adoption du Programme primaire (PP) a-t-elle influencé la structure et l'organisation de votre établissement ?
5. D'après vous, que pourrait faire l'IB pour aider votre établissement à conforter et améliorer la réussite du Programme primaire (PP) ?

Appendix 2a English Focus Group Consent Forms

Focus Group Consent

Thank you for joining us for this discussion group. We are researchers (Peggy Kong and Jill Sperandio – faculty at the College of Education at Lehigh University) who have been hired by the IB to undertake an exploration of how schools perceive the Primary Years Programme to have been a successful addition to their overall scheme of instruction. The purpose of this discussion is to help us understand how teachers, administrators, PYP coordinators, and parents define success of their PYP program, how they evaluate success, and how they achieve or maintain success in their program. After the discussion group, please complete the attached questionnaire as a group.

While we want to record your views and ideas, we do not need to know your names and school affiliations. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and if you wish to leave now, or at any time during the discussion you are free to do so. Each focus group will take approximately 30-45 minutes and then you will be asked to complete one questionnaire as a group. The results from the focus group discussion will be recorded as an aggregate of the group discussion and no individual responses will be recorded. The results of the discussion will be used solely for research purposes.

The results of the discussion will be used solely to help us formulate the survey questions.

If you have any questions, please ask now. If you have any questions after today, please do not hesitate contacting Peggy Kong or Jill Sperandio, (610) 758-2883, pkong@lehigh.edu or jis204@lehigh.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact to Susan Disidore or Troy Boni at (610) 758-3021 (email: inors@lehigh.edu) of Lehigh University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. All reports or correspondence will be kept confidential.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information to the focus group participants. I have offered the participants an opportunity to ask questions. I have offered an opportunity to leave or discontinue the study. I have given each participant a copy of this information for their records.

Signature of Facilitator: _____ Date: _____

Focus Group Participant Information

Thank you for joining us for this discussion group. We are researchers (Peggy Kong and Jill Sperandio – faculty at the College of Education at Lehigh University) who have been hired by the IB to undertake an exploration of how schools perceive the Primary Years Programme to have been a successful addition to their overall scheme of instruction. The purpose of this discussion is to help us understand how teachers, administrators, PYP coordinators, and parents define success of their PYP program, how they evaluate success, and how they achieve or maintain success in their program. After the discussion group, please complete the attached questionnaire as a group.

While we want to record your views and ideas, we do not need to know your names and school affiliations. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and if you wish to leave now, or at any time during the discussion you are free to do so. Each focus group will take approximately 30-45 minutes and then you will be asked to complete one questionnaire as a group. The results from the focus group discussion will be recorded as an aggregate of the group discussion and no individual responses will be recorded. The results of the discussion will be used solely for research purposes.

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This is your copy of this information to keep for your records.

Appendix 2b Spanish Focus Group Consent Forms

Formulario de consentimiento del grupo de discusión

Estimado(a) educador(a) del PEP:

Gracias por participar en este grupo de discusión. Somos dos investigadoras (la Dra. Peggy Kong y la Dra. Jill Sperandio, profesoras del College of Education de la Lehigh University) que estamos trabajando con el IB para llevar a cabo una exploración de cómo perciben los colegios el hecho de que el Programa de la Escuela Primaria sea una adición eficaz a su plan general de enseñanza.

El propósito de este estudio es entender cómo los profesores, el personal de dirección, los coordinadores del PEP y los padres definen el éxito del programa, cómo evalúan ese éxito, y cómo lo logran y lo mantienen en su programa. Una vez concluida la discusión, sírvase completar el cuestionario adjunto en grupo.

Aunque deseamos conocer sus opiniones e ideas, no necesitamos saber sus nombres ni los colegios a los que están afiliados. Su participación en este ejercicio es totalmente voluntaria y si desea abandonar la discusión ahora, o mientras esta se desarrolla, es libre de hacerlo.

Cada grupo de discusión tendrá una duración aproximada de 30 a 45 minutos y, a continuación, se le pedirá que complete un cuestionario en grupo. Los resultados de la discusión en grupo se anotarán considerándolos en su conjunto; no se registrarán respuestas individuales. Los resultados de la discusión se utilizarán exclusivamente para fines de investigación.

Si tiene alguna pregunta, ya sea ahora mismo o en el futuro, no dude en ponerse en contacto con la Dra. Peggy Kong o la Dra. Jill Sperandio, en el número de teléfono +1 610-758-2883 o escribiendo a pkong@lehigh.edu o jis204@lehigh.edu.

Si tiene alguna pregunta o duda acerca de este estudio y desea hablar con una persona que no forme parte del equipo de investigación, **le animamos** a que se ponga en contacto con Susan Disidore o Troy Boni llamando al número de teléfono +1 610-758-3021 (correo electrónico: inors@lehigh.edu) de la oficina de investigación y programas patrocinados de la Lehigh University. Todos los informes y la correspondencia se tratarán de manera confidencial.

Se le proporcionará una copia de esta información para que la guarde como referencia.

Declaración de consentimiento

Confirmando que:

- He leído la información anterior dirigida a los participantes del grupo de discusión
- He ofrecido a los participantes la posibilidad de hacer preguntas.
- He ofrecido la posibilidad de abandonar o suspender la participación en el estudio
- He proporcionado a cada participante una copia de esta información para guardar como referencia

Firma del facilitador: _____ Fecha: _____

Appendix 2c French Focus Group Consent Forms

Accord de participation au groupe de consultation

À l'attention des professionnels de l'éducation du PP

Madame, Monsieur,

Nous vous remercions d'avoir bien voulu participer à ce groupe de discussion. Nous sommes Peggy Kong et Jill Sperandio et exerçons comme professeures-chercheuses au College of Education de Lehigh University. Nous travaillons avec l'IB afin de mener une enquête pour déterminer dans quelle mesure les établissements considèrent l'ajout du Programme primaire à leur plan d'éducation général comme une réussite.

Le but de cette discussion est de nous aider à comprendre comment les enseignants, les membres de la direction, les coordonnateurs du PP et les parents définissent la réussite du programme, évaluent son succès, atteignent cette réussite et la font durer au sein du programme. Après cette discussion en groupe, il vous sera demandé de remplir ensemble le questionnaire ci-joint.

Nous souhaitons consigner vos avis et idées, mais nous n'avons pas besoin de connaître vos noms et établissements. La participation à cet exercice se fait sur une base volontaire, et vous êtes libres de quitter le groupe maintenant ou quand vous le souhaitez au cours de la discussion.

Chaque groupe de consultation se réunit pendant 30 à 45 minutes environ, et vous serez ensuite invités à remplir ensemble un seul questionnaire. Les résultats de cette discussion seront consignés de manière globale et aucune réponse individuelle ne sera enregistrée. Ces conclusions seront uniquement utilisées à des fins de recherche.

Si vous avez la moindre question maintenant ou plus tard, veuillez vous mettre en rapport avec Peggy Kong ou Jill Sperandio au + 1 610 758 2883, ou leur écrire aux adresses suivantes : pkong@lehigh.edu ou jis204@lehigh.edu.

Si vous avez des questions concernant cette enquête et que vous souhaitez parler à une autre personne que celles susnommées, **nous vous invitons** à vous mettre en rapport avec Susan Disidore ou Troy Boni au + 1 610 758 3021 (courriel : inors@lehigh.edu) de l'*Office of Research and Sponsored Programs* de la Lehigh University. Tous les comptes rendus ou courriers seront traités de manière confidentielle.

Vous recevrez une copie de ces informations que vous pourrez conserver dans vos dossiers.

Accord

Je confirme avoir :

- lu les informations susmentionnées aux participants au groupe de consultation ;
- donné l'occasion aux participants de poser des questions ;
- donné la possibilité de quitter le groupe ou d'arrêter l'enquête ;
- donné à chaque participant une copie des informations qu'ils pourront conserver dans leurs dossiers.

Signature de l'animateur : _____ Date : _____

Appendix 3a English Welcome Letter



Department of Education and
Human Services
College of Education
111 Research Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015-4792
(610) 758-3241 Fax (610) 758-3227

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP) Research Project: Success and the PYP

Dear Head of School and PYP Coordinator,

You will, by now, have received a letter from Helen Barrett, Head of the Primary Years Program Development about the research project planned to assess the success of the PYP as perceived by the schools offering it, a project being undertaken as part of the 15 year review of the programme. We, Dr. Peggy Kong and Dr. Jill Sperandio, faculty members at the College of Education at Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, will be undertaking the research project on behalf of the IB. We want to invite your school's participation in the following way.

1) The setting up of three discussion groups at your school

Group 1: Whole school leadership (we would like the Head of School, Primary/Elementary school leaders, PYP coordinator, and a representative of the Board (or equivalent) in this group if possible)

Group 2. PYP teachers.

Group 3. Parents of PYP students.

2) We would like each group to meet for approximately 30-45 minutes and provide thoughts and ideas in response to the following questions

1. How would you describe the "success" of the PYP in your school?
2. What are the strengths of the PYP in your school?
3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in your school?
4. How has adopting the PYP influenced the structure/organization of your school?
5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help your school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Note: The parent group should only be asked to discuss questions 1, 2 and 3.

3) We would like each group to appoint a discussion facilitator and a note-taker (please note, the PYP coordinator/administrators should NOT be present in Group 2--PYP teachers and Group 3--PYP parents). The note takers should record all responses of the discussion and send the outcomes of their group discussion directly to us, the researchers, using an electronic survey that can be accessed using the following link <http://surveymonkey.com/s/pypsuccess>.

4) We would greatly appreciate your assistance in providing focus group participants with information about this project. Please printout the project information sheet file and provide copies to focus group participants.

English version

French version

Spanish version

If your school has difficulty doing this, please mail the information to

Dr. Peggy Kong
Assistant Professor
Comparative and International Education
College of Education, Lehigh University
111 Research Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015
USA

It would be highly appreciated if we could receive a response from you by November 30, 2012.

We are very aware of the imposition on your time and resources that this project will cause, but do appeal for your participation as the results of your school's input will help to shape the future of the PYP. We would like to emphasize that although, we, the researchers, will collect information by school, we are acting independently of the IB and individual schools will not be identified in our research report to the organization. Our graduate assistant, Amelia Hsu, will contact you soon to see if you have any questions or concerns.

Please contact us with any questions and comments about conducting the groups and collecting their responses, we are excited to work with you to ensure your opportunity in shaping the future of the program. The project email address is pypsuccess@lehigh.edu or 610-758-2883.

Thank you again for your help!

Sincerely,



Dr. Peggy Kong



Dr. Jill Sperandio

Appendix 3b Spanish Welcome Letter



Department of Education and
Human Services
College of Education
111 Research Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015-4792
(610) 758-3241 Fax (610) 758-3227

Proyecto de investigación del Programa de la Escuela Primaria (PEP) del Bachillerato Internacional: éxito y el PEP

Estimado(a) director(a) del colegio y coordinador(a) del PEP:

Seguramente ya habrá recibido una carta de Helen Barrett, la jefa de desarrollo del Programa de la Escuela Primaria, acerca del proyecto de investigación planeado para evaluar el éxito del PEP tal como lo perciben los colegios que lo ofrecen, un proyecto que se realizará como parte de la revisión del programa a los 15 años de su creación. Nosotras, la Dra. Peggy Kong y la Dra. Jill Sperandio, profesoras de College of Education de Lehigh University en Pensilvania, llevaremos a cabo el proyecto de investigación en nombre del IB y deseamos invitar a su colegio a participar de la siguiente manera:

1) El establecimiento de tres grupos de discusión en su colegio

Grupo 1: todo el equipo directivo del colegio (si es posible, nos gustaría contar con la participación del director del colegio, el personal de dirección de primaria, el coordinador del PEP y un representante del consejo escolar (u órgano equivalente))

Grupo 2: maestros del PEP

Grupo 3: padres de alumnos del PEP

2) Nos gustaría que cada grupo se reuniera aproximadamente durante 30-45 minutos y aportara ideas y opiniones en respuesta a las siguientes preguntas:

1. ¿Cómo describiría el "éxito" del PEP en su colegio?
2. ¿Cuáles son los puntos fuertes del PEP en su colegio?
3. ¿Cómo ha influido positivamente el PEP en el aprendizaje de los alumnos en su colegio?
4. ¿Cómo ha influido en la estructura u organización de su colegio la adopción del PEP?
5. ¿Qué sugerencia daría al IB para que este pueda ayudar a su colegio a continuar y mejorar el éxito del PEP?

Nota: Al grupo de los padres solo se le pedirá que discuta las preguntas 1, 2 y 3.

3) Nos gustaría que cada grupo nombrara un facilitador de la discusión y un encargado de tomar notas (tenga en cuenta que el coordinador del PEP y el personal de dirección NO deben estar presentes en las discusiones del grupo 2 [maestros del PEP] y el grupo 3 [padres de alumnos del PEP]). Los encargados de tomar notas deben registrar todas las respuestas de la discusión y enviarnos los resultados de su grupo directamente a nosotras, las investigadoras, mediante una encuesta electrónica a la que se puede acceder haciendo clic en el siguiente enlace: <http://surveymonkey.com/s/pypsucces>.

4) Le agradeceríamos además, si nos pudiera ayudar proporcionando a los participantes de los grupos de discusión la información necesaria sobre este proyecto. Sírvese imprimir la hoja informativa del proyecto y distribuir copias a los participantes.

Versión en español:

Versión en francés:

Versión en inglés:

Si su colegio tiene alguna dificultad para enviar la información mediante la encuesta electrónica, sírvase enviarla por correo ordinario a la dirección

Dr. Peggy Kong
Assistant Professor
Comparative and International Education
College of Education, Lehigh University
111 Research Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015
EE. UU.

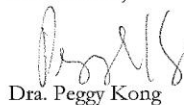
Le estaríamos muy agradecidas si pudiéramos recibir su respuesta, a más tardar, el 30 de noviembre de 2012.

Somos muy conscientes de las molestias que este proyecto le supondrá en cuanto a tiempo y recursos, pero rogamos su participación, puesto que los resultados del aporte de su colegio nos ayudarán a configurar el futuro del PEP. Nos gustaría enfatizar que, si bien nosotras, como investigadoras, recopilaremos la información proporcionada por el colegio, actuamos con independencia del IB y no identificaremos a los colegios en el informe de la investigación que enviemos a la organización. Nuestra ayudante de investigación se pondrá en contacto con usted en breve para ver si tiene alguna pregunta o duda.

Sírvese enviarnos sus preguntas y comentarios sobre la organización de los grupos de discusión y la recopilación de sus respuestas; nos complace poder trabajar con usted para brindarle la oportunidad de configurar el futuro del programa. La dirección de correo electrónico del proyecto es pypsucces@lehigh.edu y el número de teléfono, +1 610-758-2883.

Gracias de nuevo por su colaboración.

Atentamente,



Dra. Peggy Kong



Dra. Jill Sperandio

Appendix 3c French Welcome Letter



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Projet de recherche du Programme primaire (PP) du Baccalauréat International : la réussite et le PP

À l'attention du chef d'établissement et du coordonnateur du PP

Madame, Monsieur,

Vous avez certainement reçu une lettre d'Helen Barrett, responsable en chef du développement du Programme primaire, concernant le projet de recherche mis en œuvre afin d'évaluer la réussite du PP telle qu'elle est perçue par les établissements dispensant le programme. Nous sommes Peggy Kong et Jill Sperandio et exerçons comme professeures-chercheuses au College of Education de la Lehigh University en Pennsylvanie (États-Unis). Nous menons ce projet de recherche, qui est entrepris dans le cadre de la révision du programme 15 ans après sa création, pour le compte de l'IB et souhaitons inviter votre établissement à y participer de la manière suivante.

1) Organisation de trois groupes de discussion dans votre établissement

Groupe 1 : ensemble de l'équipe de direction de l'établissement – nous souhaiterions que ce groupe réunisse, dans la mesure du possible, le chef d'établissement, les membres de la direction de la section primaire/élémentaire, le coordonnateur du PP et un représentant du conseil d'administration (ou équivalent).

Groupe 2 : enseignants du PP.

Groupe 3 : parents d'élèves du PP.

2) Nous aimerions que chaque groupe se réunisse pendant 30 à 45 minutes environ, et réponde aux questions suivantes en donnant ses avis et idées :

1. Comment décririez-vous la « réussite » du PP dans votre établissement ?
2. Quels sont les points forts du PP dans votre établissement ?
3. Comment le PP a-t-il influencé positivement l'apprentissage des élèves dans votre établissement ?
4. Comment l'adoption du Programme primaire (PP) a-t-elle influencé la structure et l'organisation de votre établissement ?
5. D'après vous, que pourrait faire l'IB pour aider votre établissement à conforter et améliorer la réussite du Programme primaire (PP) ?

Remarque : le groupe de parents sera uniquement invité à répondre aux questions 1, 2 et 3.

3) Nous aimerions que chaque groupe nomme un animateur et un preneur de notes (remarque : le coordonnateur du PP et les membres de la direction ne doivent PAS assister aux discussions du groupe 2 (enseignants du PP) et du groupe 3 (parents d'élèves du PP)). Les preneurs de notes

consignent toutes les réponses de la discussion et nous enverront directement les conclusions de leur groupe en utilisant un questionnaire accessible en ligne à l'adresse suivante :
<http://surveymonkey.com/s/pypsuscess>.

4) Nous vous saurions gré de communiquer les informations nécessaires sur ce projet aux personnes qui participeront aux groupes de consultation. Pour ce faire, veuillez imprimer la feuille d'information sur le projet accessible à partir des liens ci-dessous et la distribuer aux participants.

Version en français :

Version en anglais :

Version en espagnol :

Si vous avez des difficultés à envoyer les informations à l'aide du questionnaire en ligne, veuillez les envoyer par courrier à :

Peggy Kong
Professeure adjointe
Comparative and International Education
College of Education, Lehigh University
111 Research Drive
Bethlehem, PA 18015
États-Unis

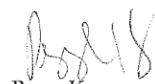
Nous vous serions reconnaissantes de bien vouloir nous envoyer une réponse avant le 30 novembre 2012.

Nous sommes tout à fait conscientes du temps et des ressources que ce projet exige, mais nous vous demandons tout de même d'y participer, car les informations fournies par votre établissement permettront de façonner l'avenir du PP. Nous tenons à souligner le fait que, bien que nous recueillions les informations de chaque établissement, notre travail ne dépend pas de l'IB et les établissements ne seront pas nommés individuellement dans le rapport de recherche que nous remettrons à l'organisation. Amelia Hsu, notre assistante, se mettra bientôt en rapport avec vous pour répondre à vos éventuelles questions ou demandes.

N'hésitez pas à nous adresser toute question et tout commentaire concernant l'organisation des groupes et le recueil de leurs réponses. Nous sommes ravies de travailler avec vous pour vous permettre de façonner l'avenir du programme. L'adresse électronique du projet est pypsuscess@lehigh.edu. Vous pouvez également nous appeler au +1 610 758 2883.

Nous vous remercions à nouveau pour votre aide précieuse.

Salutations distinguées,



Peggy Kong



Jill Sperandio

Appendix 4 Timeline of Study

Appendix 4. Timeline of Study

Date	Activity
Oct-12	Regional AEM Conference focus groups and interviews
Oct-12	Internal Institutional Review Application-Human Subjects Review
October -November 2012	Preparation of welcome letters, electronic questionnaire, and consent forms in 3 languages
Nov-12	Contacted all schools via email with welcome letter and initial email in 3 languages
Nov-12	Follow-up email sent to schools to encourage participation
End of November 2012	Initial completed online electronic questionnaires received
November-December 2012	Phone calls were made non-responding schools
Dec-12	Initial analysis of electronic questionnaire data
Dec-12	Case study data collection began
Jan-13	Schools contacted again by email or phone
Jan-13	Continued analysis of electronic questionnaire data
Feb-13	Final outreach to schools in Australia and Southern hemisphere schools
Feb-13	Case study data collection
Feb-13	Submission of draft interim report
Mar-13	Case study data collection
Apr-13	Case study data collection
Apr-13	Case study analysis
May-13	Submission of draft final report

Appendix 5 Coding Themes

1. The PYP is successful for the school leadership

- targets use of school financial and human resources
- positive parent feedback
- marketable

2. The PYP is successful for teachers

- improved external test results/rising standards/comparability results to other schools
- direct input into curriculum design and delivery; design of units
- improved confidence/enjoyment/willingness to be learners themselves
- improved practice through required training, reflection on practice
- program leadership and help from PYP coordinator
- collaboration with other teachers

3. The PYP is successful for parents

- children's pride in work/desire to share/confidence in own research abilities
- good preparation for secondary school work
- children sharing with parents/ wanting to work at home/collaboration

4. The PYP is successful for the individual learner

- enjoyable/exciting
- increases personal self-confidence
- improves learning skills
- motivating: child centered
- ownership of learning
- positive effect on attitude/behaviors (Learner Profile)
- awareness of issues – global and local

5. The PYP is successful for the school as a community

- coherence: cohesiveness: unity: common understanding: making connections: sense of ownership at all levels: integration:
- a defining ethos: Learner Profile – positive school attitude/atmosphere

Appendix 6 Case Studies

Case Study 1: located in a town in the North West of England, UK

Section 1. The School Context

The Area

The school is located in a town in the North West of England in the UK. The district lies in the heartland of the 19th century British industrial revolution, in a landscape which was of disused cotton and wool mills and mill workers terraced housing, extended with further working class housing in the first half of the 20th century. The area is ranked as one of the most economically deprived areas of the district and of the UK, with only 6102 points out of 32,482 on indexes of well-being. The school has a variety of buildings surrounding the handsome 1911 brick building which first housed the school, currently undergoing a two year renovation. Just as these buildings were, in the words of the Head teacher, “no longer fit for purpose” until the recent renovations, so too the school was backed until a decade ago, by a housing estate known for drug dealing and other anti-social activities. This estate has been demolished and replaced by an attractive school field and a new private housing development in the last few years.

The area and the school have a stable population. Long serving teachers at the school note they have seen three generations of some families pass through the school. Several of the teachers have a long service record of 20 or more with the school including the current Deputy Head/PYP coordinator, so there is a strong institutional history. Teachers note the insular nature of the school, a number of the children have a very limited experience of travel outside the North West region of England.

The History of the PYP at the School

In the late 1990's, the government of the United Kingdom set up a number of Education Action Zones (EAZs) across areas of England where there was demonstrated need for improvement. Clusters of schools in deprived urban settings received extra funding, partly government grant

and partly through private sponsorship, to support them in bringing about this improvement in standards. The EAZ Project Directors were tasked with finding innovative ways of helping the schools to move forward.

The Project Director for the EAZs in the district was had previously served as a school principal in an international school abroad that had offered the IB programs. These had impressed him as “an inquiry-based, personalized learning curriculum as opposed to the constraints of a test-oriented national curriculum” (IB World, May 2005, p.18). He saw the IB curriculums “as being the best option available to educators who are passionate about a better world for this children”. The project director also believed that students in the area of the district and others nearby needed a more broadly based curriculum in order to make sense and a success of their lives.

When a group of primary schools showed interest in learning more about the PYP, a fact finding trip was organized in December 2002 for a small group of head teachers to visit the IBO headquarters in Geneva and included a school visit to the International School of Geneva with its well established IB programs. Enthusiasm engendered by this trip led to a group of the schools, of which the school was one, committing to become PYP authorized, supported initially by EAZ funding and staff. The heads of the schools involved appointed a coordinator, on a part time secondment. Anne Read, the current head of the school, worked for 12 months for this group providing intra- and inter- school support, introducing the PYP to parents, pupils, school governors and local Education Authority officials. In addition to this support, each school was given 6000 UK pounds towards the purchase of international books and other resources.

The project director had envisaged the extension of this first cluster of state primary schools in England offering the PYP to a local secondary school which would have the IB Middle Years Program and the Diploma, into which the primary school pupils would move to complete their full IB education. However, changes in government policy, school amalgamations, and changes in school heads and governors led instead to all but two of the schools abandoning the program, and no adoption of the MYP or Diploma Program by schools in the area.

Before moving to Head Teacher in 2007, the current Head Teacher joined the school in 2004 as Deputy Head Teacher for three years, , a post that she has held now for six years. She continued the process of moving the school towards PYP authorization. The current PYP coordinator and deputy head teacher, has served the school for 20 years and was deputy head teacher during the authorization process. She assumed the additional role of PYP coordinator in 2008, relinquishing most of her teaching responsibilities to oversee the ongoing development of the program.

The school received its first authorization visit in October 2007. The report indicated that the school had failed to develop the program to a satisfactory standard. As a result of this, the school staff first reaffirmed their commitment to continue with the program and then completely redesigned the program of inquiry. The follow up visit from the IB a year later in 2008 affirmed the school's satisfactory response to all earlier recommendations. The school undertook a self study and evaluation visit in November 2011. The visit noted the strong commitment to the PYP by all sections of the school community, the sense of energy and enthusiasm apparent in all staff, the innovative approach to finding ways to support collaborative planning, a strong belief throughout the school that the PYP is the most appropriate way to improve teaching and learning and to achieve improved outcomes for its pupils, the stability of the school staff and community allowing for a strong institutional memory, the concentration on the program despite external pressures from the UK inspection body for improvements in national test results, the high level of cooperation and involvement with agencies to meet the basic needs of students to give them the best opportunity to learn and apply their learning, and the strong and effective pedagogical leadership.

School Details

The school provides for 270 students whose ages range from 3 and 11. Initially having two classes at each grade level, the school was directed by the local authority in 2007 to reduce its intake to one class, then redirected several years later to take in two classes which it is currently doing. The school has been mono-ethnic, with White British forming approximately 95 percent of the population. Other ethnic groups self identified in the school population include Pakistani,3; Any other mixed background 4; Black African 12; Asian 2;Any other white

background 2; Chinese 1; Other Asian 2; White and Black Caribbean 2; Any other black background 1. The head teacher reports the number of students from ethnic groups other than White-British has increased, primarily with the enrollment of new immigrant families settling in the area, rather than families from already established ethnic groups. The number of students registered for special help currently stands at approximately 10 percent, and 67 percent of the pupils have been, or are eligible for, free school lunches. This is well over three times the national average and an indicator of the social-economic status of the school community. The proportion of pupils in the care of the local authority is around 6 percent; again well above the national average.

The school has a head teacher, a deputy head teacher who is also PYP coordinator, 10 full time homeroom teachers, and three part-time specialist teachers, for Spanish, PE and Music. A qualified librarian comes in once a week. All classes have a teaching assistant and those students classified as having special needs may well have a teaching assistant assigned to them in the classroom.

Section 2: The Interaction of School Context and the PYP

1. Student Aspirations, Self Esteem and Parental Support. The school has succeeded in increasing parent and career involvement in supporting student learning. However, it faces a significant challenge in its efforts to develop self-esteem and a sense of achievement for all the students. In an area of high levels of deprivation, there is a proportion of students for whom the normal assumption of support by parents does not apply. In addition to the comparatively high number of children in care, the school offers pastoral care and support to the whole school community and has close collaboration with local faith groups, social services and other forms of support for students and families. Although historically some children had limited aspirations with regards to future opportunities, there is nevertheless a wide range of parent expectations. The town does now have a university, and the school has done much to raise the aspirations of children through the PYP program, including units focused on building student aspirations for future careers, particularly in year 6.

- 2. Cultural Deprivation.** For some students, the insular nature of the community has led to deprivation of cultural experience, which also impacts literacy skills with regard to a limited vocabulary and a lack of experiential and comparative sources to draw on for writing assignments. The school noted in its self-study, “We want students to be able to better articulate their own culture as well as that of others and to have a stronger sense of self and their heritage. We recognize that within the community we serve, cultural opportunities will be provided entirely by the school i.e. beyond television, computer games and X boxes..... we will challenge this assumptions about what the children already know or have had experience of....within the PYP, staff will re-examine opportunities to discuss the culture of students and of others to ensure that there is a more diverse view of the world” (TM self study).
- 3. Mother Tongue Language Support.** The requirements of PYP and the need to improve literacy scores on the national standardized tests helped the school focus on the development and support of mother-tongue English within the specific context of the school in which the majority of children come from families that have lived in the area for many generations and have English as their only language. However, although the majority of children come from such homes, there is a wide variation in their language experience and development. Many of these children do not have a rich language or literary heritage on which to draw. A number of children have addition speech and language difficulties.
- 4. Second Language Provision.** The adoption of the PYP also challenged the school to make provision for a second language before this was required by the national curriculum. Although the school has links with Paderborn in Germany, Spanish was chosen by all the schools interested in adopting the program in the school. Teachers set about learning the language and integrating it into their classes. Class teachers showed their commitment by participating in beginners’ Spanish classes in order to be able to teach the language to their students, a move described by the IB in the school’s evaluation report as “an admirable initiative” and certainly one that showed commitment and unity amongst the staff in respect

of their support of the program. Ultimately the school found funding for a part-time teacher one day a week to teach Spanish, with a teaching assistant deployed to work alongside her. In September 2009 the National Curriculum made the teaching of a foreign language obligatory for years 3-6 in all primary schools.

5. National Curriculum Integration. The development of the PYP to its current stage while meeting the requirements of the national curriculum and national literacy and mathematics testing has involved the school in a number of challenges. Developing the Program of Inquiry required “high quality professional dialogue” (head teacher interview) between the teachers at the school, to ensure the scope and sequence documents are also aligned with national curriculum requirements. The head teacher explained that the national framework, as outlined in the original documents in which it was presented, was not prescriptive about teaching methods for the content that was required. Thus the school has been able to continue to develop the program in line with their understanding of the IB program philosophy and best practice guidelines. The school notes, however, that changes in the future to the national curriculum will need to be monitored carefully to maintain the current integration, but current indications suggest that nationally, although the curriculum may be prescribed, the methodology of learning will be the choice of individual schools. The head teacher also notes that integrating national curriculum testing into PYP teaching requires a balancing act between serving the basic philosophy of the program and making sure students have basic skills and can cope with the testing. If students do not show improvement on the national tests, this has implications for the autonomy of the school and its control over the development of the PYP. Thus the tensions are not so much about integrating the national curriculum and the PYP program of inquiry, but rather in successive governments’ focus on league and attainment tables.

6. Maintaining Links to the Greater IB Community. The school has attempted to connect and develop links to both national and international participants in the IB endeavour through email or personal exchanges and attendance at conferences and workshops. Initially the school was working closely with the larger group of schools in the north-west of England

that were either authorized or in the candidate phase of the program, including private schools. This provided good opportunities to collaborate with other IB schools. However, this process has not been so successful since a number of schools have ceased to offer the PYP, and the school needs to look again at how these can be developed within the UK and beyond, given their limited financial resources. As noted previously, there are no local schools offering MYP or DP for the students to feed into.

- 7. Decision Making around the Allocation of Financial and Human Resources.** School income is limited to the money received from the local authority, but the allocation of this funding is at the discretion of the school. The adopting of the PYP has provided focus to decisions regarding spending to improve the learning experience, particularly in the areas of the hire of specialist teachers. Although the school has a firm philosophical commitment to enriching cultural as well as academic experiences, the integration of what were previously stand alone subjects such as music, into the program of Inquiry, further justifies this spending. Similarly with the reduced teaching commitment for the PYP coordinator, provision of a librarian, Spanish teacher and sports coach, and increased spending on visits and trips. In addition the program fees, and required training for teachers and administrators must now be built into the budget, and these are additional to national curriculum training requirements. Overall, approximately 90,000.00 pounds (7.5%) of a budget of 1,200,000.00 UK pounds, is used to support PYP requirements, as this is the method of all curriculum delivery.

Section 3: The Indicators of Success of the Program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

- 1. The PYP is successful for the school as a community.** The introduction of the PYP also benefited from, and developed further, a school culture of collaboration that interviews with staff confirmed had long existed at the school. The joint decision making around continuation of the program after the first unfavorable authorization visit, the willingness to spend

personal time in developing a second program of inquiry, the ongoing input of teachers into the development of locally-based units, the sharing of resources, were all commented on with pride by both administration and staff – the success of the PYP program for this school is in part because it was a good fit with an existing culture, and gave that culture a focus in improving teaching and learning.

In the words of the head teacher and PYP coordinator, “after the failure to achieve authorization, the school reassessed – did we want to continue with the program? The staff was unanimous about going ahead and we decided to start from scratch again on the units to form the program of inquiry. There was total involvement of staff and students and parents. We had a working party for six weeks working from five to eight pm after school who would then report back to the whole school to keep everyone informed. We ended with a working weekend in the Lake District, when 10 people finished up the work on the program of inquiry.”

2. ***The PYP is successful for the individual learner.*** Staff and parents noted the example of student who not only wanted to describe his own project at an evening showcasing student work, but also took visitors around other projects and described that they were about. The PYP coordinator noted the change of culture where satisfactory work is being involved – just being here is not enough. She gave the example of a girl who always did well in terms of achievement but never asked questions or contributed – even though she was high achieving, she started to get lower grades, and quickly learnt to contribute after it was explained to her how she needed to ask questions and share her understandings.
3. ***The PYP is successful for teachers.*** PYP coordinator noted much greater openness of classes to other teachers observe and a willingness to share things that worked. Teachers talk about ‘front loading’ units with trips and visitors that will bring a unit to life and connect with the local environment – the PYP units lend themselves to this in a way that the more disconnected national curriculum did not. One teacher interviewed talked about how the program had made her re-evaluate her teaching methods, cut down on the talk, spending

more time promoting student talk and discussion, and group work, and she had seen a rise in her personal teacher evaluation, from satisfactory, to good and outstanding (evaluations prepared jointly by the local authority and head teacher).

- 4. *The PYP is successful for parents.*** Three parents who regularly volunteer at the school endorsed and gave examples of their children sharing about their work, being well prepared for educational transitions, and improved parent-child collaborations in the home. Not only did they have children who had attended the school before and after the introduction of the PYP, two of them had attended the school themselves. They all noted the difference in terms of confidence, questioning, and desire to do work at home on the part of their children that they had not seen with previous curriculum programs at the school.

Responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts

Q1. How would you define the “success” of the PYP in this school?

Administrators: The PYP provides a coherent and cohesive whole school approach which is jointly owned. Teachers enjoy teaching, children enjoy learning. The Learner Profile defines the ethos of the school and provides a common understanding. There has been a cultural change in learning; standards are rising as children become better learners.

Teachers: Children ask more questions. Children do own research. Children link ideas. Children connect to real experience. Children "own" their learning. They are able to direct their learning in class towards their interests. Enjoy to learn. Learning in context. Learning skills of how to learn as opposed to following set instructions. There are now more visits / more people coming in. A focus on "WOW" events for each unit. Staff feel very strongly about being part of the IB and ensuring school continues to implement and enjoy being part of the Primary Years Programme

Parents: The PYP brings learning to life. Children become involved and are engaged. It arouses their curiosity to go and find out more facts and involves us in going on visits and finding out more about what they have been doing. Children talk about their work at home and think about their school work when they are at home. They like to do their own research - go to the library, do projects at home etc. Children have made connections through their learning e.g. with their local area. It is an interesting style of teaching and learning.

Q2. What are the strengths of the PYP in this school?

Administrators : The whole school is committed to the PYP. It has been a learning journey - all of us together, with the importance of elements, such as the Learner Profile. Specialist teachers contribute to the Units of Inquiry. Children make connections. Increased confidence of both children and staff.

Teachers: Learner profile has a positive impact on behavior and children's attitudes and social skills. Increases independent learning. Child Centred - following children's interests. Delivered in relevant and meaningful way; Library; Programme of Inquiry is varied and enjoyable. Children motivated to take "action" at home and in their daily lives. Transdisciplinary skills to help children become good learners.

Parents: The PYP is an interesting curriculum with a wide range of different units. It makes children want to come to school and gives them different perspectives. It is an exciting way of learning. Children ask questions and learn how to find things out. They learn to work together in different groups. The PYP gives them experiences which they wouldn't normally get e.g. rocket making, being museum curators and going on visits. The Learner Profile helps children know how to act towards each other.

Q3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Administrators: Children are capable of formulating better questions. They have become more active learners; wanting to take books home to continue learning. There has been a cultural change; task finishers to engaged learners. The importance of a library and librarian has enhanced learning. Whenever we go on a course, we reflect on this practice and judge whether it is best practice; generally finding that with the PYP we are heading in the right direction.

Teachers: Improved KS2 SATs results as a result of: Children being more independent learners
Collaborative learners
More research completed at school and home
Encouraged children to be more motivated because it follows their interests
More global understanding
Awareness of issues has increased
Child centred – Motivating
Child initiated – Motivating
Skills, attitudes, concepts are all more easily developed
Children enjoy their Units of Inquiry

Parents: The PYP has made children become more interested and involved in their learning so they want to carry it on at home (taking over the laptop!) Children talk about what they have done, learned or want to find out. They take pride in and want to show off their work as well as wanting to visit places again with us. The PYP has encouraged children to become more independent inquirers - to make models, posters, presentations etc at home. Children are more confident. The PYP prepares them for secondary school because they are used to doing research, work on their own, making and giving presentations.

Q4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Administrators: Learning and curriculum is this highest priority. Senior and Middle Leaders are all totally committed. The PYP coordinator, who is not class based is able to support others. Specialist staff ensure high quality opportunities for children e.g. Librarian, Spanish teacher, Music teacher and PE coach.

Teachers: Specialist teachers i.e. Spanish, Sports and Music Library / Librarian Subjects not taught discreetly but integrated into the Units . PYP coordinator is no longer in class and so can support staff and oversee the implementation of the Programme.

Q5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Administrators: Offer training in Europe, which takes place during the English holidays and which is affordable. The online training was not good for the Head teacher who would rather be with other people, from international backgrounds, who enthuse.

Teachers: Regular and supportive visits with succinct action points – recommendations. Support in sending teachers to other PYP schools. Staff training from PYP specialists. More funding available for training (new staff and refreshers). More flexibility with planning framework. Use more straightforward language. Visual support in "booklet" e.g. The School Bus. Develop website and make one for children

Section 4. Suggestions for Future Development of the PYP

- 1) Face to face versus online training for head teachers with international colleagues
- 2) Regular and supportive visits with succinct action points – recommendations
- 3) Support in sending teachers to other PYP schools
- 4) Staff training from PYP specialists
- 5) More funding available for training (new staff and refreshers)
- 6) More flexibility with planning framework
- 7) Use more straightforward language
- 8) Visual supports in IB booklets e.g. The School Bus
- 9) Develop website and make one for children

Sources

- Ofsted Reports for the school available on the school website.
- IB reports for the school authorization visits and first evaluation visit, including the school self study completed for evaluation.
- Article published in IB World (May, 2005), documenting the EAZ work with district schools and the introduction of the PYP.
- School interviews and discussions with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher/PYP coordinator, teachers and parents at the school in January, 2013.

Case Study 2: located in a province in western Canada

Section 1. The School Environment

The Area

The school is in the western region of the Foothills school Division (FSD) approximately 35 miles southwest of a city in the province in western Canada. This small, rural school is nestled in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Over the last one hundred years the area has changed from predominantly ranching and agriculture to one of a growing number of up-market low density suburban houses.

The History of the PYP at the School

In the early 2000s many already small rural schools faced a potential further loss of students, and district officials encouraged schools to consider ways of attracting in more students, including the consideration of new programming. An independent school located close to the community school was already offering the PYP. The school examined this local example, and noted the alignment of the school's existing philosophy and approaches to teaching and learning with those of the IB and PYP. The decision to adopt the program was made with the approval of the Foothills School Division, and the school entered the authorization process in 2005/6, and was authorized in 2009 to offer the program to Grade 6. The school currently offers the PYP to 5th grade, though students in grades 6-8 are also taught using inquiry learning pedagogy.

School Details

The school opened in 1951, a coeducational day school with grades 1-8 with 225 students. It is a public school, operating the Education Mandated Curriculum in the province, and state funded. It is the only public school in the state at present to offer the PYP, although several schools in the area are currently in the process of adopting the program.

The school has non-selective entry and must provide for students with a wide range of ability. The school not only serves students that live locally in the catchment area, but also attracts in

others who live in the neighboring towns and come specifically for the PYP, approximately 40 students at the current time. These families for whom it is the “school of choice” must provide their own transportation to bring students to school each day. There are 26 students in a class. Despite variations in socio-economic status, the school community is ethnically homogenous, with only one non-white student in the school. A few students have mother tongue French, Spanish and German.

The school emphasizes daily physical education, has a strong outdoor education program and promotes the exploration of the local environment through cultural and educational field trips. The school is located near a provincial park and an exploration of this local environment is supported by this outdoor pursuit focus. This school offers the students opportunities to engage in cultural and educational field trips that include visits to the local zoo, heritage park, Glenbow Museum, McMahon Stadium, Chinatown, and the Science Centre.

The older students are involved in interschool athletics in cross country running, volleyball, basketball, badminton and track and field. Students enjoy access to music and art across the curriculum as well as the opportunity to be in band. Each year the school puts on a Christmas Concert involving all students in this Fine Arts production.

The school is staffed by a school administrator, a PYP coordinator who also teaches, and six classroom teachers. The school has built up a reputation for the excellence of its teachers, and at one time had this national Governor General Award winning teachers on staff and two teachers that were nominated for the Provincial Excellence in Teaching Awards. The current school administrator has recently been awarded an Excellence in Leadership Award. The staff is very well respected within the Foothills School Division for its exemplary approach to teaching and learning, especially the role of progressive curriculum design and assessment practices. A number of teachers have held leadership roles within the Foothills School Division. The school is currently collaborating with three other large K-12 schools within three district to design inquiry based units of study that are conceptually based and use the backwards design model that is also supported in the PYP.

Section 2: The Interaction of School Context and PYP

The school noted the following effects of school context on their offering of the PYP

- 1. Insularity, Diversity and Global Awareness.** Given that the majority of the staff and students are English speaking and Canadian born, the school sees an important success of the PYP as creating a need for the school to provide opportunities to expose students to the wider world. One teacher recounted how an inquiry into art on the internet led to connecting to a British artist and a Skype conversation that led to the artist teaching art to the students online and eventually coming to visit the school. Some students do get a chance to travel, and recently one of these sent back pictures of bugs found on her travels, which the students at the school undertook to identify.
- 2. Maintaining Links to the Greater IB Community.** As most required teacher training is undertaken in North America, the school is challenged to maintain connections with the greater IB community. A teacher at the school with experience in PYP schools in South Africa and Zimbabwe has connected the school to these schools for ongoing activities online. The PYP coordinator is a trainer and school visitor and undertakes activities in schools abroad, which helps keep a sense of comparison with regard to program development in addition to online materials. There are no DP schools in the state and few MYP schools, which creates a situation where students cannot look ahead with the expectation of moving
- 3. Decision making around the Allocation of Financial and Human Resources.** As a publicly funded school, there are challenges around allocation of resources and teacher time and professional development. In state funding of professional development is in the hands of the teachers union. The parent organization however, is permitted to raise funds for the school and commits this money to the required training of teachers, for substitute teachers to cover teachers attending conferences, and for opportunities for teachers to attend conferences abroad.

The school cannot hire staff directly, but must hire from candidates supplied by the Division, and this places additional pressure on school finances when new teachers must receive PYP training, and in some cases then leave soon after.

The school also made the decision not to adopt the MYP program which was deemed too costly given the small number of students the school serves.

4. **Integration of the State Curriculum.** The Mandated Curriculum requires student undergo standardized testing in Grades 3 (reading and mathematics) and Grade 5, and time must be made to prepare students for the multiple choice tests and to ensure the content required for the Grade 5 tests are incorporated into the school's program of inquiry.

Section 3: The Indicators of Success of the Program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

1. **Importance of the PYP language** for communicating with the greater IB organization and with the local school community. The collaborative planning the program fostered amongst teachers for planning, but also the parent community was also indicated as an important success.
2. **Best practice in teaching and learning** as demonstrated by student outcomes is regarded as a clear indicator of the success of the program at the school.

Responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts

Q1. How would you define the success of the PYP in this school?

Teachers and PYP Coordinator: The language of the programme is alive in this school. Students are using the language of the Learner Profile. In their work, with their peers, and with their parents. Parents are also involved in the PYP as Exhibition mentors and supporters of the programme. Those students are engaged in their learning. They are decision makers. They have a voice in their learning.

Q2. What are the strengths of the PYP in this school?

Teachers and PYP Coordinator: Student voice, student engagement, active learning, community involvement action, global perspectives and awareness.

Q3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Teachers and PYP Coordinator: Common language, common goals, common planning. The elements of the PYP go beyond this school walls, make learning relevant make learning more international and global.

Q4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Teachers and PYP Coordinator: Makes teachers collaborative in their planning and discussion of students' learning successes and challenges. The POI promotes cross grade planning and collaboration to avoid redundancy in curriculum. Promotes and supports a common planning model.

Q5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Teachers and PYP Coordinator: Changes the fee structure based on student population. As a small public school, this fees are not equitable compared to a larger, private/public school. Provide more opportunities for grants.

Section 4. Suggestions for future development of the PYP

- 1) Change the fee structure to one based on student population – small schools are discriminated against with the present structure
- 2) Provide more opportunities for grants

Sources

- Online interviews with IB Coordinator and a teacher
- School Self Study
- Information obtained from documents on the school website

Case Study 3: located in a state of the northeastern and mid-Atlantic regions, USA

Section 1. The School Environment

The Area

The school is a publically funded Regional Charter School. It is a coeducational day school and is housed in buildings initially constructed for offices, which have been converted for school use, in an industrial park on the outskirts of a city located in a state of the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic regions of the US. At one time a center of the US steel industry, heavy industry has been replaced by a number of services industries, including several large hospital complexes and two universities. Both the city and surrounding suburbs contain numerous ethnic groups with a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds.

The History of the PYP at the School

The school was the initiative of a group of educators, parents and community members hoping to find, and in this case invent, a public school that would provide their children and other children in the area with a world-class education. The founding group submitted an application in 2001 to start the school under Public Law 108-382, Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 stating "The purpose of the school is to open portals of opportunity for children and adults in the community through excellence in public education. "The mission of the school, a fully authorized, dynamic K-12 IB World School, is to educate all students through best learning practices and innovative teaching strategies to be responsible contributors in the community and successful in a 21st century global environment." The school adopted the IB curriculum from the start, was authorized to offer the PYP in 2006 and went through the first evaluation visit in 2009. It is currently seeking Middle States Accreditation and a further IB visit in 2014.

School Details

The school currently has 600 students in the PYP, and approximately 1100 students in the school which also offers the MYP and DP programs. Students enter the school through a lottery system. The names of all students from the two chartering school districts who are interested in attending the school are initially placed in a 'hat' and names are drawn to determine those students who

will fill any vacancies. If there are no vacancies, the names are placed on a waiting list for entry into the school. After this, the names of students from other districts are also drawn and added to the list. The majority of PYP students are US citizens, and the three largest ethnic groups are White, Non-Hispanic (284,) followed by Hispanic (114), and Black (67). Roughly 20% of the students in the school qualify for free or reduced lunch.

The school employs 74 full-time teachers and 7 part time teachers, the majority of whom are White, Non-Hispanic. By virtue of its charter school status, the school employs teachers on one year at-will contracts, unlike other schools in the district where teachers are unionized and have tenure. The school has recruited many of its teachers directly from local teacher training colleges and they are selected for their understanding and grounding in inquiry teaching methods. The teachers have attended IB Training throughout North America; none have had the opportunity to attend international conferences or training outside of North America.

The leadership of the program lies with the Elementary School Principal who is also PYP Coordinator. The school also employs a Dean of Students who handles discipline, and serves as counselor. This allows the Principal to maximize her position as instructional leader for the program.

Section 2: The Interaction of School Context and PYP

- 1. Integrating the State Department of Education Curriculum Requirements.** The school is required to meet all academic standards set forth by the State Department of Education and students must undergo state testing. As an example of integrating these standards into the IB philosophy, in the third grade, students are required to learn about the community in which they live. The school has integrated this requirement into a Unit of Inquiry entitled “A city like many others”. In this Unit of Inquiry, the students initially learn about the city and then compare and contrast it with cities around the world. In the fourth grade students are required to learn about the state in which they live, and in the fifth grade they must be taught the history of the US. These currently stand alone, however, the school teaches these subjects

with an inquiry based approach, and ultimately incorporates them into units in the Programme of Inquiry. The school acknowledges the need for students and school to perform well on the state tests and teachers and administrators accept the challenge of maintaining the PYP's POI while ensuring students are prepared for test taking and mastery of context required for it.

2. **Teachers and professional development.** Teachers are keen to work in the school because they believe in the PYP inquiry philosophy. There are currently fully certified teachers in the school serving as teacher aides providing assistance throughout grade levels, while waiting for a full-time position to open. Teachers are very excited by the PYP program.

The school is required to provide ongoing professional development for the state. The school dedicates funds for professional development. Teachers are keen to attend IB training sessions and the school includes the IB trainings as part of the state ongoing professional development. IB trainings are expensive for the school, so teachers are sent for training on a rotating basis. In the past teachers have attended trainings held by IBO and the Texas IB Schools. Several teachers are working towards becoming IB trainers.

3. **Involving parents in the program.** The school serves families that come from a number of ethnic communities, several of them with no tradition of direct involvement in their children's school or learning. The school has accepted the challenge of reaching out to all parents with the intention of involving them directly in the PYP; however, this is an ongoing challenge. Parents are eager to place their children in the school for the alternative it offers to other public schools and the high rigors that it has established. In order to provide a clear picture of the school, all potential families must attend an initial information session of the program before formally applying to enroll their children. The school is seeking to develop links with the use of a parent survey, the creation of volunteer opportunities such as having parents teach or discuss aspects of their ethnic communities and other areas of expertise that they may possess. Twice a year the PYP Principal/Coordinator provides workshops for parents and an introduction to the PYP. At other times throughout the year, workshops are

held on ways in which parents can support their children in the areas of reading, math and assisting with homework. The school's website has a link to an internal network exclusive to parents/guardians of students of the school.

- 4. Developing stronger links to the IB global community.** The school notes its isolation with regard to the IB global community. There are no other PYP schools close by, and hence has a limited ability to send teachers to visit PYP schools abroad or to attend other than regional training. The school hopes to encourage faculty members to become workshop leaders, a school visitor or be involved in curricular development at the IB organizational level in an effort to gain connections and a more global perspective of the program.
- 5. Catering for diversity.** The school has a non-selective entry policy, which requires the school to provide resources for student with special needs to ensure they can access the PYP. Two full time Special Needs teachers and an assistant teacher work with the PYP students and follow each student's Individualized Educational Plan; a full time ELL specialist works with students needing additional support; three full time Reading Specialists and 2 full time Math specialists all work collaboratively to provide academic support to those students who require it. The school must conform to state standards in the provision of help to children with special needs while doing all it can to integrate these students into the PYP classroom and curriculum.
- 6. Inquiry Learning.** Inquiry learning and all the benefits it brings to students in the development of becoming lifelong learners is perceived by the school as a key success, especially given that this approach is not the norm in local public schools in the United States.

Section 3: The Indicators of Success of the Program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

1. ***The Exhibition.*** This is valued for the freedom it allows students in an otherwise constricted curriculum and is also viewed as a success for parents by demonstrating what their children can actually accomplish.
2. ***Unifying aspects of the common IB language and the Learner Profile.*** This assists with the education of parents about the program, and aids communication throughout the three IB programs offered at the school, building a strong sense of community.
3. ***The state of sets benchmarks*** for percentage of pass rates for each age/grade level. Students at the school do well on these scores and the school believes that tests only offer a snapshot of a student's academic life. There was consensus that academic success on the state tests was a direct indicator of PYP success in the school. The PYP program teaches boys and girls to think and use higher order thinking so they can make decisions and become successful academically. Science was offered as an example of an area that stretches critical thinking, deductive reasoning, and investigation and where the school's students excel academically on tests.

Responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts

Q1. How would you define the success of the PYP in this school?

Teachers: 1. Students becoming inquirers 2. Community interest demonstrated by long wait list 3. Students are better communicators 4. Students are more open minded and accepting of others 5. Rigorous curriculum 6. State mandated test scores 7. Well rounded lifelong learners 8. Parents, students, & teachers working together towards a common goal 9. Ongoing academic

portfolio 10. Longevity and growth of the program at the school and abroad 11. Learner profiles & attitude are a common thread 12. Cohesion 13. Internationally minded students / global awareness 14. Students are driven 15. Inquirers 16. Children are IB minded 17. Knowledgeable of the IB vocab 18. Good communicators 19. Teacher as facilitator 20. Internationally minded 21. Units of Inquiry are well established 22. Specialist's extravaganza allows for open communication between specialists. 23. Connects well with specials 24. Rigorous curriculum leads to high tolerance 25. Portfolio 26. Values the strengths of students

Parents: Supportive 2. Making PYP 3. Love of learning 4. Learning how to learn 5. Thinking 6. Thinking outside the box 7. Responsible learners 8. Profile traits / character education promotes healthy classroom 9. Preparation for MYP and DP 10. Fosters inter-dependence 11. Real world application 12. Desire to learn & explore 13. Prime environment for learning 14. Sense of community 15. Variety of specials 16. Specials tied to units

Q2. What are the strengths of the PYP in this school?

Teachers: 1. Common vocabularies with specialists 2. Inquirers 3. driven to learn more 4. Close knit community 5. Work well together 6. Creating partners between students, teachers, & parents 7. Becoming global citizens via the learner profile 8. Common language 9. Strong sense of community 10. Working across the curriculum 11. Rigorous curriculum 12. Foreign language 13. Unit of Inquiry based learning 14. High expectations 15. IB profile traits have led to acceptance, kindness, & tolerance 16. Units of Inquiry are building blocks for other subjects 17. Curriculum makes for well-rounded lifelong learners

Parents: 1. Well developed 2. Complete program 3. Specials are aligned 4. Well balanced 5. The LVA Staff 6. Confidence in School / Program 7. Variety of opportunities offered 8. Rigorous academics 9. Global thinking 10. Accountability with reflection 11. Positive (healthy) peer pressure 12. Student led learning 13. Strong writing skills 14. Strong presentation skills 15. Portfolios 16. Parent/Student/Teacher Conferences 17. Caring environment 18. Take learning profile to heart 19. Great leadership

Q3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Teachers:

1. Internationally awareness 2. Thinkers 3. Enjoy presenting to their peers 4. Students becoming inquirers 5. Recognizing their connection & responsibility 6. Rigorous curriculum better prepares students 7. Develops a willingness to explore 8. Risk takers 9. Fosters creativity 10. Promote problem solving 11. Opportunity to ask questions and have discussions 12. Engage in hands on activities that promote teamwork 13. Open mindedness 14. Reflection 15. Tools to be successful students and upstanding leaders in the community 16. Character driven 17. Open perspective 18. Flexibility to involve teacher creativity 19. Character education embedded in day to day learning 20. Cooperative learning

Parents: 1. Focused attention to learning 2. Level of education 3. Needs are met on all levels 4. Originally structured around IB, not adopted 5. Staff & students encouraged to think outside of the box 6. Students guide learning 7. Strong writing skills 8. Real world instead of compartmentalized 9. High standards / expectations 10. Peer problem solving 11. Committed parents, staff, & administration

Q4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Teachers: 1. Collaboration with specialists and other grades 2. Same language across the grades 3. Non-standard ways of teaching allows students to be thinkers 4. Units of inquiry are implemented across the curriculum 5. Teachers are sent for training 6. Meetings with specialists to plan 7. Everyone is on the “same page” 8. Curriculum centered around the PYP 9. Deep integration fosters a creative classroom and opens the door to discussion 10. Good foundation in the PYP 11. Solid structure for vocabulary, problem solving, and having the kids think outside of the box 12. LVA was structured around the PYP from the beginning, not necessarily adopted. 13. Well known for our educational philosophy 14. Continuous need to expand due to high numbers of students on waiting list.

Q5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Teachers: 1. Better networking between IB schools 2. Provide on-site IB training 3. Training on IB in the classroom 4. Visits to IB schools locally & internationally 5. Fewer units of Science & Social Studies with longer duration to increase depth & understanding. 6. Consistent training schedule 7. Realization and understanding that we are also a Public School that needs to pass high stakes testing. 8. Difficult to follow true IB philosophy in Math 9. IB vs. State testing 10. More training

Section 4. Suggestions for future development of the PYP

- 1) Develop OCC resources that are more user-friendly and geared toward the PYP
- 2) More consistent training schedule
- 3) More flexibility of unit times to allow for deep learning

Sources

- Interviews and observations at the school with the PYP Coordinator/Elementary School Principal, teachers and parents
- Interview with the Elementary Principal/PYP Coordinator
- Programme Evaluation Self Study and IB report of the evaluation visit
- Charter School Application
- School leaflets, website and other school information available online.

Case Study 4: located in Africa

Section 1. The School Context

The Area

The school is situated on a secure campus in an affluent residential section of the capital city. The area is away from the bustle of the city center, but parents and teachers accessing the school, primarily by car, must cope with the challenges of the mixture of cars, buses and foot traffic on the limited road system in getting to and from the school. While there are some shopping malls, most purchases are made from the many little shops lining the roads and the supply of imported goods is limited. The school has developed its own structures for importing the supplies it needs, and maintaining the facilities of the US style school with gymnasiums, swimming pool, libraries and air-conditioned classrooms.

The History of the PYP at the School

The school was founded in 1968, and initially offered an American curriculum. The school moved to incorporate both IB and US curriculum due to the interest of the parent community, particularly European parents anticipating a move back to their home country and the school leadership at the time. The school also believed the adoption of all three IB programs would create a market niche for the future of the school. The initial authorization visit for the PYP took place in 2006. The current Program of Inquiry used by the school was reviewed and adopted in August 2012, and the school had completed a self study and reauthorization visit only weeks before the researcher's visit.

School Details

This American accredited international school is a private, nonprofit, coeducational day school currently serving over 700 students in all students in all. There are 354 PYP students in classes of approximately 23. The school currently offers all three IB programs – the only school in West Africa to do so. The school serves the children of a high socio-economic group with the means to pay the school fees. There is little competition with other schools; only one other 'international'

school offers the same level of services and this follows a British curriculum model. The school is not equipped to serve students with more than mild learning disabilities, but does take in students with a wide range of English language mastery. The students that the school serves in the PYP section are nationally diverse. The largest percentages are US (24.7%), British ((9%) Lebanese, Dutch , French, Korean, and Nigerian (4% each). The remainder is made up of 39 different nationalities.

The program has a faculty and support staff of 35. One third of the classroom teachers are local nationals who were typically employed by the school in the period preceding the adoption of the PYP. The other two-thirds of the teachers are expatriates from a variety of teaching backgrounds in Australia, New Zealand, the US and Canada, and the UK and Europe, who are hired on two-year contracts. These teachers typically stay an additional year before moving on. All classes have a teacher assistant, typically a local national.

The PYP program has a designated coordinator, and is supported by a whole school Director of Educational Programs who oversees the integration of the three programs among other duties, and both of these members of the instructional leadership team have experience of implementing the PYP in schools prior to coming to the school. In addition, the team includes the Primary School Principal and Head of School, responsible for hiring teachers for the program. These four members of the instructional leadership team are expatriate hires. The school offers both the MYP and Diploma program, with a school wide Educational Leadership Team consisting of principals, Head of School and Director of Educational Programs.

Section 2. The Interaction of School Context and the PYP

- 1. Inquiry Learning and Teaching.** The school illustrates the challenges involved in moving to the inquiry based teaching and learning demanded by the PYP from curriculum requiring a different pedagogy, and with some teachers trained in a different pedagogical style with little or no experience of inquiry based learning. The school self study notes the measures it has taken to instill a common understanding of PYP pedagogy to its diverse teaching faculty:

Practice C3 2d requires that the school ensure inquiry is used across the curriculum and by all teachers. In 2009 the ES principal and some teachers assessed this as a standard in need for improvement. At that time, *Comprehension and Collaboration* by Harvey and Daniels was a book distributed to all staff provoking dialogue about inquiry circles as a pedagogical approach. In 2010, the ES staff continued their exploration of inquiry and adopted Kath Murdoch's inquiry cycle as a common frame of reference for inquiry. The staff continued to explore inquiry and began initial planning using an "inquiry planning tool" based on Murdoch's "Classroom Connections" in February of 2011. In 2011 professional inquiries were based on the central idea "Inquiry is the pedagogical approach used across the curriculum" using form and function as lenses for conceptual understanding and language, IT and concepts as lines of inquiry. Teachers began including the inquiry model in PYP planners in January 2012. 2012 also saw book clubs explore the John Barel book, "Why are school buses always yellow" furthering collective understanding of inquiry. Promoting the use of student questions to guide teaching and learning continues to be a goal of the current PYP coordinator. Through careful reflection and continued sharing and exploration of resources, the school continues to better align to this standard and feel proud of accomplishments. (School Self Study 2012).

Visiting IB teams endorsed the need for the school to establish a more consistent understanding of the constructionist approach and inquiry learning, noting the need to move away from teacher directed learning and reflection opportunities, and for more student ownership of displays of their work.

Teachers discussing this issue with the researcher also recognized the challenge, noting “inquiry learning means different things to different people”. For long time teachers working at the school prior to the adoption of the PYP, and for incoming teachers trained in the pre-inquiry era, or coming from prescriptive school systems, including public schooling in the USA where the emphasis has moved to standardized teaching and testing, moving away from teacher led activities to child centered learning and providing the freedom for children to explore and provide answers to their own questions, is an ongoing journey and requires a major mind change. While the curriculum framework (units, lesson plans etc) provided by the PYP has been put in place the school recognizes the ongoing need to ensure there is a common understanding of what inquiry learning looks like in practice, and what teachers must do in their classrooms to facilitate it.

The school recognized that this shift in pedagogy requires a considerable investment in professional development which it makes, and that the most effective form of professional development to address this challenge involves work with teachers in their own classroom situation. The PYP coordinator is heavily involved in this and has, among other measures, developed videos of the teaching of whole units to share with other teachers to promote discussion of teaching to promote inquiry and to provide teachers with a visual image of what it looks like in a classroom.

Thus the key challenge for the school is establishing what inquiry-based learning is in the context of the PYP and the school, what it looks like, and how to use it effectively. As the IB training offered by the IB organization itself is of a more general orientation, the development of these understandings, the supervision of teachers transitioning to it, and the incorporation of expectations around teaching pedagogy at the school into formal evaluation

systems must fall to the school's instructional leadership team. However, the school must also cope with high turn-over of its expatriate faculty who typically stay only three years.

Like many schools in Africa, the school must compete with schools in less challenging environment for the limited pool of teachers with PYP training and experience, and is accepting that the school will provide this training for teachers coming to the school. The leadership team noted it does a lot of interviewing around constructivist learning and inquiry methodology in the hiring process with expertise and familiarity with the PYP being an important priority.

2. **The Language of the PYP.** A further challenge identified by several expatriate teachers was the complexity of the PYP language and document/framework. These teachers had encountered no problems with inquiry learning, having come from teacher training institutions that promoted this, but noted that it had taken them the first two years of working with the PYP at the school to reach a stage of feeling comfortable with the framework and the language, which they had mastered just as they came to the end of their contracts with the school. The importance of a dedicated PYP coordinator 'talking people through the program' was stressed.
3. **Host country culture and language.** The school received the highest rating on its parent survey for fostering International Mindedness, but IB program evaluations have requested more "host country awareness". The school community set this as a vision point "maximizing the benefits of living and learning in Ghana" and the school has focused on it since 2010, developing some measurements around it. Host Country language requirements are not easy to meet when the host country has over 50 different tribal units many with quite different languages. The school is also challenged to help the diverse expatriate students maintain their mother tongue.

4. External Validation of Student Progress. The school is diligently working to ensure both formative and summative assessments are an integral part of the Program of Inquiry. However, the lack of external assessment of student work during the PYP has led the school to seek external validation of student progress and the school's program. In this respect the school is similar to many other international schools with highly mobile student populations where parents need to be reassured that the standard of student achievement will allow their children to transfer easily to a similar grade in another country. The school's parent survey suggested that half of parents were concerned that student learning in the PYP at could be more challenging. So in addition to the authorization process conducted by the IB, the school has also sought accreditation by the US Middle States Association (MSA) and the Council of International Schools (CIS). Student progress is tested using the International Schools Assessment (ISA) and the school is currently piloting the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) diagnostic tests for mathematics and language with 4th and 6th grades. The school is also considering its alignment with the US Common Core, and uses US mathematics and reading schemes with integrated assessment to ensure student progress is comparable with similar student populations abroad (e.g. Every Day Math).

5. Summary

American International School reflects many of the challenges facing private international schools serving mobile and diverse expatriate students and their families, a combination of long serving host country teachers and short stay expatriate teachers, operating in relative isolation in countries where location and living conditions make retaining trained PYP teachers difficult. The success at the school is measured both objectively in respect to comparisons of achievement with comparative schools abroad, but also by observing student behaviors, surveying parent satisfaction, and noting teacher adoption of 'best practice' with respect to modeling and promoting transdisciplinary inquiry learning and the skills and attributes of the Learner Profile.

Section 3: The indicators of success of the program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

- 1. *Building of a positive ethos and culture centered around the Learner Profile.*** With students from many different cultures, the Learner Profile/PYP ethos established common norms of behavior and expectations that has helped unify the school community.
- 2. *Students reflecting the Learner Profile.*** The researcher informally visited a class engaged in a game to successfully market lemonade – attended an assembly where several classes presented their reading experiences through the perspective of the Learner Profile, a chemistry experiment being undertaken by groups of students, listened to students working on a design project on computers in the library – in all cases students were enjoyed and enjoying the activities, confident about asking questions and presenting answers.
- 3. *Parent feedback on the program.*** School administration noted that despite limited competition, parents liked the international visibility of the program.
- 4. *External assessments.*** Discussions with administrators and teachers explained that the school maintained high scores on the external tests that the school chose to administer, so satisfaction with the PYP resulted more from the challenges it presented to students to demonstrate creativity and thinking skills.

Q1. How would you define the success of the PYP in this school

Administrators: Children being comfortable inquiring-the questions they come up with, hearing them be naturally curious, expressing wondering- so different from other schools. Teachers collaborating and understanding the transdisciplinary skills; integration of single subject with units of inquiry. Feedback from parents who are new to PYP and who love it, kids are excited about learning and proud of it. confidence in sharing learning, familiarity with the Learner Profile; on par with other schools in terms of external assessment, each student success in the PYP exhibition, caliber of projects and confidence; we think they are prepared for middle school however change in pedagogical approach in middle school might challenge this perception as a result of the written curriculum becoming increasingly developed. Inquiry based, differentiated reflected on in a timely manner, positive atmosphere around the school, respectful students, parent satisfaction and education about the program, noisy classrooms, independence of students.

Teachers: The current PYP coordinator provides support to new teachers to implement the PYP and current teachers are getting continued support. Teachers are now being held accountable for the implementation of the PYP. Students have a better understanding of the Learner Profile and the concepts. We have a vertical and horizontal POI and the units of inquiry match the transdisciplinary themes.

Parents: Kids talk about what they are learning at home; youngest son pointing out things around him that connect with concepts at school, older son will ask about something, knows how to research to find answers himself: younger sons literacy development- original writing, encouraged to pursue his own interests even in different languages, learning cursive, eager to share what they are learning at dinner table; remember units done in past and make connections to them; hands on experience of doing his own business, thinks critically about current learning, lack of options to represent learning, songs in French and vocabulary that connect to units; good

progress in math and language; ability for parents to know what kids can do but don't necessarily see the work; they learn something, develop themselves. International view, general knowledge about the rest of the world, critical thinking, positivity about going to school, use resources, academic results similar to other systems, confidence and openness to express ideas with others, dare to stand out and face risks, you can make mistakes, less competition in terms of grading - not ranking, not restricted to textbooks.

Q2. What are the strengths of the PYP in this school?

Administrators: strong PYP coordinator; workshop leaders on site; recruiting teachers with experience; capacity within the staff; programme of inquiry is a collaborative effort and developed teacher willingness to be learners themselves: understanding that inquiry is what we do here: international diversity of staff and students: established narrative that PYP is the program at the school; evidence of consistent learning across grade levels - central ideas, concepts, student questions; teacher professional development through professional inquiry groups.

Teachers: The Units of inquiry are now stabilized; the POI is aligned with a continuum for each grade level. The teachers are receiving better training and up to date resources through the PYP coordinator, assisting in making connections with current events. The school allocated a decent amount of time for collaborative planning within grade levels, meeting twice a week, one time with the PYP coordinator.

Parents: Hands on experiences - field trips, creation and innovation; success of kids is based on what they can do; built confidence in writing; no stress and feel good about learning; skills are being met without the traditional emphasis on rote- while being able to pursue inquiries; Kids like learning and it doesn't feel like work; learning is relevant to what they might do outside of school - such as ability to research; broad vision; international mindedness; focus on the child as an individual; using local community resources; looking at the whole world; kids have opportunities to mix with other grade levels - reading buddies, MYP kids interact with PYP kids,

community feel; teachers are committed, with experience in the systems; teachers are open and supportive; learning is endless; takes so much from the teacher; when teacher is good, there is no end, but without a good teacher who understands this systems it is a real challenge; individual student is more responsible for his own learning

Q3. How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Administrators: confidence in children; sharing their learning; students as inquirers, thinkers and communicators; students have ownership of their learning; learning is fun; interest in learning for sustained periods of time; intrinsic motivation for learning; early dismissal for collaboration; structured collaborative planning.

Teachers: Inquiry cycle, students ask a lot of questions directly related to the units; teachers are modeling inquiry, the units encourage deeper teacher questions. Students are making connections with units and with their life, conceptual learning is strong. Students are confident with the knowledge they have and are willing to share it. Students develop a lot of skills, research skills. The weekly assembly offers a chance for students to develop their transdisciplinary skills and chance to show them. Students ask questions for clarification of learning.

Parents: broader learning outside the classroom. individual child focused; not the same type of learning, meaningful units, learning is fun, students have choice within a topic; social development, learning from friends; units are very broad so they have the ability to gather information and share; it will help them for the rest of their lives by start early with skills of research; not afraid to stand on stage and talk; learning isn't random, its linked to wider topic or idea; integrated art and other subjects; get used to learning this way - they remember a lot of things about things and they remember it; promotes interest - not boring, positive about school. Talk about learning at home. Learn to find their own information. Learn to develop themselves. Grade 5 exhibition based on interest. They like it, kids come back home happy.

Q4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Administrators: Vision/focus/form. Intentionality of learning; Easy to sell as has unique and substantial qualities. Unclear as was implemented years prior to this arrival

Teachers: Time allotment for collaborative planning, budget allotment (having a full time PYP coordinator.)

Q5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Administrators: IB being responsive to requests/queries etc. IB Africa symposium and continued support on African continent has been good but still room. Make PD more affordable.

Teachers: Official training that is easily accessible for this area.

Section 4. Suggestions for Future Development of the Program

- 1) Increase responsiveness to questions from schools regarding programming
- 2) Greater affordability of teacher training
- 3) More locally/regionally available training
- 4) Clearer guidelines for assessment of student progress in developing the skills and attributes of the Learner Profile

Sources

- Primary Years Programme Evaluation Report, Feb. 2009
- Response to the progress report submitted by the school (Nov. 2011) (the report addressed aspects of the school needing attention as indicated by the 2009 visit)

- Self-study questionnaire: December 2012
- Results of Parent Survey: 2012
- School interviews and discussions with the Head of the Elementary School, PYP Coordinator, teachers, parents and teacher assistants conducted during a visit to the school in March, 2013.

Case Study 5: located in a city in Mexico

Section 1. The School Context

The Area

The school is located in a city in Mexico. The total population in 2010 was 727,034. There were 194,919 households with an average household size of 3.7. The total number of schools in the municipality is 650 (in 2010). The area surrounding the school is largely a residential area with many schools in the neighborhood. The school is conveniently located near major roads.

The History of the PYP at The School

The school was established in 1956. The school used traditional teaching methods, but was project-focused. From 1962, the school had the sole owner of the school who changed the school in many ways including the pedagogical approach and the language of instruction. Such vision was to provide an environment where children felt safe and nurtured to learn. To this end, the school was a bilingual school and introduced English as a second language into the school. The school also offered students learning strategies that developed their communication skills and encouraged students to become an active part of the learning process. By 1967, the school had adopted an integrated educational model that focused on the participation of students, teachers, and parents. The school's first parent-teacher association was established in that year. From this beginning, the school has continued to look for innovative programs and teaching methods that balance the academic and social needs of the students. This forward-looking approach has turned the school into a diverse and inclusive school and to be a part of the International Baccalaureate programs.

From the start, the school has been focused on incorporating innovative and dynamic programs that focus on student inquiry. As such, the school does not adopt programs, but adapts programs

to suit the learning environment. In 2001, when the school adopted the PYP, the school had already implementing the MYP and DP programs.¹

The English program prior to the PYP was constrained and tied too strongly to textbook companies. Materials had to be purchased every 5-6 years, when new editions of textbooks and materials were rolled out. For English teaching, the school adapted an innovative English language teaching program called “Whole Language.” The program provided strategies to motivate active student participation in developing communication skills and integrating content into the English teaching. When selecting to participate as a PYP school, the school administration felt that it was a perfect fit for the philosophy of the school and offered an external authority that validated the school’s approach to learning. In addition, prior experience with the DP and MYP programs added to the school’s enthusiasm for the PYP.

In 1999, the Foreign Language Principal went to Switzerland for PYP training. In 2001, all teachers received the in-school course Making the PYP Happen. Over the years, teachers have been participated in IB teacher training workshops. The current PYP Coordinator has been to two several IB trainings. Typically 5-7 teachers of different levels go for IB training each year. However, there are about 25-30 teachers who have not received training. The school is currently conducting its self-study and will have a reauthorization visit in January 2014. An in-school IB workshop is planned for August 2013.

School Details

The mission of the school is “to train, within a framework of freedom and respect, people of integrity in feeling and thought, so they can function effectively in any cultural field, responsible leadership, committed to the national reality and universal values.” The school is a privately owned co-educational non-religious bilingual school that offers pre-school and primary education. The primary teaching languages of the school are Spanish and English. Two and a

¹ Until 2009, the school was part of a larger consortium of IB schools.

half hours of the school day are taught in English and two and a half hours are taught in Spanish. In addition, the school offers French as an additional language as well.

There is a strong institutional history in the school. The structure of the leadership team includes a Head Mistress, Spanish Principal, Foreign Language Principal, Pre-school Principal, and the PYP Coordinator. The school staff is stable with several of the school leaders having been at the school for over 30 years. The school has 62 full and part-time teachers. The teaching faculty is all local teachers except for the Foreign Language Principal.

The current student population of the school is 530 including pre-nursery through grade 6. There is one pre-nursery class, and two classes of Nursery, Kindergarten 1, Kindergarten 2, and Pre-primary school. For grades 1 through 5, there are three groups in each grade. For each group there is an English and a Spanish teacher. Each full-time teacher covers two of the groups, which includes crossing grade levels. There is no additional support in the classrooms, aside from either one Spanish or English teacher. The PYP is implemented from Nursery through grade 5. Grade 6 also consists of three groups. They follow an interdisciplinary based on the National curriculum. Students have a teacher for each subject. It is a grade of transition and reinforcement of skills and abilities for their entrance to Secondary school or to the MYP. The school serves the local Mexican community. A majority of the students are Mexican, roughly 96% and the remaining 4% of the students come from 9 different countries.

Educational Context

All schools in Mexico, both private and public schools must follow the regulations outlined by the Secretariat of Public Education. A new policy entitled the Integral Reform of Basic Education was implemented in 2006. This reform included a greater emphasis in three areas, “diversity and interculturality, emphasis on the development of competition, and the incorporation of themes that encompass more than one subject” (SEP, 2010). This change in policy has opened the door for the Spanish curriculum to participate more in the PYP.

All Spanish teachers must graduate receiving their training through a Normal Teaching College, as outlined by the Secretariat of Public Education. Many of the teachers at the school have university degrees, in addition to their Normal Teaching credential. In addition, all Spanish teachers must participate in teacher trainings provided by the Secretariat of Public Education. As such, teachers are not trained to work across disciplines, expected to use the required textbooks and follow the same sequence for courses. English teachers typically have a college degree (majors vary) and must have a teaching of English as a second language course credential from the Secretariat of Public Education.

Section 2: The Interaction of School Context and the PYP

- 1. Integrating PYP and the National Curriculum.** All schools in Mexico must follow the regulations of the Secretariat of Public Education. As such, the textbooks and curriculum are explicit and must be strictly implemented. However, the new reforms have been encouraging and have allowed for more inquiry-based and transdisciplinary inquiry for students. As part of the new reforms, a student profile similar to the PYP learner profile is being encouraged. The current Head Mistress has capitalized on this momentum and has implemented a community profile based on the learner profile at the school. The learner profile can be seen on classroom walls and heard in classroom discussion and in how parents describe their children, risk-takers, communicators, and independents. As noted above, great strides have been made in developing, training, and implementing a unified curriculum at the school. However, the school community noted that there is still more room for improvement to connect the Spanish and English curriculum together as a unified program.
- 2. Inquiry Learning and Teaching.** A key challenge for the school is implementing what inquiry-based learning looks like in the context of the SEP and the PYP. The school has the challenge of teachers trained in normal training institutes or from different educational background with the national curriculum as the focus and the SEP examinations as the goal. The recent reforms have opened up more opportunities and for inquiry-based learning and teaching and also sharing of curriculum between Spanish and English teachers.

- 3. Differentiation in the Classroom.** Among the school community there were varying perspectives on the PYP and if the PYP is appropriate for all learners. What was clear was the implementing differentiation was a challenge and an area for improvement. English language is the most straightforward area to provide differentiation for students and some English teachers implement differentiation. There is no teaching support in the classroom and it is difficult for one teacher to implement differentiation. In 2010, the school started a new department, Servicio de Apoyo Educativo (SAE). It's main objective is to design and adapt differentiated activities for students with special learning needs. SAE personnel work directly with the group teachers and parents on the implementation of these learning strategies. These strategies have been successful in integrating special needs students to their daily classroom activities in a more independent and active way. IB training and feedback is necessary on this matter of differentiation.
- 4. Financial Challenges.** The school is a private school that charges a fairly high tuition, although it is 10% lower than other private schools in the area. However, what the school community stressed was that the context of Mexico and Latin America should not be forgotten. Mexico is still a developing country and average annual salaries are not as high as in other countries. Even with the relatively high Mexican tuition, the school feels that implementing the PYP poses many financial challenges. The financial challenges constrain what the school would do in terms of expanding the library and technology available in the school. In addition, the existing economic crisis and unemployment have resulted in many overdue accounts in the school.
- 5. Training.** The financial constraints influence teacher, administrative, and parent training. The school is committed to providing IB training to all teachers, parents, and the school community. However the financial costs of trainings are burdensome. Internally, the PYP coordinator provides IB training to teachers roughly once a month and to parents two to three times a year. More training is also encouraged for parents to better understand the PYP,

including the evaluation and language of the PYP. There was interest in online English and Spanish trainings.

- 6. Transdisciplinary Integration of Mathematics.** The school has been interested in inquiry-based mathematics instruction and wants to move away from traditional mathematics teaching methods, but has found it challenging to find an appropriate program of math instruction. The school has spent a lot of time exploring international math programs, but struggled to find a math program that fit PYP, SEP, and Alexander Bain. The PYP provides general guidelines on math, but limited information for the school to build the mathematics program and SEP provides a very rigid guideline on mathematics teaching. The school has found that currently students acquire the mechanics of mathematics, but have difficulty applying math knowledge to other areas.

In the last few years, the school has partnered with an organization that designs and implements inquiry-based mathematics instruction entitled New Conscious Discipline and “Inventions” in Mathematics. The teachers are receiving training and close consultation with the program representative. The goal is to integrate mathematics instruction across disciplines. But, for now, mathematics is taught as a single-subject.

- 7. Language Support and Training.** The school community emphasized the importance of conferences and trainings provided in Spanish and not solely English.
- 8. Evaluation Tools, Planner and Rubrics.** There was a call from teachers and administrator for more support for evaluation tools and stick to rubrics in Spanish and English. Most teachers use one or two that are provided by SEP in the national curriculum. Teachers are concerned that the evaluation tools may be too subjective and would like more examples of summative evaluation and the objectives for developing a good evaluation process. There was consensus that the planner was not easy and the difference between stages 3 and 4 is difficult to discern. The teachers would like more flexibility with planners. Exemplar

planners are available on the OCC, but it would be helpful to have an IB explanation on the exemplars, areas that are done well and areas that could be improved.

9. **Isolation.** Among teachers and administrators there was a strong feeling of isolation and a desire to be connected to other administrators, coordinators, and teachers in Latin America or Mexico that face similar challenges. Most teachers were unaware of schools that also implement the IB program and are bilingual schools. A community of teachers could provide support pedagogically and aware of the challenges of a national curriculum.

Section 3: The Indicators of Success of the Program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

1. ***School unity and a common language.*** The school whole-heartedly believes in the learner profile and the PYP for supporting inquiry-based learning. The school community expressed how the PYP has not only changed the learner, but has also changed the teachers, coordinators, administrators, and parents. Across all stakeholder groups, the learner profile emerged in the common language the each group used to describe their participation. Teachers talked about modeling communication with colleagues for students. Parents highlighted the importance of communication between children and parents and among parents. All stakeholder groups mentioned how they see change in their everyday lives of the IB profile and in their interactions with individuals outside the school. How teachers, parents, and administrators have learned to be more tolerant and understanding of difference. There was a clear sense that the community and learning environment changes and is shaped by the learner and that a PYP learner is continuously seeking answers to questions to the world around them.

In addition, there was a suggestion from the IB Evaluation that the library resources needed to be improved. The library is now a well-resourced library and uses the Dewey decimal system. Another recent change is the changing role of the librarian. Traditionally, a librarian

prepared all the materials students needed for a research project. Now, the librarian serves as a facilitator and offers assistance to students to find their own project books and materials.

2. ***Teacher involvement and collaboration in planning and developing the curriculum.*** Since the school began implementing the PYP program, the school community has been busy working on a unified curriculum, collaborative planning, and designing meaningful learning strategies. The PYP really “fit” the philosophy of the school in terms of valuing the process of learning for children and nurturing their growth for the changing global world. However, as mentioned above, the Mexican National curriculum poses a great challenge in terms of focusing much of the curriculum, teaching pedagogy, and student learning on disciplinary areas, traditional methods, and examinations. Since about 2009, the school has been able to implement and design planners in a transdisciplinary manner with the material from the Mexican National Curriculum. Prior to 2009, there was one PYP coordinator for all three primary schools in the cooperation group of the school. This was a recommendation from the IB Evaluation visit in 2008 that the school immediately carried out. Another recommendation from the IB Evaluation visit was to promote longer periods of inquiry and investigation, which the school has implemented. Moreover, the scope and sequence in all subjects have been updated and the school is working toward designing appropriate evaluation policies. There are designated times for planning, Tuesday afternoons for 2 hours and one Friday a month. However, with these times teachers still felt there was limited planning and collaboration time.

Teachers enjoy the teamwork and do not feel competition between them. They feel that teamwork and collaboration serves as a good model for students. The single-subjects are being integrated into the curriculum. Technology, science, and physical education teachers are participating in planning and collaborate to extend student learning. In the last few years, there is more discussion both horizontally and vertically to ensure that students do not repeat content as they deepen their learning each year.

The curriculum gap between English and Spanish teachers has narrowed. Spanish teachers have historically been reluctant to give up and share their curriculum with the English teachers. Spanish teachers feared that if the material was not adequately covered, it would reflect poorly on their teaching. The state testing is mandatory for all students. Moreover, shifting the perception at the school that Spanish teachers need to cover the 4.5 hours of national Mexican curriculum in 2.5 hours of Spanish class to collaborating with the English teachers to cover the curriculum in over the combined 5 hours of Spanish and English instruction. Related, shifting the perception that English teachers implemented the PYP as there was more flexibility in the English curriculum.

3. ***Parent Involvement.*** Parents at the school are more aware of the PYP program. Many parents are drawn to the school because of the reputation for preparing students that are prepared for the world and on the Mexican national curriculum. Parents are impressed with the language and reflection of their children. Parents believe that the Mexican education system is traditional and textbooks and curriculum have been used for several generations and the school offers an alternative and prepares their students for global challenges. The students return home inquiring and research projects become projects in the family. These activities are not only changing students, but also parents, and the family structure. Traditional parent roles are being challenged and parents are being asked to answer tough questions and reflect on their own parenting practices.

Responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts

Q1. How would you define the success of the PYP in this school?

Administrators:It's a program that has been consistent for 11 years, it has grown in regard to engaging this community and generated union, establishing relationships between the school, home and the world. The Community Profile as a basis to conduct processes puts us to work with kids whose skills transcend. Teachers, through live training, have enriched the learning process and has established collaborative work. They are committed to the importance of organized

planning. They are motivated and on the move in search of appropriate strategies to develop the teaching-learning process. Has narrowed the gap between English teachers and teachers of Spanish fostering greater communication, creativity and challenge. It has generated a different consciousness in the evaluation process, which is more directed towards achievements than failures. Has provided strategies and opportunities to generate a constructivist learning process. It has also been a tool for developing reflection and critical thinking in this students performing work that comes together, we can get more exposure PEP, fulfilling a transdisciplinary Inquiry Project evaluation as a process of working together since age three. Currently, the staff finds that incorporates greater organization and withdrawing, be enriched

Teachers: Adopt attributes Profile Learning Community as a lifestyle that makes us citizens of the world. Reflecting on the limitations and strengths of each, both students and teachers, and work on weaknesses to polish. Observe how students transform their thinking unlike other schools with different programs. Learning is significant because children are constructing their own learning and that helps to develop different life skills. Teamwork and communication between students and teachers is valuable. Through a process of inquiry students make connections based on their knowledge and experiences, situations and global issues. This encourages students to enjoy and want to learn more, to take charge of their own learning, is confident and enthusiastic in the classroom. Curiosity. There are no limits on what students want to learn. There advice and enriching work outputs. It is an exciting program that motivates us, as teachers, to give the best of ourselves. The program is becoming tangible connections that make giving students shows how important it is meaningful learning. The student evaluates himself using different tools and is confident to evaluate others. The program has transformed us, believe in it and we have adopted as a way of life.

Parents: Throughout these years we have touched the success of PEP School have seen that teachers are trained and updated on the changes affecting this world. There have also been training for Parents and so we understand how it works and what is this role as parents. Another success is seeing that all staff of the School believes that program. This success leads to this children to have a broad knowledge, insight Interglobal, a diversity-based knowledge planned

objectives. Even this children have developed their individual independence throughout the primary years.

Q2.What are the strengths of the PYP in this school?

Administrators: The close involvement of teachers interested in designing a good written curriculum planning, seeking a balance between subjects, meeting the social, cultural, emotional, physical and academic achievement. Achieving strengthen and complement the Community Profile and Learning. Support has been vital in steering group to determine how best to implement the program and investment in materials and resources to manage the processes of inquiry, considering the teacher's most valuable resource for the success of the program. Evidence of active participation of students in learning awareness and service. The deal, within this means, to the recommendations and demands flexibility and adopting different strategies that allow the construction of knowledge through meaningful experiences that gives support PEP coordinator through its functions to the whole group teaching, extending to Parent.

Teachers: The adaptation of the program, and this is a flexible program, the National Program of Education is compulsory in this country. The school has been able to supplement the elements of PEP with the national program (SEP). Different assessment tools. The portfolio as a tool for student evaluation, tripartite meetings and the design of new assessment strategies that allow the exchange of thoughts on the teaching-learning process. The focus on a qualitative rather than quantitative, which helps us know where we need to go with the group and allows student growth. Learning through concepts that help them understand the real world. Planners and assessments allow us to see how the students are, what we are going and where we are headed. Transdisciplinarity that allows students to understand concepts and connect them to different areas and different subjects. Collegial planning. IB Workshops for Parents.

Parents: Among all came to the conclusion that the School fosters teamwork, promotes tolerance, solidarity and empathy among children and community. We also believe that another strong point is the work carried out with the Community, such as delivering groceries, helping

children through the donation of wheelchairs, the restoration of works of art and endless activities the benefit of the people around us. And through activities School prepares children for life.

Q3.How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Administrators: The student and the teacher have developed skills that allow them to build learning through inquiry. Active participation is perceived, reflection and development of skills and attitudes, enabling them to make connections between experiences and the information they obtain. The student teacher depends less is more autonomous, allowing observe what is capable of. The student has the opportunity to express themselves freely, in resolving conflicts. It comes to something concrete and develops the ability to think about what caused and what caused it. The tools that account to meet expectations.

Teachers: When you clear the development of life skills. The constant training of teachers is reflected in the design of learning strategies and generates significant areas of opportunity for the development of the elements inside and outside the classroom. Students with critical thinking that enrich their work and that of others. Promotes learning autonomy. The collaborative participation both among students and between teachers. The approach to different sources of information. Generations are clearly more creative and student growth. Children are proactive problem solvers.

Parents: Then give the rain of ideas that emerged from all Parents:. Children learn to defend their ideas. The community outreach program through service learning “Sonrie” connects them closer to the reality of this country. Teaches them to be selective and to reason. They make an ecological conscience. These are children who go to school happy, excited them to create projects and motivate them to carry them out successfully. Increases communication between parents and children and between teachers and students. Promotes individualization of children. The program respects the individual to learn from each one of the children. Teaches them to look for the best ways to meet any eventuality and decide the best option

FINAL CONCLUSION After placing it on the table all brainstorm IB importance in the lives of this children arrive at the following conclusion: "we are parents family convinced IB as the basis for future life of this children"

Q4. How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Administrators: In the organization of what everyone does and vision with which it does. Has provided ways to achieve a balance within the teaching group and subjects. It has generated the need for collegial work has opened different perspectives on learning and keeps us moving in search of better strategies in teaching processes. Facilitates communication between principals, students and teachers. In regard to the recruitment, there is a sense of searching for a profile that fits the needs of the school.

Teachers: There are enough materials (all types) and tools that help us open the channel of student learning. The change in attitude of teachers to become guides. Autonomy in learning (how I learn, how I connect with everything around me and how to extend that knowledge). Modifying planners according to the needs that are being created. Teachers work collegially to know where we have to handle. It has allowed the formulation of objectives and design of a sequence of contents. We have an updated library.

Q5. What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the PYP?

Administrators: Greater accessibility on the economic situation. Prevent the organization remains aware of the needs of schools throughout the world and does not become parochial (especially lately when it shows a greater influence of the United States and its interest in PEP) that performs for the diversity, upholding the ideals that have characterized so far. Continue to review the CEPEL in terms of design and functionality, in order that the teacher approaches him with enthusiasm. The Office of Credit adequate monitoring respect of payments already made since this school is dealing with this type of problem that generates a lot of hassle and waste of

time and money. The staff of this department has been very unprofessional. That the magazine that publishes the IB is accessible through the network to the Learning Community. That the Organization supervise its subsidiaries such as AMEXCAOBI in Mexico, to offer the same quality of services that the OBI.

Teachers: If parents have direct access to CEPEL could help them understand the program through which their children attend, as some of them can not attend IB workshops for parents that the school offers. Make CEPEL friendlier to the teachers concerned navigation. Open a link in CEPEL for teachers to have direct advice and answer questions that arise throughout the units. Build a website more dynamic and interesting

Section 4. Suggestions for Future Development of the Program

- 1) Greater affordability of teacher training
- 2) More locally/regionally available training and in Spanish
- 3) Provide more guidance for assessment of student attributes and attitudes in learning
- 4) Greater affordability overall

Sources

- Focus Groups with Administrators
- Focus Groups with Teachers
- Focus Group with Parents
- Primary Years Programme Evaluation Report, 2008
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía
<http://www3.inegi.org.mx/sistemas/mexicocifras/Default.aspx?i=i&e=9>, accessed on April 25, 2013

Case Study 6: located in a province in eastern China

Section 1. The School Context

The Area

The school is located in a province in eastern China where is home to over eight million people and is a medium-sized city in China. The city has played an important role in Chinese history, as it served as the capital of China many times. It is one of the oldest cities in China, dating back to 495 BCE, and has served as the capital many times in China's history. It is a considered a second-tier city that has a growing industrial and technology industry. It is located on the lower part of the Yangtze River and the Yangtze River Delta economic zone. The Yangtze River Delta is one of the largest economic zones in China. Many overseas companies have set-up manufacturing plants such as Ericsson, Samsung, LG, Kia, Ford, and Siemens. The city has many rich natural resources including iron and sulfur.

The History of the PYP at The School

From the beginning, the school has strived to provide an educational environment for all international families in the city. The school started in 1992 with three families living in city, a German family and two American families. These expatriate families moved to the city for work and needed a school for their children, there was not alternative. The school emerged out of necessity to provide a schooling experience for expatriate families and parents were heavily involved in the school design, administration, and school curriculum. These features of the school are still present today, the commitment to providing expatriate children a deep schooling experience, the focus on being an international community, as opposed to one country-specific, and also the involvement of parents in the school. The school no longer needs to provide the schooling for all expatriate families, as there are now other international schools in the city. However, the school has made a conscious choice to provide schooling opportunities to all who want to attend and is today an inclusive learning community.

The school was originally named the the school because it received support and logistic guidance from an American School Center in Shanghai. However, the school never took money from a company or a country because it did not want to be dependent on anyone entity. Parents were instrumental in securing the physical space of the school, hiring teachers, updating the classrooms, acquiring materials for the school, and overall management of the school. The school received administrative assistance from the Center. The school initially used the Calvert Homeschooling program. By September 1992, the school was located in an unheated room at a Foreign Language School in the city. The program continued to grow and in 1994-1995 had hired two more teachers and had roughly 22 students enrolled. The curriculum was developed by the teachers and was a mixture of many different curriculums. The school classrooms were physically outfitted to Swedish standards, with the help of Ericsson.

During the 1996-1997, many new changes occurred at the school. First, the school was officially granted permission from the Chinese government to operate as a school in China. Second, the school moved into an unused two-story building in August 1996. Third, an outside administrator was hired in 1996, Rebecca Mason. Fourth, the school raised its tuition, but did offer scholarships and free tuition to students in need. By the end of the 1996-1997 school year, the school had roughly 40 students enrolled. Fifth, the school's library was started in 1997 when books were barcoded and organized for students to use. In 1997, the school offered Pre-K through Grade 9 education.

In 1997, the first principal/director of the school was hired who remained as the school head until 2008. The principal brought the idea of the International Baccalaureate programs to the school. The school started offering the MYP program initially and. was the first school authorized to offer the IB programs at all three levels, PYP, MYP, and the DP. At the time, the school served 100 students. The school was the first international school in China to offer all three IB programs. In the early years of the PYP, it was difficult to attract teachers to the city because it was not Shanghai or Beijing.

The school graduated its first class of students in 2001. In 2004, the school moved from its central location in the city to its current location at the outskirts of the city, a newly built area in Xian Lian College and University Town. The school was fully accredited by CIS, NEASC, and NCCT in 2007.

School Details

The school is an inclusive learning community, inspiring International Mindedness, Personal excellence, and creative thinking. It is a private non-profit parent cooperative international school located in the city. There is a seven member board responsible for guiding the direction of the school, but not involved in day-to-day administration. As a non-profit school and puts all tuition money back into the school. The school has an extensive library, technology resources, swimming pool, café, and is building a design center. Several staff commented on the supportive environment of the school to providing the materials teachers need to succeed.

There are currently over 700 students at the school who represent roughly 40 nationalities, approximately 45% Asian and 55% outside of Asia. Students hail from the following regions: 18% European (excluding Germany), 10% Germany, Asia (excluding Korean) 10%, Korean 34%, American 12%, Australian 8%, Others 8%. The school has a target of growing to 880 students. The Korean community has been rising because of the Korean companies in the city. However, Americans and Australians are also on the rise as Ford has opened up a plant in the city. The growth of the school has impacted class sizes and has expanded class size from 16 students to 21 students per class. Since 2012, the number of classes per grade grew from two classes to three classes per grade².

The school serves a Prek-12 community with a Head of School, School Principal, DP Coordinator, MYP Coordinator and Principal, and the PYP Coordinator and Principal. The current Head of School joined the school in 2009. He is the second School Head at the school

² With the exception of Kindergarten and Pre-K. There are two kindergarten classes and only 1 class of Pre-K. Companies do not typically pay for Pre-K.

who brought with him the shift to the school becoming an inclusive learning community. The current head of primary and PYP coordinator joined the school in 2005.

There are 89 teachers in the school from 14 countries including US 24%, UK 24%, Australia 12%, Canada 15%, China 9%, New Zealand 6%, and other 10%. The average number of years of teaching experience in the school is 18 years. There are two Special Education Needs teachers, English Language learning support, ICT, Librarian with aides, PE, Music, and a Chinese department.

Section 2. The Interaction of School Context and the PYP

1. Balancing international mindedness and diversity. International-mindedness at the school manifests itself in three ways. First, the school community addresses the nature of the school's location in the city. As an international community in the city in China, the school highlights this unique nature and difference. The school also focuses on the difference among the community and not as a homogenous whole. The Head of Primary explains to parents that they should feel uncomfortable with others at some point during their time at the school, and that this is okay and part of appreciating and confronting difference, be it cultural, social, or other. Further, based on diverse community perspectives on the PYP, the school draws from the rich diverse community to address to bring out the difference. Finally, teachers are encouraged to create the classroom environment and curriculum to reflect the classes' rich cultural diversity and not the teacher's background. This manifests itself in the selection of books and resources for class. The school's Five-Year Accreditation Report noted, "the strong sense of school community and the demonstrated commitment to international mindedness and global citizenship."

The school is strongly committed to providing an educational experience for all international expatriate families. However, it recently had to implement a country quota system to ensure that the school remained international in composition and not dominated by one nationality. The main driver for this came from the Korean community. Parents were drawn to the school

because it has an international community. As mentioned above, a large number of Korean companies and families were moving to the city. Korean parents feared the school becoming mostly Korean and no longer international and suggested setting quotas for each country. The school now caps at 30% of the total potential numbers in each grade coming from one nationality. As such, the school serves a large population where English is a second language. The school has a team of English language learning specialists to support non-native English speakers.

Finally, school is committed to being an inclusive learning community and has two full-time special education needs specialists. Keeping with the school's original philosophy, the school has joined over 70 international schools around the world as inclusive learning community schools. The school does not consider student's learning needs prior to accepting them into the school and does the best it can do to support students with diverse learning needs.

2. **Student Mobility and the Importance of a Strong Sense of Community.** Because of the mobile population served by the school there is a need for school to serve as a stable center of the community. Student family backgrounds are diverse in terms of home country in the school, but the professional backgrounds are similar in terms of professional positions and industry. Employers typically pay for the school tuition. The school population is rather transient as the employer dictates the length of stay in the city. Most families stay for an average of 3 years. Many school members noted that the PYP philosophy was initially foreign and different than home country education systems. However, the PYP philosophy was seen as a welcome difference and many families were reluctant to leave. All parents that were interviewed emphasized that they would stay in the city for a longer term because of the school. However, for many families, staying in the school is not possible because their work situation does not permit it.
3. **Teacher Recruitment and Retention.** The school had difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers because of its location in a second-tier city. The school attacked this challenge with

fervor over the last 7 years (since 2005) by providing competitive salaries, professional development, and a strong sense of community. The school brings specialists and trainers to the school and provides extensive professional development for teachers. This has worked and many teachers who would not have considered the city in the past are now teaching in the school. In the IB community, teachers know that the school is a supportive professional environment and teachers want to come to the school. Recently, the school has provided on-site trainings by experts who were meaningful for teachers and pushed their thinking in terms of real “action” for students. The combination of the school’s environment, professional development, and competitive salaries has improved teacher recruitment and retention. Over the five years, the school has the luxury of only hiring teachers committed to inquiry-based learning. Last year there were 120 applicants for 1 teaching post in the primary school.

4. **Symbiotic relationship with host country community.** The school has worked to increase understanding and interaction between the school community and the local culture and bridge with the local community instead of being a stand-alone bubble community. In all matters, the school attempts to engage in mutually beneficial relationships for both the school and local community. For example, students volunteer as English tutors that go to the local schools and older students give performances in the local kindergartens. The school also opens the pool to students from a local migrant school and NIS students engage in cleaning up litter in the area. Three main barriers that exist are language/cultural understanding with the local community, the size and scale of the local community compared with the school community, not proportional, and the schedules of the school and the local schools are not aligned.

In terms of “action” with the community, teachers raised the challenge of using the design cycle of empathy and listening to the community to implement real action. Action in the school still tends to be teacher led. Teachers want to have action come from students, but it is challenge to have discussion and all for independent inquiry and meaningful action in 6 weeks. It is important to connect students to their community.

5. **Digital technology within Chinese context.** There was discussion about the use of more digital technology, but the context of China makes it difficult to access some digital media. Students, staff, and faculty all mentioned the limitations on digital and electronic sources available in China.

Section 3. The Indicators of Success of the Program

The responses to the electronic questionnaire confirmed by in-depth discussions at the school show the school to perceive the following indicators of success of the PYP to be important:

1. **High Quality Inquiry-based Learning.** NIS has a long history of implementing the PYP and clearly follows an inquiry-based approach to learning. Administrators, staff, and faculty mentioned that PYP is a platform for allowing inquiry-based learning. However, teachers often used other methods and ideas to teaching as well. The PYP is flexible enough to incorporate many learning and thinking strategies to enhance student learning. During the site visit, teachers were heard to be engaging in pedagogy discussions. During interviews, teachers expressed that pedagogy discussions were commonplace; collaborative work and planning are part of the culture at the school. Teachers share strengths with each other to support the learning of students. The school is a reflective community and is constantly asking “where do we go from here?” The school continues to reflect and improve the learning and teaching environment, but would like to see more room in the PYP to allow them to innovate.
2. **Collaboration.** Administrators place a high value on integration and a collaborative culture in the school. There is a sense of a two-way integration that is genuine and authentic. There is collaboration time built into the schedule to allow for both vertical and horizontal collaboration. Moreover, there is also time for integrating single-subjects into the classroom. Over the last 2-3 years, integrators are increasingly involved in classroom collaboration meetings.

3. ***Enthusiastic Learners.*** Parents, teachers, and administrators all pointed to the enthusiasm that learners feel as part of the school. Parents commented how much confidence the students exude as they show their analytic thinking. It was noted that ISA results offer one snapshot of success, but the balanced enthusiastic learner was a better indicator of PYP success.
4. ***Parental Involvement.*** The strong history of parent involvement in the school supports the PYP. Administrators, teachers, and parents all described how parents are welcomed into the school community and encouraged to participate in classrooms and in the school. The role of parents in the school have strong roots at the school.
5. ***Inclusive Learning Community.*** The PYP program allows for differentiation and offers many different ways of sharing learning. One aspect that works very well for diverse learning needs is working in groups. Working in groups allows students with special educational needs to exhibit their strengths and allows for differentiation within the classroom and also movement for students that need movement.
6. ***Exhibition.*** The fifth grade Exhibition was noted as an indicator of PYP success. Exhibition links the fifth graders to the sixth graders. In the school, the physical space where the fifth and sixth graders share a corridor also links the two grades.
7. ***The Learner Profile Language.*** This unifies the community. Parents, students, teachers, and administration all used the language of the learner profile in the electronic questionnaire and in interviews and focus groups. Moreover, the student displays also reflected the learner profile. The attributes of the learner profile are also reflected in the schools' mission statement

Responses to the electronic questionnaire prompts

Question 1: How would you define the “success’ of the PYP in this school?

Administrators: The PYP provides a common language for staff which is not tied to a national system. This has allowed us to be clear in recruitment of staff what the school stands for and to appeal to an internationally diverse faculty and student body. Linked to this diversity is the transferability of the skills students acquire in the PYP as they move on from us into other educational systems or move on to the MYP here. One major success of the PYP is the level of collaboration it has engendered by giving staff from different countries a common language to discuss pedagogy. This collaborative culture in the PYP has influenced the culture in both the MYP and DP sections of the school and engendered K-12 dialogue.

Teachers: documentation -good vertical and horizontal articulation -spiraling document - student learning and student performance -students are engaged in learning -supportive parents -on-going inservice for parents

Parents: Engaged and motivated students

Question 2: How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Administrators: One of the main strengths of the PYP in the school is the excitement for learning for both students and staff. Discussion on pedagogy are common place and involve teachers from all 3 programmes. These discussions lead directly to the focusing of PD opportunities throughout the school. As mentioned above collaborative work and planning is the norm allowing all teachers to share each others strengths. Displays around the school are meaningful and explicitly reference learning.

Teachers: students are very confident, they are pro-active management is committed to the PYP -committed and trained staff (to the philosophy of PYP) -committed and well-versed administration (to the philosophy of the PYP) -balanced students (and a celebration of it) -PSPE is being addressed -the PYP sits so comfortably with international students -most students transition well coming into this school

Parents: A topic led curriculum that is on a rolling programme - this allows students to fully understand a topic.

Question 3: How has the PYP positively affected student learning in this school?

Administrators: The PYP's emphasis on sophisticated and critical thinking by students from an early age has impacted in creating a high expectation of student learning in the school. Students feel ownership over their own learning and through the emphasis on reflection develop a positive growth mindset. The transdisciplinary nature of the programme means that students are able to make meaningful links with their own lives and the international nature of the programme means that students can feel that their own cultural heritage is valued.

Teachers: students work collaboratively both within the grade level and across the grade levels

Parents: Independent, problem-solving learners.

Question 4: How has the PYP changed the structure/organization of this school?

Administrators: From the leadership point of view learning and teaching is a focus of the leadership. The leadership structure of the school is one of a Director and Principal and a Head of Primary Years who is also PYP Coordinator, Head of Middle Years and DP Coordinator. By having the Head of Primary and Coordinator roles combined it is made clear that delivery of effective learning within the PYP programme is the key role of this person. The schedule for the day is structured to allow for the highest possible amount of collaborative planning opportunities.

Teachers: timetabling (Grade level collaborative meetings) planning time (cooperation and collaboration between teachers) -full time PYP coordinator -Learner Profile recognition and instruction

Question 5: What would you suggest the IB could do to help this school sustain and improve on the success of the MYP

Administrators: A higher degree of flexibility in how the programme is delivered to allow for innovation to come up from schools. In particular more flexibility in the number of units to be covered during the year. This could be achieved by allowing single units to cover elements from more than one transdisciplinary theme. As a school we have worked hard to enhance this 3 programme continuum. There is still a strong impression that communication between the 3 programmes at IB level is not as effective as it is at school level. Improve the level of communication between schools and the IB with go to contact people rather than IB answers which is currently an ineffective way of getting responses. Finally to ensure that PD is available to stretch experienced and effective teachers. This may mean the provision of leaders from outside the IB Educators network to run specialist level 3 courses.

Teachers: improve the on-line PYP courses (more engaging, more relevant, less hours, link pedagogy with course syllabus) -re-look at the planners (a different format as the bubble planners are not user friendly: planners need to be easy to use; the planners are so involved and difficult to use that they sometimes take time away from planning for teaching and learning) -stand-alone planners could be more subject-specific and therefore more user-friendly (e.g. when integration of second languages is applied) -stand-alone planners could be more focused on skills -option to decrease number of units per year (even down to four units per year) -In fifth grade the units need to be decreased in order to properly support the Exhibition -more emphasis on the Exhibition philosophy across the grades -integrate Learner Profile and Attitudes into one set of easy to use and easy to remember characteristics -PYP-MYP transition is not seamless

Section 4. Suggestions for Future Development of the Program

- 1) Improve training (online courses) to be more engaging and relevant
- 2) Simplify the planners
- 3) Provide the option to reduce the number of units per year, and other opportunities for schools to be innovative and adapt to their own context, and to stretch experienced and effective teachers.
- 4) Increase the emphasis on the Exhibition philosophy across the grades
- 5) Integrate learner Profile and Attitudes into one set of easy to use and remember characteristics
- 6) Improve the PYP-MYP transition, and communication between the three programs within the IB organization
- 7) Better communication lines with the IB – direct, easy contact with people is needed
- 8) Allow Innovative schools to innovate

Sources:

- NIS Five-Year Accreditation Report, December 12, 2012
- IB Primary Years Programme Evaluation Report, October 2012
- Interviews with teachers, staff, parents, and student council
- The school brochure
- NIS Parent Survey 2012
- Self study student survey
- School leaflets, website and other school information available online