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A STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION & IMPACT OF THE MYP: NEXT CHAPTER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Phase 1 findings are consistent with the typical trajectory of new innovations. Schools were generally positive about the curriculum changes — but less confident in their ability to put those changes into practice.

Nearly three years ago the International Baccalaureate (IB) began a curriculum change intended to enhance its Middle Years Programme (MYP), making it "better for students, easier for teachers, and more flexible for schools" (IBO, 2014). Since September 2014 this change, known as the MYP: Next chapter has been transitioned into MYP schools across the IB global community.

In mid-2015, the IB commissioned the Claremont Evaluation Center to study the effects of this change, and to lead a long-term research project on the MYP: Next chapter's implementation and impact. Over the next three years, the CEC will document schools' experiences with the MYP: Next chapter, report on how the changes are implemented, and test whether these changes bring about the anticipated benefits for students, teachers, and schools.

This report

This report is the first in a series of research summaries that will be shared over the life of the research project. It summarizes findings from the first phase of the CEC study in which more than 3,000 MYP teachers, coordinators and students completed online 'implementation' surveys. These Phase 1 surveys were designed to: (1) capture school perceptions of the curriculum changes, (2) document how schools have put the changes into practice, and (3) understand factors that support effective implementation of the MYP: Next chapter. This report is accompanied by a full Technical Report for those seeking additional detail.

Phase 1 surveys will be followed by three rounds of school site visits during the 2016, 2017, and 2018 school years. These site visits will deepen our understanding of factors that best support implementation of the MYP: Next chapter across a wide range of contexts.

Phase 1 surveys will be followed by three rounds of school site visits .

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Findings

Results from the Phase 1 surveys suggest five key findings:

1. Schools are generally supportive of the Next Chapter changes, but aren't always confident in their capacity to implement them.

Research on behavior change says that for change to occur (e.g. for teachers to adopt a new curriculum) people need to: (1) think the change is a good idea *(attitudes)* (2) be in an environment that supports the change *(norms)*, and (3) feel they have the time, skills and resources to implement the changes *(capacity)*.

> BEHAVIOR CHANGE =
> Attitudes + Norms +
> Capacity

Phase 1 results suggest most MYP teachers[1] and coordinators hold generally positive attitudes towards the MYP: Next chapter changes and work in schools that also support the change; however, some teachers are not confident they have the time, skills, or resources to fully implement the changes.

2. Some teachers are not yet confident in their ability to implement the changes to a high standard of quality.

When asked to rate the quality of their MYP: Next chapter implementation,[2] just under half rated their implementation as good, one quarter rated implementation as average and another quarter of teachers rated their implementation as below average. These findings are to be expected given the MYP: Next chapter's early stage of implementation.

3. Teacher comments suggest the need for additional information about some changes.

Analysis of open-ended comments suggests mixed levels of understanding about MYP: Next chapter components. On average, nearly one third of teachers described the MYP components with moderate levels of accuracy; however another third either could not describe the components or described them inaccurately.

4. Some teachers demonstrated deep understanding of the MYP: Next chapter changes.

On average, 15% of teachers demonstrated deep understanding of the curriculum components, and provided exemplary examples of the changes in practice.

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[1] Participating teachers had an average of 4.96 years experience in the MYP.

[2] Surveys examined 6 dimensions of implementation: vertical articulation, interdisciplinary planning, concept-driven teaching, global contexts, subject group flexibility & service as action. Overall quality scores combined teacher and coordinator responses on these six dimensions.

5. Early adopters[3] were more positive about the changes than late adopters.

As with most innovations, Phase 1 findings show that change takes time. Teachers who had been implementing the MYP: Next chapter for longer (early adopters) reported higher levels of understanding, more positive attitudes towards the MYP: Next chapter, and school contexts that were more supportive of the change. This same group was also more confident in their capacity to implement the Next chapter framework and described their implementation as being higher quality than those who had only recently begun implementation.

These findings are consistent with the typical trajectory of newly implemented innovations: that is, implementation appears to improve as teachers and schools become familiar with the change and gain experience embedding it within school systems and practices.

Additionally, three critical contextual factors appeared to support successful implementation of the MYP: Next chapter:

1. Perceptions of improvements. Teachers who thought the changes made it (1) easier for teachers, (2) better for students, (3) more flexible, and (4) more aligned with other programs are more confident in their ability to implement the changes. Their self-reported adherence was also higher.

This was a more powerful predictor of MYP implementation than all other factors.

2. Resourcing. Teachers who felt their schools were well resourced were more confident in their ability to implement the curriculum changes. Teachers in these schools also tended to have more positive attitudes, higher social norms, and self-report higher levels of adherence and quality.

3. Time. When schools had been delivering the MYP: Next chapter for longer, teachers were more confident they could implement the curriculum changes well. They were also more positive about the changes, and had more supportive school norms.

> Implementation appears to improve as teachers and schools become familiar with the changes and gain practice embedding them within school system

[3] For more information on early adopters, see: Rogers, E. M. (2010). *Diffusion of innovations*. Simon and Schuster.

What does this mean for…

TEACHERS?

- Capitalize on opportunities to actively check your understanding about the MYP: Next chapter changes.
- Work with your MYP coordinator to identify areas where understanding and capacity are lower, and develop school-specific strategies for targeting those areas.

SCHOOL LEADERS?

- Review the activities your school has for developing a good understanding of MYP: Next chapter changes.
- Actively create an environment where teachers feel able to ask questions and seek feedback and clarification on programmatic elements.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT?

- Work with teachers and coordinators to understand teachers' capacity constraints.
- Develop strategies that support increased capacity and understanding, particularly in those areas where understanding appears to be low.

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION SURVEYS

1422 schools were invited to participate. 419 schools participated.

4,488 MYP teachers responded.

435 MYP Coordinators responded.

486 students responded.

Participants represented at least 51 countries from across all three IB regions.

WHERE TO NEXT?

- 20 school site visits in the 2016-2017 school year.
- A round of surveys and site visits in the 2017-2018 school year.
- A round of surveys and site visits in the 2018-2019 school year.

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BACKGROUND

Survey design was informed by previous research on Behavior Change and Implementation of Innovations.
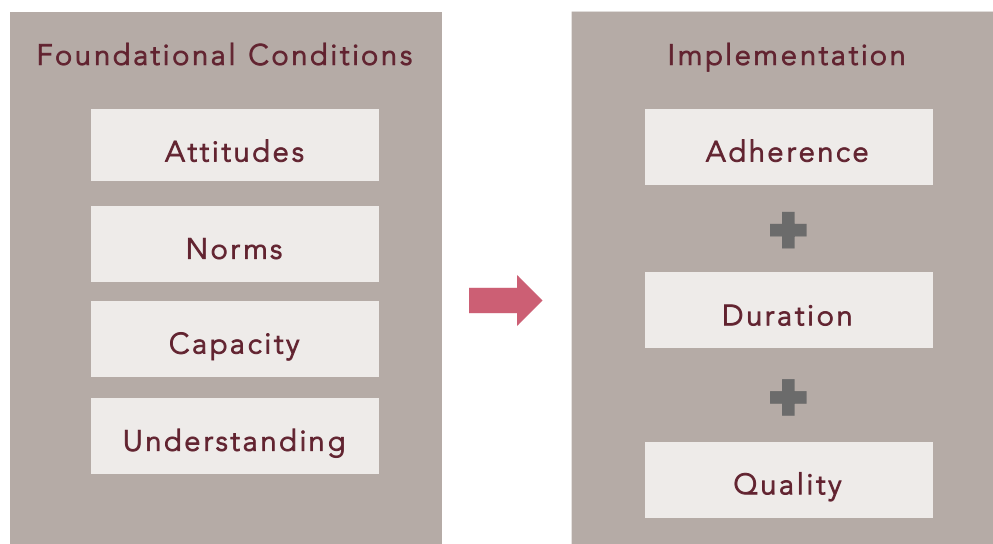
During Phase 1 MYP teachers, coordinators, and students completed online implementation surveys. These surveys were designed to: (1) capture school perceptions of the curriculum changes, (2) document how schools have put the changes into practice, and (3) understand factors that support effective implementation of the MYP: Next chapter.

More specifically, surveys were designed to capture teacher, coordinator, and student perspectives on seven high-level dimensions. Selection of these dimensions were informed by social science theories on behavior change and implementation, which identify these seven dimensions as critical features in the successful implementation of innovation.

Additionally, eight MYP curriculum changes were examined: vertical articulation, interdisciplinary planning, subject-group flexibility, concept-driven teaching, approaches to learning, global contexts, service as action, and eAssessment. Focusing on these elements allowed the research team to look at the nature and extent of implementation, while also looking at factors that commonly support/inhibit its implementation.

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Foundational Conditions	Implementation
Attitudes	Adherence
Norms	➕
Capacity	Duration
Understanding	➕
	Quality

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[4] In this figure: *Attitudes* = attitudes towards the change; *Norms* = expectation that the changes be implemented; *Capacity* = belief that teachers have the time, skills and resources to implement the changes; *Adherence* = delivery consistent with MYP documentation; *Duration* = length of time implementing the MYP: Next chapter; *Quality* = self-reported quality of implementation.

WHO FILLED OUT THE SURVEYS?

4,488 teachers, 435 Coordinators, and 486 students from across all three IB regions responded to the implementation evaluation survey.

A total of 1,422 MYP schools were invited to participate in the implementation evaluation surveys. 4,488 teachers, 435 Coordinators and 486 students across the three regions responded.

Among respondents, most from the IB Asia Pacific (IBAP) and IB Asia Europe Middle East (IBAEM) regions represented independent schools (90% and 77%, respectively), while the majority of IB Americas (IBA) respondents represented state schools (54%). In addition, slightly under half of respondents were from schools providing the MYP only; an additional quarter of respondents represented schools that offered three of the IB's Programmes (typically the PYP, MYP, and DP).

On average, teachers indicated that their schools had been affiliated with the IB for 13.68 years (SD = 13.49, n = 3,120). Teacher reports, however, differed quite substantially from Coordinator reports, who noted an average affiliation of 9.70 years (SD = 7.13 years).

On average, teachers had worked at their current school for 6.14 years (SD = 5.98 years), and had an average of 4.96 years (SD = 5.00 years) experience teaching in the MYP. The majority of teachers had a master's degree (53.6%) and an additional 38.4% had their bachelor's degree (n = 2,716).

Students provided further demographic information regarding gender, age, and MYP year level. On average, students were 13.4 years old. More females (53.2%) responded than males (44.7%). A majority of respondents were in MYP year level 1 (63.9%) or year level 2 (20.6%).

Table 1: Summary of Respondents

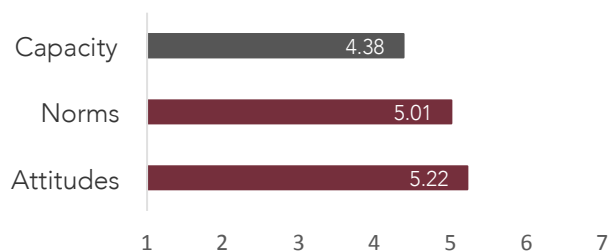| Respondent	IBA	IBAP	IBAEM
Teachers	1,673 (50.3%)	771 (17.2%)	883 (19.7%)
Coordinators	190 (53.3%)	104 (28.6%)	75 (20.6%)
Students	216 (66.3%)	15 (4.5%)	95 (29.1%)

FINDINGS

Finding 1. Schools were generally supportive of the Next Chapter changes, but weren't always confident in their capacity to implement them.

Research on behavior change[5] says that for change to occur (e.g. for teachers to adopt a new curriculum) people need to: (1) think the change is a good idea *(attitudes)* (2) be in an environment that supports the change *(norms)* and (3) feel they have the time, skills and resources to implement the changes *(capacity)*.

Combined phase 1 results suggest most MYP teachers and coordinators held broadly positive attitudes towards the MYP: Next chapter changes and work in schools that also support the change; however, some teachers were not confident they had the time, skills, or resources to fully implement the changes.

Figure 1: Overall Teacher Reports for Attitudes, Norms & Capacity*

*7 point scale where higher numbers indicate greater agreement.

This trend was consistent across teacher reports on Vertical Articulation, Interdisciplinary Planning,

Approaches to Learning and Global Contexts. Notable exceptions include:

1. Service as Action, where schools reported markedly lower school norms[6] than other MYP components ($m^7 = 4.44$)[8].
2. Subject group flexibility, where teacher attitudes were relatively lower than other MYP: Next chapter components ($m = 4.69$).
3. eAssessment where attitudes were also considerably lower than other components ($m = 4.39$). Here, teachers and coordinators cited a number of practical and philosophical obstacles, including: cost (**23%**), administrative challenges (**13%**), lack of practical value from the certificate (**11%**), philosophical misalignment (**11%**), and too many existing exams (**10%**).

In general, teacher concerns regarding capacity were typically related to concerns around time and, to a lesser degree, having adequate resourcing. Nevertheless, most teachers agreed the change was better for students (**66%**); nearly two-thirds agreed it was more integrated (**60%**); over half agreed it was more flexible for schools (**54%**) and just under half thought it was easier for teachers (**47%**).

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[5] The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 2011).

[6] i.e. environments that support and expect its implementation.
[7] *m* = mean score = average score.
[8] 7-point scale, higher scores mean higher norms etc .

Finding 2. Some teachers were not yet confident in their ability to implement the changes to a high standard of quality.

When asked to rate the quality of their MYP: Next chapter implementation,[9] **nearly half** of the responding teachers (44%) rated their implementation as high, **one quarter** (29%) rated their implementation as average, and **one quarter** rated their implementation as low (24%).[10]

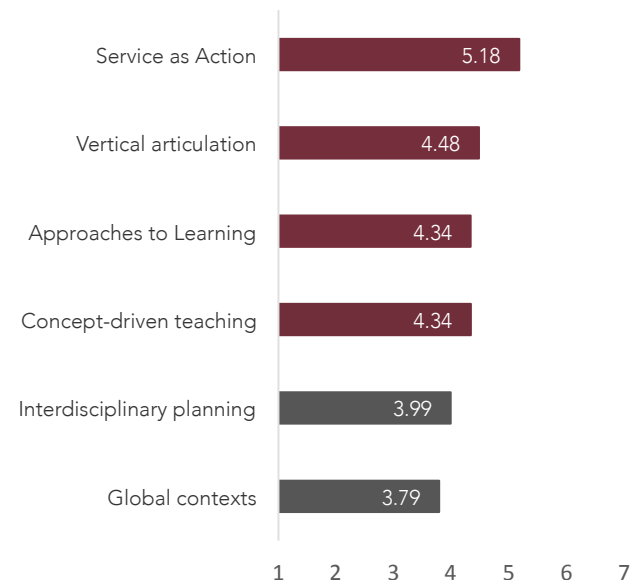Figure 2: Overall Teacher Reports on Implementation Quality

Given the MYP: Next chapter's early stage of implementation, this variability in teacher confidence levels is to be expected.

On average, teachers were most—although not exceptionally—confident in their ability to implement concept-driven teaching, and least confident in their ability to implement interdisciplinary planning to a high standard of quality.

This was consistent with MYP Coordinator perceptions of implementation quality, which were collected alongside teacher reports to triangulate these findings.

Coordinators identified service as action as the area with the highest level of implementation quality, and interdisciplinary planning and global contexts as areas with the lowest, but still moderate levels of quality.

Figure 3: Coordinator Reports on Implementation Quality

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[9] Combining teacher and coordinator responses on Vertical articulation, Interdisciplinary planning, Concept-driven teaching, Approaches to Learning, Global contexts, and Service as Action.
[10] Those whose combined average quality scores for all MYP components were less than 4 on a 1-7 scale.

Finding 3. Teacher comments suggested the need for additional information about some changes.

As part of the Phase 1 surveys, a random sample of teachers were asked to provide practical examples of MYP: Next chapter implementation in practice. Teacher responses were then compared to explanations of the MYP components as described in *MYP: From principles to practice.*

Analysis of teacher comments suggests that while many MYP teachers have a moderate level of understanding about the Next chapter changes there is also a need for some additional clarification about the MYP: Next chapter changes.

Across the MYP components, approximately one quarter of teacher comments reflected a low level of understanding about the changes. These comments were either direct statements of no understanding (i.e. "*I don' know"*) or described a different MYP: Next Chapter component than was asked for.

Where this occurred, teachers tended to confuse other MYP: Next chapter components with interdisciplinary planning or global contexts. This suggests that teachers may benefit from additional

clarification on the specifics of each component and how they differ from one another.

Comparison across components revealed particularly low levels of understanding about **global contexts**. Almost 70% of teacher comments revealed no to low levels of understanding on this topic. Comments regarding global contexts also tended to be much more general than other framework components; for example: "*They are general approaches to the application of a topic.*"

> Most teachers have a moderate level of understanding of the MYP NC framework components, although there is some need for additional clarification.

Table 2: Analysis of Teacher Comments on MYP: Next Chapter Changes

Component	No/Low Understanding	Moderate Understanding	Exceptional Understanding
Global Contexts (understanding)	68%	30%	1%
Subject Group Flexibility	39%	56%	5%
Global Contexts (practice)	37%	52%	11%
Interdisciplinary Planning	32%	57%	11%
Vertical Articulation	27%	51%	22%
Concept-driven Teaching	26%	48%	26%
Service As Action	14%	56%	30%

Finding 4. Some teachers demonstrated deep understanding of the MYP: Next chapter changes.

Promisingly, some teachers demonstrated exceptional understanding of the MYP changes. Across the MYP components, approximately 15% of teacher comments revealed a deep understanding of the MYP changes. These comments fully articulated the components' key elements and provided specific details on their application into practice, along with benefits for students.

What set these descriptions apart from others was that teachers described *why* the framework component was important and *how* they were implemented in practice. Interestingly, these comments also often identified school-wide practices that were used to support teachers' classroom implementation.

Comparison across the components revealed three framework elements that were better understood than others: (1) vertical articulation, (2) concept-driven teaching, and (3) service as action.

Examples of these comments are provided below.

Exceptional Vertical Articulation: "*Since I teach a particular subject, knowing what students have learned prior to entering my class will help me create lessons to enhance their learning and to make connections. So, chatting with the teacher below my grade level or doing an activity that will encourage them to show what they know helps me to prepare my lessons to implement new knowledge.*"

Exceptional Concept-Driven Teaching: "*Using 'Change' as a key concept to discuss the interactions between Human and Natural environment was very effective. Lessons sought to discuss the continual changes and developments in our environment. Student inquiry was directed towards the causes and consequences of these changes and how interactions between man and environment is a dynamic process. The related concepts taken up were 'Resources', 'Sustainability'.*"

Exceptional Service as Action: "*A youth radio program was created and designed to exercise the right to communication. Through this radio program the students were given the opportunity to generate ideas and possible solutions to cultural problems. The radio scripts reflected the research and coming together of the youth, to open communication. This program is serving the educational community.*"

Finding 5. Early adopters were more positive about the changes than later adopters.
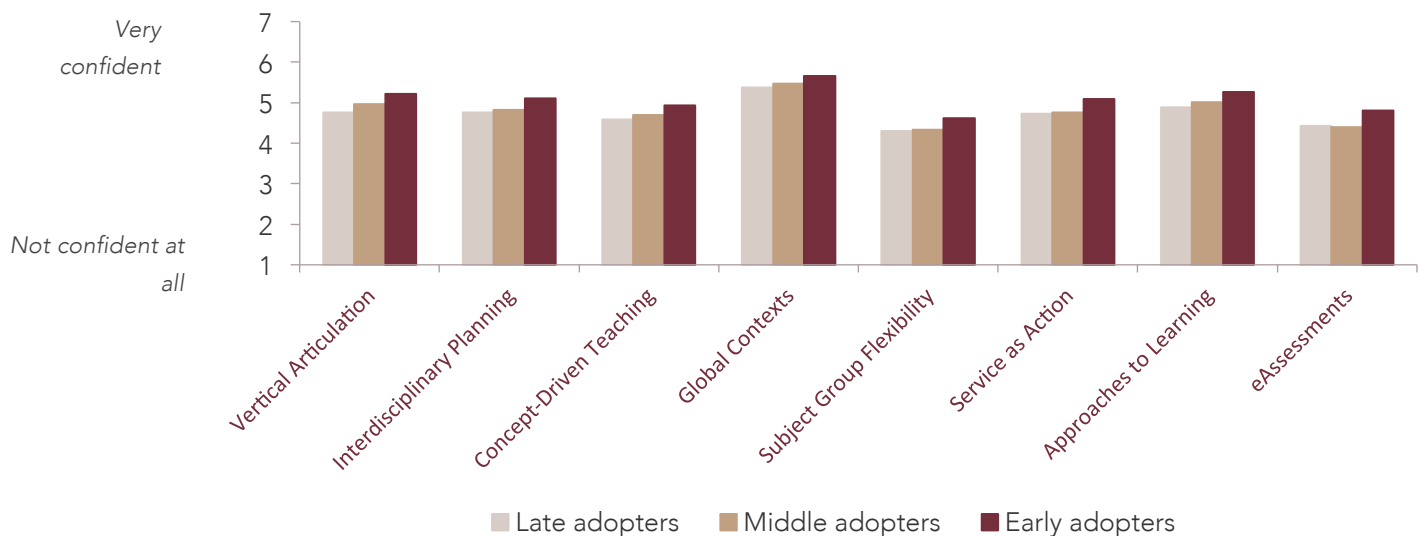
It is widely acknowledged that large organizational changes (such as implementing a new curriculum) take time to embed. Phase 1 survey results suggest that the MYP: Next chapter programme is no exception; the time schools had to implement the curriculum played a significant role in predicting teacher and coordinator perceptions of the curriculum change.

Teachers who had more time and experience with the curriculum tended to have more positive views of the curriculum change at their school. These positive views extended to all parts of the curriculum and all aspects of its implementation.

Teachers with more time to implement the curriculum also tended to report the following:

- More positive attitudes towards the curriculum itself
- Greater understanding of the curriculum itself
- More positive views of their school's capacity to implement the curriculum
- More positive views of the administrative and social support for the curriculum.

Figure 4: Teachers at early adopter schools were generally more confident about MYP: Next chapter changes than late adopter schools.

Note that: All relationships reported in this section were statistically significant, but had relatively small effect sizes. For a detailed description of the statistical significance and effect sizes reported here, please see the full technical report (Appendix G).

Reports of adherence to implementation requirements varied across the MYP components

In addition to measuring teacher attitudes, norms, capacity and quality, surveys also measured the degree to which teachers followed the MYP: Next chapter requirements. Overall, teacher-reported results varied across the MYP components. However, a moderately small group of teachers consistently reported low-to-limited implementation across the MYP: Next chapter components.

Vertical articulation

Approximately two-thirds (**66%**) of teachers met at least once a month for collaborative planning sessions. One third said they met at least once a week.

Interdisciplinary planning

Nearly half of responding teachers met with teachers from other subjects to do unit planning at least once a semester. However, approximately one in five teachers (**17%**) said they **never** met with teachers from other subjects for unit planning.

> One in five teachers said they **never** met with teachers from other subjects for unit planning.

Subject-group flexibility

Approximately two in five schools (43%) said they did not offer subject-group flexibility as an option for students.

Figure 5: Proportion of schools offering subject-group flexibility

No	Yes	Don't know
43%	51%	6%

Concept-driven teaching

On average, teachers estimated that half of their classroom activities reflected concept-driven teaching.

Approaches to Learning

Nearly three-quarters of teachers agree that Approaches to Learning were incorporated into their unit plans.

Global contexts

Most teachers and most students agreed that classroom lessons typically had real world applications.

Service as Action

Approximately six in ten MYP coordinators (**58%**) thought their schools met the MYP requirements regarding projects for students in MYP Years 3 to 5. Nearly all (86%) of MYP Year 3 to Year 5 students were working on a personal or community project at the time of the survey.

Three critical contextual factors appeared to support successful implementation of the MYP: Next chapter: time, resourcing, and perceptions of improvement.

Survey analysis identified three factors that were major contributors to MYP: Next chapter implementation:

- Duration of implementation (time)
- Perception of school resources
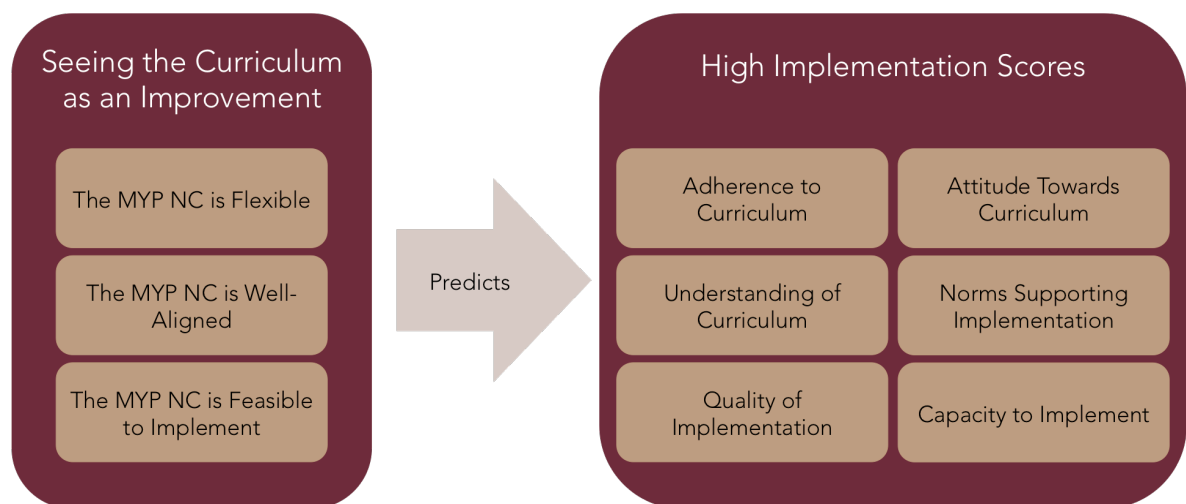- Perception of the MYP NC as an improvement over the old curriculum.

As discussed earlier, the length of time schools had to administer the new curriculum significantly predicted how well each program component was implemented. Even stronger predictors of implementation, however, were teacher and coordinator reports of adequate school resourcing. Stronger still were teacher and coordinator

perceptions of the new curriculum as an improvement.

Teachers and coordinators who perceived curriculum as an improvement tended to believe that:

- The MYP NC curriculum was aligned with other IB programmes
- The MYP NC curriculum was easily integrated into existing government curriculum requirements
- Teachers know what is expected of them with the new curriculum
- The MYP NC curriculum allows teachers enough flexibility to accommodate all students.

Figure 5: Perceptions of curriculum improvement significantly predicted all aspects of successful implementation.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN…

The IB community's transition to the MYP: Next chapter is following the trajectory of many innovations. It is a positive sign that many teachers, schools and coordinators see value in the changes, and are taking steps to put these into practice.

…for teachers?

Unsurprisingly, teachers play a critical role in the MYP: Next chapter transition. Findings from this study reaffirm this role and highlight the positive steps that teachers have taken to put the MYP: Next chapter into practice. Additionally, this research highlights a number of key messages for teachers.

1. Ask for feedback. One critical finding from this study was that additional clarification on the MYP: Next chapter changes may be beneficial. While there are certainly steps that School Leaders and the MYP Programme Development staff can take to support this goal, teachers can also play an active role. Teachers are encouraged to take advantage of all available opportunities to receive feedback on their planning and practice.

2. Actively check your understanding. Relatedly, teachers are encouraged to seek opportunities to verify their understanding of the MYP: Next chapter components. For example, teachers might take advantage of the Building Quality Curriculum resource to gain an outside perspective on the extent their planned lessons

reflect an accurate understanding of the MYP: Next chapter components.

3. Work with your MYP Coordinator to identify areas where understanding and capacity are lower, and develop school-specific strategies for targeting those areas. Teacher understanding and capacity vary widely across school contexts. It is critical that school communities work together to build a shared understanding, and shared capacity to implement the MYP: Next chapter changes.

4. Give it time. Like anything new, implementing change takes time. Data from this study show that those who have been implementing the MYP: Next chapter for longer find it easier, and have gained confidence in their ability to implement it well. Findings from this study acknowledge the importance of time, and experience, in facilitating the change process.

…for School Leaders?

1. Put measures in place to check for understanding – both upwards (i.e. with the IB community) and downwards (i.e. with your teachers). During this transition, school leaders are encouraged to take steps to ensure their own understanding, and that of their teaching community is consistent with the MYP's. Upwards strategies may include use of the Building Quality Curriculum, regular discussions with IB school services staff, or IB conference participation. Downward strategies may include classroom observations or in-school planning sessions and workshops.

2. Review school-specific measures designed to build appreciation, understanding and capacity. School leaders are encouraged to critically assess the mechanisms they have in place to support the development of teacher understanding of the MYP: Next chapter changes, and mechanisms for assessing school-wide capacity and understanding.

It may also be advantageous to share with teachers the positive impacts these changes could have; address concerns teachers may have regarding the changes and ensure adequate resources are available to help support the changes.

3. Actively create an environment where teachers feel able to ask questions and seek feedback and clarification on programmatic elements. Creating open environments where people feel free to voice questions and uncertainty is a critical feature of the change process. Prior research suggests that when leaders allocate time for discussion about challenges and difficulties, openly communicate about past challenges, and share their own experiences overcoming problems, this can help to create an environment where teachers are able to voice concerns and respond to potential problems.

4. Give it time. As with teachers, it is important for school leaders to remember that change takes time, and it will take time for teachers, and school systems to become confident in the MYP: Next chapter changes, and to embed them into school systems and practices.

…for MYP Programme Development

1. Work with teachers and coordinators to understand teachers' capacity constraints. Findings from this study suggest that understanding, time constraints, and resourcing are be commonly identified constraints for MYP schools. Recognizing this, it is recommended that the MYP Programme Development community work with partner schools to understand the nature of these constraints.

2. Develop strategies that support increased capacity and understanding. It is also recommended that the MYP Programme Development community review the mechanisms in place to support building teacher capacity and understanding about the MYP: Next chapter. It is recommended that the MYP consider the relevance and adequacy of these measures for building and maintaining teacher and school capacity to deliver the required changes.

3. Give it time. Similarly, it is recommended that MYP Programme Development continue to recognize the importance of time in facilitating the change process, and continue taking this into consideration when working with schools to support the change.

> It is recommended that the MYP work with teachers, coordinators and IB Professional Development to understand teachers' capacity constraints.

CONCLUSIONS & LIMITATIONS

Overall, findings are consistent with the trajectory of newly implemented innovations. Specifically: MYP teachers, coordinators and students reported generally positive attitudes towards the MYP: Next chapter and moderately strong school norms around its use, but lower levels of capacity, adherence and quality. This is to be expected as teachers and schools become familiar with the change and gain practice embedding it within school systems and practices.

What is positive about these findings is that teachers' self-reported adoption of the MYP: Next chapter appeared to increase with time. That is, teachers who had been implementing the MYP: Next chapter for longer reported significantly higher levels of understanding, more positive attitudes towards the MYP: Next chapter, and school environments that were more supportive of its implementation. This same group of teachers also held more positive perceptions of their own capacity to implement the Next chapter framework, and reported higher levels of adherence and quality across the eight MYP: Next chapter components.

Although reliant on self-report at this stage, such improvements over time are what one would hope to see in the implementation of innovations, and tentatively suggest teachers are beginning to build confidence and embed MYP: Next chapter practices as they gain more experience with the curriculum framework.

Limitations

The research team acknowledges a number of limitations to this study that should be taken into account when interpreting findings. Namely:

Findings from this research are largely based on self-report and should therefore be interpreted

with caution, as teacher and coordinator perceptions of the change dimensions (e.g. quality) rather than external, objectives assessments of those dimensions.

The findings presented in this report are also based upon cross sectional (i.e. point-in-time), rather than longitudinal data. As such, conclusions about factors that support change should be interpreted with some caution, and will be followed up in later stages of this research.

Finally, although a large number of MYP teachers and coordinators completed the CEC surveys, these represent only 30% of MYP schools. While findings reported here are nevertheless reflective of a large portion of MYP schools it is possible that participating schools differ in some substantial way to those who did not participate. In this way the research team encourages all MYP schools to participate in future rounds of this research so that we can ensure our findings are as representative of the broad range of MYP schools as possible.

> The research team encourages all MYP schools to participate in future rounds of this research to ensure our findings can be as representative of the broad range of MYP schools as possible.

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