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Teacher Perceptions During the Candidacy Phase of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS DURING THE CANDIDACY PHASE OF THE

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME.

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS DURING THE CANDIDACY PHASE OF THE
INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME

Nicole M. Beins, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2020

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This qualitative case study explores the perceptions of educators during the candidacy phase of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme in a suburban Midwest school. The methodology was comprised of a two-phase research design. During Phase 1, participants responded anonymously through written narrative responses via electronic questionnaire. This data was analyzed for common themes. After initial data analysis, focus group questions were generated using the findings of common themes to ask focus groups what strengths and challenges were faced during the implementation phase of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme. The goal of this research was to gain insight on the structures, strategies and support systems that educators found beneficial in the implementation process.

Participant response analysis reported that though the programme is arduous to implement, it brings benefits to students, teachers and the entire school community. Structures that were found beneficial were aligned with the *Coherence Framework* (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) to include focusing direction, creating collaborative cultures, deepening learning, securing accountability, and leadership. Recommendations developed from the findings include creating structures that support time, providing

continuous, scaffolded professional learning experiences, and appointing a strong

coordinator with sufficient release time.

DEDICATION

This dissertation journey would not have reached commencement without the support, first and foremost, of my staff. These risk-takers embarked on a whirlwind journey that only made us stronger. Thank you for sticking with me throughout the change and pushing us all to do better.

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To my family, thank you for instilling a love of learning in me at a young age. I hope that I can instill a love in my own children as deep as my own. To my husband and sons for all the additional man-nights, almond milk macchiatos, and bearing with me as I fell asleep on the couch, thank you for all of your support, laughter and love.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

School choice is an educational phenomenon that is increasing in intensity all over the world. Schools, both public and private, compete with one another to remain at the forefront of innovation. One of the fastest growing programmes of choice across the globe is the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP), with 1,715 authorized schools worldwide and 608 schools in candidacy (Lope, 2018).

Operational Definitions

The major focus of this study involves the **candidacy phase** of the **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme** (IB PYP). The IB PYP is a program of choice for students ages 3-12 in both public and private school settings. This programme strives to develop internationally minded students through a curricular framework involving transdisciplinary learning, inquiry-based teaching practices, and intentional character education. Schools interested in adopting the IB PYP must meet the requirements to become a candidate school before adopting the PYP curricular framework, in addition to requirements of the standards and practices that are necessary to become an IB World School.

IB Programmes, though rigorous to implement, benefit the entire school community. IB students develop strong academic and social emotional skills and often outperform students in other academic arenas. Through its inquiry led, transdisciplinary framework, the programme challenges students to think for themselves and take responsibility for their learning as they explore opportunities in real-life contexts. Teachers benefit from continuous professional development and opportunities to

collaborate and deepen student learning. The whole school community, including

parents, are viewed as partners in learning and actively contribute to an educational

experience benefitting the whole child (International Baccalaureate, 2018).

Schools wishing to implement the IB PYP must demonstrate a commitment to the

programme throughout the candidacy phase. The candidacy phase of the IB PYP involves

executing all of the necessary processes and resources to deliver the PYP, which includes

teacher training, policy and curriculum development, and collaborative planning amongst

all educators leading to horizontal and vertical articulation of a balanced programme. An

additional requirement involves appointing a coordinator who is tasked with ensuring the

implementation of the programme.

The trial phase of a candidate school must last at least one year before the

application for authorization can be completed (IBO, 2007b). The candidacy phase

normally takes two years, but schools may choose to extend their candidacy for an

additional year to develop or construct the requirements of the programme. Due to the

flexible time frame, for the purpose of this study the interested, candidate, and initial

authorized phases are considered years 1-5 of implementation.

Implementing a program of choice, such as the IB PYP brings much change to a

school, including terminology, new common language, different teaching practices, and

change to the curricular framework. Schools in the candidacy phase need supports in

order to develop and meet the standards and practices of the Primary Years Programme

(PYP). The standards and practices are broad in nature and enable schools to mold the

curriculum framework to each school's unique context. This leaves room for

interpretation during the initial implementation phase. Supports provided by the

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) and the individual school are essential to ensuring sustainability while the programme is implemented from candidacy to authorization.

According to Evans (1996), "There is a fundamental duality to our response to change: we both embrace and resist it" (p. 21). Though change might be difficult and create confusion at times, effective change processes can transform an organization and the participants' perceptions about the process. A school transformation model, as guided by change leadership, not only transforms the curriculum and practices of the school, but transform the way teachers perceive their school, their circumstances, and the school's culture. "Teachers' attitudes, expectations, and perceptions of their school often conditions responses to change initiatives" (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002, p. 37). This study explores how teachers describe the implementation process during the candidacy phase of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, the challenges they face, and the strengths that make them successful.

Literature reviewed builds a case that adopting a program of choice, specifically the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, is a challenging task. Existing literature indicates that the shift from traditional teaching approaches, namely direct instruction, to inquiry-based teaching can be a daunting and challenging experience for teachers (Savage & Drake, 2016; Twigg, 2010). Significant background about the programme is provided to build this case. Too often leaders neglect the voices of the people school change impacts most: the educators who must change their teaching practices, values, and beliefs while implementing the change.

This study explores how one school successfully achieves authorization by exploring teacher's lived experiences of the process throughout the candidacy phase and uncovers the strengths and challenges faced by educators throughout this process.

Conceptual Framework

This study is explored through the lens of a change leadership model called the *Coherence Framework* (Figure 1). "Coherence consists of the shared depth of
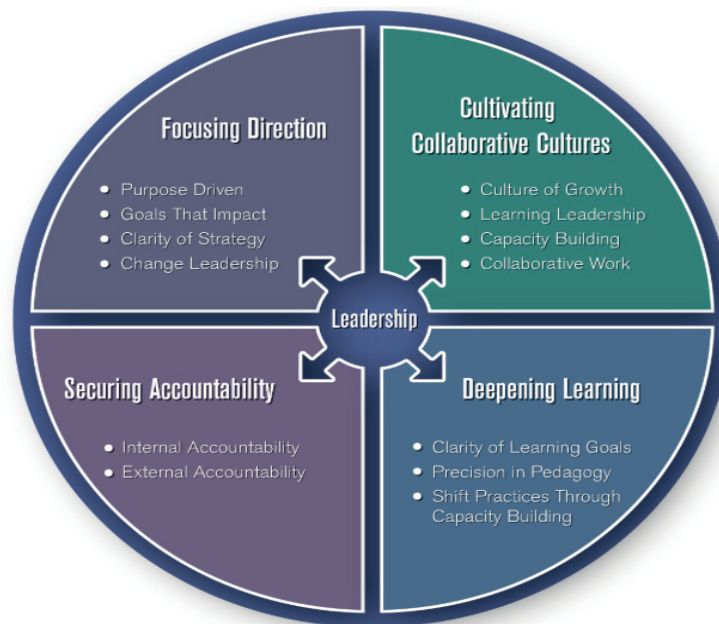
Figure 1: *Coherence Framework.* Fullan, M. & Quinn, J. (2016). *Coherence: The right drivers in action for schools, districts, and systems.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Understanding about the purpose and nature of the work" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 1). The *Coherence Framework* focuses on four key facets: Focusing Direction, Cultivating Collaborative Cultures, Securing Accountability, and Deepening Learning. These four factors, when working cohesively with transformational leadership creates a "shared moral purpose" that ignites change (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 17). At the center of the

framework is leadership. According to Fullan & Quinn (2016), leaders must find the right combination of these elements to meet the needs of their unique situation. Once this is achieved, coherence is achieved, and successful transformation ensues. This conceptual framework was chosen for this study because of its alignment with the IB PYP Standards and Practices. This change leadership framework along with the Standards and Practices, defines the scope and breadth of this study in regards to transforming school cultures undergoing change initiatives. A chart correlating the standards and practices of the IB PYP with the *Coherence Framework* is provided in Appendix D to explain the alignment further.

The *Coherence Framework* provides a concrete structure in which to examine the data analyzed. The themes uncovered in analysis are structured and integrated into the overarching concepts of the *Coherence Framework* to include focusing direction, cultivating collaborative cultures, deepening learning, and securing accountability. Using this successful change framework as a guide, teachers' perceptions provide insight into the journey of implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme throughout the candidacy phase in a Midwest suburban public school.

Problem Statement

Societal change calls for educational reform that meets the needs of our increasingly global world. The IB programme presents an option that is not only popular but is also viable in public, private, magnet and charter schools in countries worldwide. Significant research exists about the success of the IB programmes throughout the world. Gaps in the literature regarding programme implementation exist. Too often the final state of a successful implementation is overemphasized, rather than the process. This

research investigates how teachers describe the process of programme implementation throughout the candidacy phase to authorization, and the factors influencing the implementation that leads to successful adoption of the programme and to authorization.

Purpose Statement

Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore teachers' perceptions of the strengths and challenges faced by educators during the candidacy phase of the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme in a public school setting. This research will assist schools in successful implementation that will result in a sustainable programme. This study may provide interested or candidate schools a useful guideline for creating supports to implement in order to ensure a successful transformation process when adopting the IB PYP. The educator voices presented in this study provide a rich background of strengths and challenges faced during programme implementation, which upon analysis, could serve as recommendations for future schools undergoing change initiatives.

While the IB PYP has been implemented successfully in many schools across the globe, there is little research to date that has been conducted on the process of implementation to include teachers perceptions of the implementation process. During the candidacy phase, there is much change and learning happening. Exploring teacher perceptions during this time of change could be very useful to other IB Schools or interested schools. This research may contribute to the existing literature concerning the implementation of a programme of choice in a public school setting.

Central Phenomenon

How do educators describe the process of implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme during the candidacy phase in a public school setting?

- What strengths and challenges are faced by educators throughout the implementation phase?
- Do teachers perceive a transformation (personal or cultural) during the process?
- What supports were found beneficial to implementing the programme?

Significance

Few studies, if any, have offered insight into teacher perceptions during the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme throughout the candidacy phase through the verification. The relevance of this research is that schools are continuing to necessitate to change. Processes and structures in regards to change leadership and transformation practices need to be in place prior to or during implementation to ensure a successful change process. Teachers' perceptions of the process can give insight into the most valuable practices or structures in their school that helped them to achieve the school change initiative.

The results of this study may inform schools wishing to implement the programme recommendations for implementation. The findings of this study may also provide generalized assistance to schools wishing to implement programmes of choice or choosing to undergo change initiatives such as program and curriculum adoption. This study may facilitate or benefit schools undergoing change initiatives worldwide.

This case study is explored through the paradigm of phenomenology, where "reality and knowledge reside in the mind, as the individual perceives and experiences it, and knowledge may be discovered by exploring human experiences" (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013, p. 56). Using a case study approach, the study site has been followed throughout the candidacy phase. This study is a single case study and is bound by following one public school in its journey through candidacy to verification.

Individual teacher's perceptions have been collected anonymously as written narrative responses via Google forms. Due to the anonymity of initial questionnaire response items, individual teachers' perceptions could not be tracked or compared over time. Additionally, an unequal numbers of educators participated in the questionnaire each time it was released. Teacher attrition during the candidacy phase both eliminates individuals who participated early on in the study and brings new voices with later input. This impacts the ability to adequately represent all voices involved at the study site. Questionnaire data, therefore, was analyzed for common themes in order to generalize the findings and the voices of the participants before focus group questions were developed.

Upon the conclusion of the candidacy phase, focus group interviews were held. The sample for the focus group interviews conducted in this study has been narrowed down to educators who have been involved in the entirety of the implementation phase from September 2016 thru the verification visit in April 2019. Field notes are provided for data triangulation, and thematic analysis has been conducted to present findings. The verification reports provided by the International Baccalaureate Organization enhance and validate the findings of this study.

Organization of the Study

The literature review relevant to this study is presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes the approach and methodology of the study. Chapter 4 reports results of initial questionnaire data and focus groups, coupled with field notes and document analysis to explain the structures, systems and strategies implemented between questionnaires. Chapter 5 provides analysis and interpretations, discussion of the research findings, recommendations, implication for future research and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme within a public school setting hosts a multitude of factors to consider when striving to meet both the required state and district curriculum mandates, standards, and assessment policies while adhering to the standards and practices of the programme. Though rigorous to implement, the IB Programmes boast a multitude of benefits for the entire school community, to include increased academic achievement and enhanced character education for students as well as continuous professional development and growth for educators. The following literature review has been structured to include background on school transformation, components of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, and teacher perceptions, guided through the lens of the *Coherence Framework* (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Literature reviewed will build a case concerning the strengths and challenges of the programme. This study will help fill the gap in literature that exists about teacher perceptions of the strengths and challenges that is missing from existing literature.

School Transformation

Implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme in a public school setting can be a challenging task. Not only do teachers need to establish that the requirements of the programme are in place for authorization, but also ensure that state and district mandates are followed as well.

The degree of change required to implement the PYP on a school-wide level varies considerably from one school to another. Schools should expect that:

- School-wide adoption of the PYP requires change not only in the classroom but throughout the school community

- Engaging in this change process has beneficial impact on the whole school and, most significantly, on the quality of student learning

- The process of change in teaching practice requires substantial, sustained support from the administrators of the school for all teachers, including professional development for all staff. (IBO, 2007b, p.12)

Change in education is constant. As an innovative society, pushed to create new and better ways of performing, educators can find that once an initiative is well established, a new paradigm evolves that impacts teaching and learning in the classroom. Though change is a constant, it is never perceived as normal, and can create feelings of displacement, loss, and confusion. Concerning change, Evans discusses,

A major part of our world stops making sense; continuity is disrupted; our connections

can no longer be counted on. Virtually nothing is more painful or more

threatening to our basic security, our very ability to understand and cope with

things. It is natural that we should vigorously avoid and resist such experiences.

(Evans, 1996, p. 29)

Evans continues to explain that the only way that change effectively happens is to make a case for innovation, emphasizing the seriousness and necessity of change and offering a solution (or meaningful pathway) to successful implementation, which may involve challenging the status quo and assisting staff in addressing loss, incompetence, confusion and conflict before commitment, competence, coherence and consensus occurs (Evans,

1996, p.55). Creating a consensus, or a common vision, is the first step in creating

meaningful change.

In the *Coherence Framework* (Fullan & Quinn, 2016), this common vision is

referred to as *Focusing Direction.* "Humans need to experience success to keep going;

they need to understand and experience the conditions that advance the cause. In many

situations, constant overload and fragmentation overwhelm purpose" (p. 17). Teacher

leaders are essential in moving the change initiative forward. Once teacher leaders

recognize the need for change, and how it can benefit their teaching and learning, the

transformation process can begin.

Every teacher is a change agent, as each teacher helps students learn and grow

over the course of the school year. Transforming educational processes, however, can

create uncertainty in even the most seasoned change agent. Creating commitment needs

to come from not one, but many individuals who believe that they can and will.

Relationships can be impacted during this time. "The change agent must make clear his

caring and support, his commitment to working with people to take the difficult steps

toward new learning. He must reaffirm connection and help make the change meaningful

to people by finding the familiar in the new and strength amidst weakness" (Evans, 1996,

p. 58). Once the change agent makes clear his/her undying and unwavering support, the

transformation goes a little further, and trickles from a thought into a movement,

spreading to more individuals. From there, a common vision takes shape, and a clear

focus for direction ensues.

According to Evans (1996) "Despite what has been learned about implementing

change, we--everyone involved in school improvement--still face a major implementation

gap, for we are now attempting reforms that are far more extensive and complex than ever before" (pp. 4-5). Change, however is scary for most people. Humans are, as they say, creatures of habit. How we experience change depends on how it affects "the pattern of understanding and attachments we have already constructed and by which we live" (Evans, 1996, p. 28). Drastic change in a school environment takes time, structured and scaffolded support, and teacher leaders who can commit to and realize the necessity of change in the school. Implementing the PYP in a public school setting takes time, leadership, continuous professional development and supports. The following sections build background on the components of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme and build a case for supports needed for successful implementation.

International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) was established in Geneva in 1968 starting with the Diploma Programme. The IBO originated with the purpose in providing students with a balanced education, facilitated to meet the needs of international children who had increased geographic mobility and cultural understanding. The goal of the IBO was to provide a consistent educational framework and to prepare these students for higher education (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2007). With the success of the Diploma Programme in multiple nations worldwide, the IBO sought to increase the offering of programmes by creating a continuum of education in order to provide educational consistency and promote intercultural understanding. This continuum of programmes has evolved into an inclusive international programme of education for all students, with the development of the Middle Years Programme in 1994, and the Primary Years Programme in 1997.

The Primary Years Programme (PYP) was developed through the International Schools Curriculum Project whose goal was to have a "common curriculum for students ages 3-12 which would provide continuity of learning within each school and ensure that the curriculum developed international-mindedness on the part of the learners" (International Baccalaureate, 2018). After 10 years of collaborative efforts creating a comprehensive curriculum framework for international education, the PYP was established. Schools can be public, private, magnet or charter schools, and may or may not adhere to a state or national curriculum, but offer the commonality of the curriculum framework different from traditional schooling.

Components of the PYP. The PYP, as a curriculum framework and not a specified curriculum, is cohesive worldwide due to the implementation of the common Standards and Practices. According to the International Baccalaureate:

> The standards are general requisites established for schools to implement any IB programme. Practices are further definitions of the standards...the common standards and practices and the programme-specific requirements are necessary for the successful implementation of the relevant IB programme. The IB is aware that for each school, the implementation of an IB programme is a journey and that the school will meet these standards and practices to varying degrees along the way. However, the IB expects that the school must make a commitment towards meeting all the standards, practices and programme requirements. (International Baccalaureate, 2014, p.1)

The programme standards and practices lay the foundation for schools and the IB to ensure quality and fidelity in the implementation of its programmes. Each school must

adhere to and provide evidence as to how each of these standards and practices are met within the school. The IB PYP is an extensive innovation, containing 33 practices under corresponding standards in place in order to become an authorized IB World School, with 82 additional practices in progress that are required of IB World Schools under the 2014 standards and practices. The standards and practices are broad in the fact that they are open to interpretation, and so each school may adopt these standards and practices to fit the needs of the school.

According to published literature from the International Baccalaureate Organization, "The IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), for students ages 3-12, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the outside world. It is a framework guided by six transdisciplinary themes of global significance, explored using knowledge and skills derived from six subject areas, with a powerful emphasis on inquiry-based learning" (International Baccalaureate, 2013, p. 7). Each school must restructure their current curriculum into six transdisciplinary units (which is referred to as a programme of inquiry) or adopt the model curriculum from the PYP that includes these themes.

The six themes in the IB PYP are *Who We Are, Where We Are in Place and Time, How We Express Ourselves, How the World Works, How We Organize Ourselves, and Sharing the Planet*. Throughout these themes, students deepen their learning by developing conceptual understandings and making connections across disciplines and beyond subject areas. These themes are considered transdisciplinary because connections could be found between any individual discipline (science, social studies, language arts, mathematics, etc.) and within and between themes. The idea is that the more conceptual

connections are made between disciplines, the deeper students learn and understand. Students learn to make connections, inquire, problem solve, and tie learning together in a synthesis of understanding. "Such a framework seems particularly important in today's society where global knowledge is required to solve the world's complex problems, drive innovation, and expand the global economy" (Savage & Drake, 2016, p. 15).   The thought behind the conceptual understandings is that students develop critical thinking skills to make connections and synthesize new learning. It is not the content that is most important, but the fact that the curriculum teaches students how to be thinkers; students are developing real-world life skills that are applicable beyond the classroom and are transferable to higher education and future careers.

The IB curricular framework is integrative in nature in order to challenge and extend students' thinking within and across disciplines. The challenge of an integrative curriculum, however, involves a paradigm shift from traditional public schooling, which involves singular subject areas defined by fixed time frames. Dowden (2017) states "the real reasons for trepidation or reluctance are probably embedded in the deep structure of the education system. For most teachers integrative curriculum is a serious challenge that involves a paradigm shift--from a subject-centered perspective to a student centered perspective--along with substantive changes to their professional identity" (p. 64). Significant reframing of the current public school curriculum into the transdisciplinary units of inquiry takes a vast amount of time and critical thinking amongst all educators to ensure a balanced and articulated programme of inquiry across the school.

The content chosen to be incorporated within the programme of inquiry bears significance to the global spectrum. Each programme of inquiry is not nationalized or

localized, but instead could be transferred into any school across the world. It bears educational authenticity and is considered *significant, relevant, engaging* and *challenging,* four terms that are discussed throughout PYP literature. "Educational authenticity bears significant potential for contemporary education as it combines the importance of civic engagement, preparation for political involvement, and co-construction of knowledge and offers a fresh rationale for student involvement in curriculum planning" (Luddecke, 2016, p. 509). Teachers have the opportunity to add to their current curriculum in order to make the content more robust and use student questions to drive the inquiry.

The nature of incorporating student voice and choice, which is referred to as *student agency* in the PYP, engages students and involves them in planning the curriculum. This sense of ownership is important in the PYP because it serves as a call to action, influences direct learning, and encourages students to contribute and participate in the learning community (International Baccalaureate, 2017). Action is the ability to want to make a difference in the world, and by empowering students in their learning, students identify a problem and want to make meaningful change on a personal, local, national or global scale. When students see they have the ability to make decisions in their learning, they become more connected, active and engaged, and tend to learn deeper and form long term understandings.

Another aspect of the curriculum that enables teachers and students to make connections across the curriculum is the use of eight key concepts within an inquiry-based learning environment.

In an inquiry classroom, students are taught how to design inquiry questions that

help them to decide on the main issues that need to be investigated, the data that

are required to answer the questions, where the data could be located, the means

that could be used to collect the data, how to analyze the data so that the answer

can be found to the questions being asked, and a way to present the answer to the

questions involved in the issue being investigated. (Van Deur, 2010, p. 160)

The eight key concepts help to frame questions that can be used to deepen understanding

in and across disciplines. These 8 key concepts are *form*, *function*, *causation*, *change*,

connection, *perspective*, *responsibility* and *reflection*. These key concepts, along with

their framing questions, are the basis for what students could understand in any content

area. These key concepts help establish a common framework for inquiry-based teaching

and learning that transcend disciplines, connecting student understanding and creating

critical thinkers.

The PYP aims to develop the whole child, and through this development teachers

use approaches to learning to develop thinking skills, social skills, communication skills,

self-management skills and research skills. These skills are referred to as Approaches to

Learning. "Approaches to Learning (ATL) refers to those skills that students develop

when they are learning how to learn and think effectively; how to process information

and manage their emotions and behaviours….The ultimate intention of ATL across the

IB continuum is to develop self-regulated (self-managed, self-directed, independent)

learners through skill-based, process-focused teaching" (International Baccalaureate,

2013, p. 8). The ATL support whole person development, within and beyond the

classroom.

The whole child is also developed in the PYP with the Learner Profile: what is known as the ten attributes of an internationally minded person. The Learner Profile is articulately broken down into different themes that encompass the whole child (Bullock, n.d.). These themes are backed up by research from educational theorists such as Gardner, Vygotsky, Piaget and Bloom among many others, and is broken down into themes. The cognitive, or intellectual theme, comprises *knowledgeable, thinkers, and reflective.* This theme addresses the process of acquiring in depth knowledge and understanding. The conative, or personal theme, comprises of *inquirers and principled.* This theme looks into personal intention and awareness of one's own learning. The affective, or emotional theme, comprises *caring, risk takers, and balanced.* The culture, or social theme, comprises *communicators* and *open-minded* (Bullock, n.d.). With the intentional teaching of these 10 attributes, students are molded into responsible citizens who are ready to make an actionable difference in their world.

The International Baccalaureate Learner Profile could be considered intentional character education. Teachers model the attributes of the Learner Profile for students and incorporate authentic learning experiences to practice living these traits. In teaching the Learner Profile, students develop empathy, an essential component of an internationally minded person, one who is willing to accept and tolerate differences and perspectives, which is needed in our increasingly global and interconnected world. With the development of the Learner Profile in conjunction with the Knowledge, Concepts, Approaches to Learning, Attitudes, and Action, International Mindedness (the end goal of the PYP) is achieved.

With our increasingly global economy and the innovation of technology world-wide, the link to the rest of the world is at our fingertips. We are increasingly living next to, working alongside, sharing our leisure with, and choosing our partners from people with different cultural backgrounds (Davy, 2010). We are experiencing an increasing interdependence and interconnectedness to the rest of the world. Educating students for global citizenship provides students with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and attributes to engage with peoples of different cultures in our global society. Curriculum design is extremely important in this grand endeavor.

> Education for a better and more peaceful world requires explicit curricular foundations. The pedagogy of constructivism is the starting point for an international curriculum. Students must build a knowledge base and understanding of global issues while developing critical thinking skills and pluralistic attitudes. Development of specific assessment practices for global knowledge, skills and attitudes will strengthen international mindedness in IB programmes. Technology skills contribute significantly to a twenty-first century global curriculum and students' ability to make change in the world. (Davy, 2010, p. 3)

International curriculum design is driven by perspective, culture and diversity. These three components, along with the Learner Profile, help students become more open minded to differences of others, but more so to the similarities that we have with others despite our differences. It is the ability and capability to study issues from different national and cultural perspectives (Walker, Lee, & Panjwani, 2014, p. 5) that engages students to be internationally minded. As students begin to develop an understanding of

others, they develop empathy, a key component to understanding others and motives for thinking in the world. "As the IB develops and expands—given the growing role of globalization and internationalization in many social and economic spheres, including education—international-mindedness is regarded as increasingly important" (Walker, Lee, & Panjwani, 2014, p. 8). Our world is increasingly global. As educators, we want our world to be a better place. An international curriculum for global education is a great step in this massive endeavor, which is one reason why this programme is desirable across the globe.

  Candidate Phase. The candidate phase of the IB PYP has been selected for this study because it is a time of change--a time where uncertainty can overwhelm even the most experienced educator. "This phase will involve putting in place all the necessary processes and resources to deliver the PYP, including teacher training, curriculum development and providing opportunities for teachers to plan collaboratively for both horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum" (IBO, 2007b, p. 21). The candidacy phase must last at least one year before the school applies for authorization, but most schools choose to extend the candidacy for 2-3 years in order to develop the program. By inquiring into what teachers' perceive are beneficial supports to the implementation process, interested schools who are considering the program can develop supports prior to initiating the candidacy phase in order to ensure successful implementation and sustainability beyond authorization. Additionally, candidate schools can benefit from this research by using its findings to modify their implementation process in order to lead to successful authorization.

Teacher Perceptions

The IB PYP, being a curricular framework (not a specific curriculum) leaves room for interpretation within the broad standards and practices. There could be numerous ways to accomplish meeting an IB standard. This open interpretation can be a benefit as teachers have more freedom to restructure and interpret the curriculum. It could also be perceived as an unwelcomed challenge, however, if teachers are accustomed to teaching a fixed curriculum with fidelity. This change in terminology, new standards and practices, and new ways of teaching can bring additional workload, stress, and confusion.

Transformational leaders are thus needed to transform not only the curriculum and practices of the school, but transform the way teachers perceive their school, their circumstances, and the general school culture. "Teachers' attitudes, expectations, and perceptions of their school often conditions responses to change initiatives" (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002, p. 37). The adoption of the PYP takes a considerable amount of work in addition to what teachers are already doing. It takes time, collaboration, and critical thinking on the part of all persons involved. Teacher perceptions of this process is valuable, however research is lacking in this area, specifically considering teachers perceptions of PYP implementation. Studies referenced include perceptions of adopting inquiry-based practices, as this is one component of the PYP.

In a study by Twigg (2010), personal and professional characteristics of teachers perceived to assist him/her in adopting inquiry-based teaching and learning were explored. This study revealed that teachers who "have high personal expectations that are reflected in the organization, deliverance and assessment of the programme, in

conjunction with evaluation of the teachers and coming to the process as a learner, contributor, reflective practitioner, challenge seeker and simple fun-loving positive person, play an important role in them transforming their practice from traditional didactic methodologies to inquiry-based teaching and learning pedagogies" (Twigg, 2010, p. 40).   The shift for teachers from the traditional teaching approach of direct instruction to inquiry-based teaching can be a daunting and challenging experience (Twigg, 2010; Savage & Drake, 2016). Experienced teachers accustomed to teaching with direct instruction could possibly find inquiry based teaching a challenge. "A teacher who has spent 20 years in traditional educational systems, where 'teaching to the test' is the most predominant aspect of the classroom, may find it difficult to adapt to IB PYP pedagogical practices….If an IB PYP school has a vast majority of its teachers attuned to more traditional forms of teaching, this may impact the extent to which IB PYP philosophy permeates the school and its classrooms" (Jamal, 2016, p. 30).   Literature reviewed indicated that teachers do not receive adequate education concerning inquiry in pre-service teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities (Caram & Davis, 2005). According to Maxwell, Lambeth, & Cox (2015), teachers are often hesitant to utilize inquiry based methods in their classrooms because they are unfamiliar with these practices. This is an implication for school systems across the country adopting inquiry-based curriculum and teaching practices. Teachers provided with continuous professional training can "attain the requisite level of skill needed to produce the best results among the students" (Hugerat, Najami, Abbasi, & Dkeidek, 2014, p. 530). Quality professional development in inquiry-based practices, concerning duration, frequency, and methods of implementation, should be investigated in further research.

Literature on teacher perceptions, however, indicate that once teachers receive professional development in inquiry-based practices and are able to implement effectively in their classrooms, suggest that inquiry does improve student engagement and achievement. In an article by Clark (2014), the author collected teacher perceptions, one such saying inquiry "changed my classroom rigor, classroom management, curriculum delivery, and student assessment/evaluation" (p. 17). Classrooms are more student-centered, where teachers are most viewed as facilitators of instruction as opposed to transmitters (Stillisano, et al, 2010). Inquiry, in general, "moves classrooms towards democracy" (Wilhelm & Wilhelm, 2010, p. 45). Students feel like they have a choice and are more motivated to learn in this democratic approach.

Friesen (2010) argued that inquiry is necessary for achieving 21st century skills. Direct instruction was created for a school system designed for an industrial era. As the world is evolving into a technologically advanced global society, schools need to be prepared to increase critical thinking and problem solving abilities. According to Friesen (2010), "Students and teachers alike became more engaged because living disciplines foster and reward engagement, where industrial assembly does not" (p. 14). Inquiry is designed to be real-world, involving hands-on experiences that help students understand their surroundings by interacting with them. Increased engagement is positively linked to increased motivation and achievement.

The International Baccalaureate Programmes as School Choice

Given the nature of the curriculum in addition to the philosophy of the Learner Profile and international mindedness, the IB is seen as a desired school choice option among many people, especially those of foreign mobility.   In a survey completed in a

diverse area of Australia, researchers found that the results "clearly show some parents specifically chose the school because of the inclusion of the PYP" (Law, McDowall, & Feder, 2012, p. 301). The attractiveness of the programme, however, doesn't only stem from it's framework design. The IB programme boasts increased academic achievement. When the IB programme, for example, is adopted as a programme of choice within the public school system, it oftentimes desegregates schools and provides an alternative option to impoverished youth. In a study by Hill (2012), one principal stated:

> The IB programme gives students from the poorest neighbourhoods in our city the opportunity to have the same academic experiences as those students who attend the most elite schools in the world. It levels the playing field for students who may live in poverty, yet at the same time, it also challenges the most gifted students in our schools. It offers hope to many; but more importantly, it shows that our students can compete academically on a global stage. (Hill, 2012, p. 345)

Through the adoption of inquiry-based learning design, critical thinking and constructivist based strategies are developed, enhancing academic achievement. These ideas challenge and extend students to think deeper and enable students to apply their understanding in a variety of ways.

School Choice Impact on Students. Bifulco, Cobb, and Bell (2009) state that magnet schools which offer interdistrict choice are more effective than regular schools at raising student proficiency in reading and social studies. Multiple studies have shown inquiry to show positive and higher levels of student achievement (Aktamis, Higde, & Ozden, 2016; Friesen, 2010; Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009; Hemelt, 2014; Hugerat, Najami, Abbasi, & Dkeidek, 2014; Kanter, & Konstantopoulos,

2010; Maxwell, Lambeth, & Cox, 2015; Wilhelm & Wilhelm, 2010). One such study

worth noting demonstrated a 5-year quasi-experimental investigation involving 9 Title 1

Schools, where "an inquiry-focused protocol to solve instructional problems

significantly increased achievement" (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg,

2009, p. 537). Using this framework, achievement scores in this case rose from worst to

best in the district. The reason why inquiry framework works so well is because it

accelerates the development of schema and improves student's abilities to solve problems

(Hugerat, Najami, Abbasi, & Dkeidek, 2014). These studies are relevant to the

importance of the IB since the PYP is taught through the framework of guided inquiry.

Standardized test analysis conducted in New Zealand indicated that academic

achievement within PYP schools generally exceeded the academic achievement of

schools with similar school populations as well (Savage & Drake, 2016). This could be

contributed to the inquiry-based framework, transdisciplinary design or teacher training

and professional development. Many believe that integrated schools provide access to

more qualified teachers, more opportunities to take advanced coursework, have higher

teacher expectations, and are environments more conducive to learning, thus can help

poor and minority students improve academic achievement. Some also have argued that

by organizing curriculum and instruction around a special theme, magnet schools can

foster more student engagement and a stronger sense of membership and purpose and

thereby help to improve student achievement (Gamoran, 1996).

Another draw of the PYP is that it not only appears to increase student

achievement in academic content areas, but it also explicitly teaches life skills through

the approaches to learning. "Parents felt it was the acquisition of learning skills rather

than particular knowledge gained that was important" (Law, McDowall, & Feder, 2012, p. 302). Skills acquired that were mentioned by parents in this study were lifelong skills, risk taking, problem solving, balanced, caring, confident, independent, focused, reflective, skills that will take you a long way, and being able to find the right solutions. Additional findings from this study suggested that "an emphasis on international awareness and gaining a global perspective are important aspects of an IB approach to education for parents when considering the educational and employment possibilities for their children and which may have contributed to the choice of a PYP school" (Law, McDowall, & Feder, 2012, p. 306). An education that connects students to the rest of the world opens up doors of opportunities. Increased educational opportunities are the hopes of any parent wanting a better education and a better life for their child.

Parents are considered a vital component of the school community. In a study by Perez White & Lopez Levers (2017) relationships were examined between parents and teachers at the school during the adoption of school choice, a potentially stressful period adopting pedagogical change. Participants were interviewed and three major themes were found that pertained to parent-teacher interaction: the need for communication, a desire for human empathy, and felt oppression. In this study, "a positive relationship between teacher and parent was found to be a protective factor that may positively affect parental involvement in children's academic performance and behavior" (Perez White & Lopez Levers, 2017, p. 22). Communication and participation are highly valued in the PYP. Creating clear channels for these to succeed is a task of leadership that is very important during pedagogical change. The research mentioned above proposes that the PYP is a highly regarded and desired programme of choice. Implementing school choice, however,

takes specific leadership skills that not only create successful implementation but create a sustainable programme.

Impact on School Culture. The adoption of a program of choice can impact school culture. Culture is indicative in the way that people talk in the organization, the way they respond to authority, how conflict is handled, and how self-interest is balanced with that of the organization (Leo & Wickenberg, 2013). "Organization culture can be considered as one of the keys to successful leadership" (Deenmamode, 2012, p. 306). In a study by Robensteine (2000), it is argued that school choice can potentially create a divide between principal and staff because "there is a tendency for principals to become increasingly distanced from the work of teaching, and hence, also, from their faculty" (p. 27). With the adoption of school choice, there becomes more principal focus on image, marketing, and school population. This study will explore how one schools' culture has been impacted by the implementation of the PYP as well.

Conclusions

Common themes found in the review of literature were teacher perceptions, distributed leadership, and implications of change with school choice. This literature review thus aims to tie together the ideas about the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme as an option for school choice, teacher perceptions of school choice implementation, and factors that impact sustainable school change. Too often we find ourselves seeing the research on a program and its effects but rarely we ask the ones who implement it about their perceptions of executing the implementation. Ultimately teacher perceptions, values and beliefs about implementing a program are what drives the program to be successful.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This case study explores how teachers describe the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme during the candidacy phase in a public school setting. This study is defined as a case study because "A "case" is generally a bounded entity (a person, organization, behavioral condition, event, or other social phenomenon)" (Yin, 2012, p. 6). This case study is bound by the fact that it is a single site; the research site is a single candidate school in the midwest United States in a suburban public school district. "Case study research assumes that examining the context and other complex conditions related to the case(s) being studied are integral to understanding the case(s)" (Yin, 2012, p. 4). Participants in this study are educators involved in implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme during the 2016-2019 school years. The span of these years cover the interested, candidate, and authorized phases of the implementation process.

Participants

Participants for this study are from a public IB PYP candidate school in a suburban school district in the midwestern United States. The school district serves over 24,000 students in 35 schools and is the only school district in the state to offer the continuum of the IB Programmes K-12. The school site is an elementary school of over 500 students. Participants involve 33 teachers, predominantly female, ages 22-68. 70% of teachers hold master's degrees in education and the average teaching experience is 15 years. All participants received International Baccalaureate Category 1 Workshop

training in years 2017, 2018 or 2019 respectively, depending on when the teacher was hired.

Role of The Researcher

As an IB PYP Coordinator, the researcher essentially is tasked with the implementation and development of the programme, and therefore brings a biased view. The process of implementation is close to the heart of the researcher, so the story of implementation is very personal. The researcher brackets experiences in order to prevent bias. Member checking is also used in the analysis process to ensure that interpretation remains unbiased.

A central feature of the analysis is the researcher's self-reflexivity. The researcher has recorded memos throughout the process concerning observations and assumptions throughout the implementation process. These memos reflect the researchers own personal involvement. Reflexivity is used to indicate the experiences of the researcher and how they might impact the participant site. "Sufficient reflectivity exists when researchers record notes during their research process that reflect their own personal involvement, the likely impact the study will have on readers, and how the participants are reacting to the study" (Creswell, 2016, p. 225). The experiences of the researcher, as a participant-observer will be logged and examined for biases and assumptions and is subsequently analyzed.

Phase 1 Questionnaire

Participants voluntarily completed a Google form during the fall and spring of each school year during the candidacy phase in 2016-2019 Responses were recorded anonymously, and no individual identifiers were attached to the participant response data. The number of participants varied each time the questionnaire was sent out, as indicated in Figure 2.

Number Responses			
Fall	33	25	20
Spring	21	24	20
School Year	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019

Figure 2: Participants who responded to the questionnaire sent out in Fall and Spring during the Candidacy Phase.

Phase 2 Focus Groups

Focus group participants have been reduced to educators who were involved in the entirety of the programme implementation during the 2016-2019 school years. Participants were paired down to meet criterion before being invited to participate in the study and were provided informed consent at the time of the interviews.

Procedures, Data Collection, and Analysis

Data is strengthened when collected from a variety of resources. Multiple sources of data assist the researcher in avoiding bias. Collecting multiple methods of data increase the validity of the research. For the purpose of this study, data has been collected using different methods and sources.

Phase 1 Questionnaire. The initial questionnaire posed educators with open ended questions to collect educators' written narrative responses. Strengths of the programme implementation were asked the question *What are you most excited about when thinking about becoming an IB World School?* Challenges were uncovered by asking *What are you most concerned about when thinking about becoming an IB World School?* This questionnaire (Appendix A) was sent out in Fall and Spring during each year of the candidacy phase in order to measure growth over time.

Initial data has been be analyzed after this school has held its verification visit for authorization. This analysis included multiple read throughs. Thematic data analysis occurred by coding common themes and findings are reported through written narrative analysis. In order to protect participant confidentiality, only common themes and partial phrases of this data are reported. These common themes assisted the researcher in developing focus group questions.

Phase 2 Focus Groups. According to Yin (2012) "A second common source of evidence for case studies comes from open-ended interviews, also called non-structured interviews. These interviews can offer richer and more extensive material than data from surveys or even the open ended portions of survey instruments" (p. 12). Upon gaining IRB permission, focus group participants were procured. Criterion sampling was utilized in order to find representative participants who have experienced the phenomenon in entirety (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 157). Participants being sought for this study involved teachers who had been involved in the entire implementation process at the research site. New teachers were not considered for this process as it was essential for the participants to have history with the transformation process to gain full insight into

the unique school's transformation and successful structures, strategies and supports during the school implementation process. Participant numbers, therefore, have been paired down and bounded. According to Savin-Baden & Major (2013), "A case study tends to be bounded, which means that it is focused and intensive as well as narrow in scope. It also means that the case has clear boundaries or limiters. If a case is bounded, then, there should be a finite number of people who might be interviewed, a finite number of documents to be reviewed or a finite number of observations that might be made" (p. 154). These focus group participants were procured by identifying the staff who met criterion before gaining interest. Focus group participants have been reduced to those certified staff members who have been involved in the entirety of the implementation process.

Participants were notified of the study in writing and granted permission to take part in the study with informed consent. The study procedure did not interfere in any way with the normal educational practices of the school. Teachers voluntarily took place in focus group interviews after contract hours during a convenient time for both the researcher and participants.   Since the researcher has formed relationships with the participants in her role as the coordinator of the programme, the researcher personally interviewed focus groups. The personal relationship developed by the researcher with the participants allowed the participants to speak freely and more openly about the implementation process. The researcher is also aware that some responses may be guarded. Though the researcher has no evaluative authority over the focus group participants, the leadership role of the coordinator, though bracketed in experiences, may

bring a perceived power structure into the focus group interviews and thus may impact participant responses.

      Interview Questions. Interview questions for these focus groups were generated by collecting common themes from the initial google form narrative data analysis. A focus group of teachers at an authorized school validated the interview questions and provided feedback before initiating interviews with participants of this study. Questions that were asked of participants are included in Appendix C.

      The purpose of these semi-structured interviews was to gain further insight into the school's strategies and support structures, including change leadership as guided by the *Coherence Framework* (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). The school and teachers' identities remained confidential throughout the process. Participants voluntarily took part in the focus group interviews, have been provided informed consent and had been notified they may opt out of the study at any time during the interview process.

      Document Analysis. Implementation history including meeting minutes, staff development agendas, and the verification visit report has been analyzed in correlation with participant response questionnaires and focus group responses. Document analysis enhances notes for recommendations in establishing an IB World School.

      Field Notes. Field notes have been taken throughout the process in order to strengthen claims and enhance the validity of the study. The claims presented by this research enhance interested/candidate schools worldwide in implementing change initiatives. By uncovering common themes, recommendations have be developed for future interested/candidate schools that would indicate what supports are essential for the successful implementation of the programme.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

As stated in Chapter 1, the purpose of this qualitative study was to explore teachers' perceptions of the strengths and challenges faced by educators during the candidacy phase of the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme in a public school setting. The central phenomenon explores how educators describe the process of implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme during the candidacy phase in a public school setting. Sub questions include:

- What strengths and challenges are faced by educators throughout the implementation phase?

- Do teachers perceive a transformation (personal or cultural) during the process?

- What supports were found beneficial to implementing the programme?

The educator voices presented in this study provide a rich background of strengths and challenges faced during programme implementation, which upon analysis, could serve as recommendations for future schools undergoing change initiatives.

Phase 1 Questionnaire

As stated in Chapter 3, initial data was collected throughout the candidacy phase during the 2016-2019 school years. Google Forms were sent out in Fall and Spring of each year and participant responses were collected anonymously. Participants were asked to complete a written narrative to the following questions: *What are you most excited about becoming an IB World School?* and *What are you most concerned about when thinking about becoming an IB World School?* Participation was voluntary, thus

numbers of participants varied each time the questionnaire was sent out. During the entirety of the candidacy period, fifty-four different educator voices could be represented due to teacher attrition and new hire voices. Participants involved certified staff to include classroom teachers, specialists (Physical Education, Music, Spanish, Media, and Counselor) and Interventionists (Resource, Speech/Language and Reading Specialists). No individual identifiers were attached to responses in order to receive the most honest feedback without apprehension of punitive discourse. The results of the questionnaires were used to modify and improve systems and structures within the school. Field notes and document analysis will be added to this section to explain some of the modifications made throughout the implementation process.

In order to maintain the confidentiality of the participants, only common themes and partial phrases will be a part of this report; data in its entirety will not be shared nor will it be a part of this published dissertation.

September 2016. This questionnaire had 31 responses. As field notes indicate, this questionnaire was sent out after initial training on site had begun, yet teachers had not yet received official IB Category 1 training. Document analysis indicates that participants have been informed on the general components of the PYP through informational meetings. Participants have also been offered the option of having release time to observe educators teach at an IB World School nearby. Participants have a generalized understanding of the changes to come, yet systems and structures are not yet in place to make these changes. The school is currently in the "interested" phase and is working on applying for candidacy.

Strengths. Questionnaire analysis reported teachers were excited about inquiry based teaching, and increased hands-on project driven instruction at this time. Teachers enjoyed the concept of enabling students to become more critical "worldly" thinkers. Participants were excited about the connections between subject areas within a transdisciplinary learning design. They enjoy the service learning component (Action) and having a 2nd language. One participant noted that IB will build individual problem solving while working collaboratively in groups. "The students will learn how to THINK." Another participant wrote that "I think it will be wonderful to look at our teaching differently. Rather than teaching with textbooks or workbooks in isolation, we'll raise the bar and invite students to guide our teaching through inquiry."

Challenges. The researcher noted that 5 out of 31 responses could not report any excitement about implementing the program and expressed concerns in both question response areas. Teachers report concerns about time, workload, and overwhelming feelings about the programme. It was mentioned that it felt like "too much," that something is always being added and nothing is being taken away. The researcher noted feelings of despair in regards to workload and overwhelming feelings about the programme. "I feel like I'm the only one that can't keep up, but then I hear that other staff members feel that way. I just feel like I'm drowning." Another participant noted "I feel as if I am already putting in 150% for this job and I think that IB will require more time and effort." Fear was noted when a participant noted they were "fearful teachers will lose their passion for good teaching" in an effort to get everything accomplished. Field note analysis indicates that seamless integration is needed in staff professional development sessions so the IB implementation is a natural substitution,

modification, augmentation or replacement for current practices in the classroom so it does not feel like another additional requirement that needs to be met.

After this questionnaire was sent out, a professional development plan was created in order to meet the needs of the building. Monthly staff development on the components of the PYP was initiated. Document analysis of professional development meetings indicate that topics were broken down into 30-60 minute sessions where staff collaboratively learned about the PYP component. Monthly topics included: the six transdisciplinary themes, concepts, creating central ideas, lines of inquiry, developing a programme of inquiry, the key concepts, approaches to learning, the learner profile, and action. Each session included an inquiry activity connecting the PYP concepts to current school curriculum, followed by a mini-lesson and application. Educators were able to create portions of their unit plans and the programme of inquiry over the course of the year, so that at Category 1 training, they would be able to revise and refine their knowledge accordingly.

May 2017. This questionnaire had 21 responses.

Strengths. From Fall to Spring, teachers remained excited about incorporating inquiry because it enabled them to be "more creative" in the classroom and thus "enhanced engagement" of students. It was noticed that students were becoming involved in "global, critical thinking," enhancing the learning of the students as well as the teachers. A new development during this period was that teachers were excited about the collaboration and cohesiveness amongst the entire school. Positive comments included "I LOVE the collaboration" and expression of excitement about "collaboration

of the whole school." 20 out of 21 responses were positive. One failed to comment but participated.

Challenges. Time and overwhelming feelings continue to remain a concern. Some teachers ask "am I doing IB the right way?" and are concerned with being overloaded with all of the district mandates as well as IB. There was more positive feedback this time in the *Challenges* area: "I know I can do it" and "I am sure this will come with practice," indicating the presence of hope. Three staff members indicated no concern at all. This questionnaire took place after nine months of in-house professional learning and prior to the whole staff receiving Category 1 training.

October 2017. This questionnaire had 25 responses. Field notes indicate that this questionnaire took place after all educators had Category 1 training in late May of 2017. Members from the International Baccalaureate Organization came to train the whole school staff at a 2.5 day training off campus. Teams had 2.5 additional days to plan and write the unit planning documents. This questionnaire took place approximately 8 weeks into the school year.

Strengths. The researcher perceives that commitment to the programme has increased and there is an enhanced understanding of the programme. Positive comments about how the coordinator had developed professional learning opportunities for teachers in "small pieces" was mentioned in this questionnaire. Teachers seem to be more excited about the program because they see how the programme has made a difference in their students. Teachers are excited about the levels of deeper thinking and student engagement in the classroom. They are beginning to see that students are thinking "outside the box" at a more global level. They love the collaboration and how they are

able to create "creative learning experiences" for all of their students. One educator

mentioned "It's exciting to see the innovative ways they have already engaged their

students with the Learner Profile." The researcher perceives that the difference in

students has increased educators confidence with and about the programme.

Challenges. Increased workload and time remain a constant concern, now that a

full year of planner implementation has gone by. Now that educators understand what is

involved in a unit of inquiry--the planning, documenting, reflecting, and standards

analysis--it is more to keep up with. Teachers also express concern with the adoption of

new reading curriculum and how they might integrate that within their units. A new

development in concerns include some comments about teaching basic skills and

uncertainty if "some basic skills are getting left behind."

After this questionnaire, professional development included topics on how to

teach a unit of inquiry, including providing an environment designed for inquiry,

provocations and assessment. In January of 2018, the IB consultant visited to give

recommendations moving forward toward authorization. Consultant findings included

there was "dedicated meeting time provided for teachers' collaborative

planning." Additionally, the teachers' timetables were "reviewed in order to establish

collaborative planning practices that fulfill the requirements for the successful

implementation of the programme" that is used "regularly and systematically for

collaborative planning and reflection." Recommendations included that specialists could

benefit from more opportunities for "direct collaboration with grade levels" to discuss

possible conceptual connections.

Additional findings of the consultant indicated that there was a published programme of inquiry, however some units have central ideas and lines of inquiry that need to be developed further. This programme of inquiry was created collaboratively by certified teachers throughout the previous year. At this point in time, the fifth grade team had not yet written a final unit, and some science and social studies content was not being addressed within the programme of inquiry. Field notes indicate that these items were not required until the following year, as some grade levels were only teaching part of their year as units of inquiry, and part of the year remained taught as traditional curriculum. The full six units of inquiry would be required during the 2018-2019 school year for all grade levels. Continued professional development thus ensued on transdisciplinary unit design, international mindedness and deepening understanding of the IB Standards and Practices.

May 2018. This questionnaire had 24 responses.

Strengths. Teachers are excited about inquiry because it enables students to be more engaged and involved in their learning. They are enjoying the increased student choice and fluidity of the school day with the transdisciplinary curriculum. Teachers comment that they "are more energized" and "excited about teaching." Teaching is "more juicy." And "I am energized by the opportunity to learn and grow as a professional." Field notes capture a veteran teacher saying "I like teaching again." Not only does the programme seem to be beneficial for students, but for teachers as well.

Additional strengths of the programme highlighted in this analysis include a more "comprehensive plan from K-5" and "how the building is becoming more unified." Enjoyment is expressed about the common language, skills and character traits

of the learner profile. Student action is fun and engaging. One educator mentioned, "I am most excited about our student taking action to solve problems in the world around them." Another educator stated that "Students realize they have a voice and are capable of taking action to make real change."

Challenges. Some educators mentioned they are worried about learning the terminology, but feel confident they will learn it with time. It is a perception of the researcher that more hope is evolving in the comments. Concern was expressed about "the time to do the programme justice." Overwhelming feelings of teacher burnout were also stated. Document analysis indicates that two additional paid contract days were offered to the teachers in order to work on unit planning after the school year commenced.

October 2018. This questionnaire had 20 Reponses.

Strengths. Teachers are beginning to see students "transform into the Learner Profile." Responses indicate that educators are noticing a difference in their students. They are noticing that their students are becoming "better individuals" and are increasing in international mindedness through the intentional character education of the learner profile. It is a perception of the researcher that since educators notice the difference in students, they are increasing commitment to the programme.

Challenges. Concerns still include extra time, work and additional district expectations. Field notes indicate that a structure was put in place during the 2018-2019 school year; extra plan time was provided where the coordinator would cover classes so teams had time to collaborate during the day. One participant commented that they are most concerned about "balancing district and school curriculum requirements at this time.

It feels a bit overwhelming…" An increase in class sizes this year brings additional

concern to the teachers, as they are beginning to serve a larger population due to the

programme bringing additional students to the school.

Professional development analysis indicates that each monthly staff development

meeting was guided by the standards and practices of the IB. Each month, a specific

standard was a focus in conjunction with an inquiry activity, and plan time was built into

each session so teachers had the opportunity to work on their planning, reflection and

artifact collection during this time. One participant noted in the questionnaire that they

are excited about the opportunities planned by the IB Coordinator this year, indicating a

sense of developed trust. Since time was a constant concern, additional structures were

implemented to make time during regularly scheduled teacher contract hours.

May 2019. This questionnaire had 20 responses.

Strengths. This final questionnaire took place after the verification visit

happened. Teachers expressed a love of going in-depth with the content, inquiry

activities and ownership of learning. There was emphasis on the increased collaboration

with teammates, other teams, and entire staff. One participant noted they are "becoming

a better teacher" and the students are becoming better people. "It all fits into what I

think students need and what will help them become better people." Additional

comments included "Seeing students enjoy learning and feeling proud when taking

action."

Challenges. Concerns remained time, additional requirements, extra work, and

continuously implementing district and IB requirements. Teachers are concerned about

figuring out how to integrate it all with fidelity. One participant noted they are "Worried

about the work that will continue to go into implementing the programme as well as the increased demands from the district" and worries about stress and how it will affect the climate. Teachers, however, did not mention worry about buy-in, indicating they felt all teachers were committed to the programme. Four participants mentioned no concerns at this time.

In the Summer of 2019 the school received it's notification of authorization from the International Baccalaureate Organization. Within the Verification Report, findings from the IB, as aligned with the standards and practices, were indicated in a factual matter as written statements of what the site visitors saw, heard, or read during their visit. Site visitors relayed their findings to IB, who upon analysis give *Commendations*, *Recommendations* or *Matters to Be Addressed* based on their findings. The school was given three *Commendations* and four *Recommendation*s as indicated in Figure 3. Additional findings from the report will be mentioned in conjunction with the combined analysis in Chapter 5.

Commendations	Recommendations
The parents, students and staff have made the attributes of the learner profile a natural discourse within and outside of the school.	The school should further develop support and resources for mother tongue and language learning.
The district has developed a system of communication and support for all their IB authorized and candidate schools in all three programmes which meets consistently.	The school should further develop learning engagements to allow a broader variety of learning through inquiry.
The school uses a range of strategies and tools to assess student learning and these are evident through student work samples and unit planners.	Teachers should continue to develop their understanding of assessments and common criteria for evidence of achievement.
	The school should further develop procedures to provide students with feedback to inform and improve their learning.

Figure 3: Commendations and Recommendations cited by the International Baccalaureate Organization in the Report on School Authorization, 2019.

Document analysis of the Report on School Authorization indicate that the school has found a common language with the natural discourse of the Learner Profile within the entire school community to involve staff, students, administration and

parents. Additional strengths involve support from the district and structures for communication. Further document analysis involved analyzing IB Leadership Minutes, which included sharing plans for furthering the programme at the school which involved maintaining an adequate budget for resources and professional development of the staff. A strength of the staff showed a variety of assessment strategies school wide as indicated in the curriculum documents, which was a system of accountability set up for unit artifact collection. Recommendations are to be considered as next steps. The school will consider these as actionable items between the Verification Visit and the next Evaluation Visit in four years.

Phase 1 Summary Analysis

Throughout the analysis, it appears that educators increased in commitment to the programme throughout the 2016-2019 school years. Positive features of the programme that became even more positive in the teachers' perceptions were the inquiry-based curricular framework as well as the intentional character education and international mindedness of the Learner Profile. Once the teachers saw a difference in their students, they began to believe in the programme and in themselves that they could manage the programme. Overwhelming feelings of the teachers in respect to time and workload management remained a constant concern throughout the candidacy phase. Recommendations will be offered in Chapter 5.

Phase 2 Focus Groups

Focus group participants were procured with criterion sampling. The school staff representing the first authorization year of the school was analyzed and educators who were hired during or after the candidacy phase were eliminated, since participants for this

study needed to have participated in the entirety of the candidacy phase. Of the 23 staff members who met criterion, 11 certified staff members voluntarily agreed to participate in the study and were provided informed consent. Dates and times were agreed upon to hold small focus groups and individuals were provided the interview questions ahead of that date.

Focus group interviews were held on three different dates to accommodate work schedules. Participants were asked the same questions in each focus group. Focus group interviews were audibly recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were coded for common themes, and are reported in the findings below.

Question 1: What supports are provided to educators during the candidacy period of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme?

IB Consultant

Consultant feedback was practical and useful to participants. "I liked how [the consultant] was available to us to look over planners and help us through that process. She was pretty quick at getting feedback back to us." Field notes indicate that classroom teachers were able to field questions with the IB Coordinator and connect to the IB Consultant from the time the candidacy initiated up to the consultant visit. During the consultant visit, the IB consultant made time with each grade level team to answer their questions and help to improve their understanding of the IB process as tied to their units. Follow-up recommendations were given by the consultant that were practical and manageable to achieve between the consultant visit and the authorization visit.

IB Resources

There were many resources and articles available to participants on the My IB system as well as the Online Curriculum Center. Teachers enjoyed being able to preview sample planners and be able to see examples of what units of inquiry could look like. One teacher mentioned that they have access to a "global community" via the IB Systems. Social networking sites were also utilized to ask questions. Teachers were able to make connections with educators around the world via Facebook and Twitter and were able to utilize some of their ideas in inquiry and classroom design applied to their classrooms.

Release Time

A structure put in place by building leadership involved offering teachers release time to see IB in action at a local IB PYP school. "It was helpful to tour other IB schools and see the programme in action; it was useful to collaborate with other schools and have the ability to consult their coordinator if we had questions." Field notes indicate that Coordinators from four different IB PYP schools met quarterly throughout this process and had regular contact via email. If educators had any questions throughout the candidacy phase, a network of individuals could be consulted to find answers, resources and examples of practice.

Continuous Professional Learning

IB Training. IB training as a whole staff was noted as a beneficial support. Additional planning days were given to allow teachers to plan immediately after training and receive compensation for additional contract days. Teachers also had the opportunity to further their training with category 2-3 IB development. Those staff

members would come back to the building and present "fresh ideas" to the staff, ensuring that learning was always new.

  Professional Development. Professional development included many activities that could be taken back to the classroom and be used with students. "When [IB activities were] modeled it made it felt real and easier to use. I could see how I could use it in [grade mentioned]." Field notes indicate that professional learning experiences took place in different rooms, and some sessions involved being tasked to go into a peer's room. Participants noted they were able to observe how others were presenting activities to students, such as student-created schedules and flexible seating. Artifacts and pictures in the rooms and hallways indicated what students were learning in each grade. Time was also allotted at the end of staff development meetings to incorporate developed topics into unit planners and collaboration. One participant noted that "The whole idea [of IB] was broken down into little bits." Another participant commented that "the support we got was like a ladder. It was just enough and in increments that made sense to me." Scaffolding learning experiences for staff made deep concepts of the IB more manageable to understand, and enabled educators to implement learning opportunities for their students with valuable takeaways.

  IB Book study was also an option provided to staff who were ready to take the next step in their learning. This book study centered on inquiry. Members that chose to participate were able to take an idea or activity back to their teams to share right away. These activities were modeled so participants could "bring it right back to the classroom." As part of the IB Book Study, participants were encouraged to observe their peers in practice. Release time was provided for participants to observe the inquiry

activity in practice. Peer modeling helped other teachers feel more comfortable with implementing inquiry activities in their own classrooms.

Visuals. Information was also shared in various areas throughout the school. An IB Bulletin Board across from staff mailboxes focused on the upcoming topic(s) for staff development. Google classroom was utilized to send messages at regular intervals, and email was used to share pictures and videos of IB in practice in the classroom. Infographics were even displayed in the bathrooms so teachers could "have PD by the TP," ensuring learning was a part of each day. Educators were constantly immersed and exposed in the IB philosophy.

Question 2: How have these supports impacted teaching and learning in the classroom?

Impact on Teaching

Teachers were stretched to go outside of their comfort zone and were challenged to try new things. One participant noted that "learning naturally changed" with the intentional focus of each professional development opportunity. Teachers had time to collaborate. This enabled teachers to plan and be aligned in improving their units of inquiry. Teachers discussed the vertical alignment involved in creating unit planners and the whole school programme of inquiry. This involved ensuring all thirty-six units of inquiry were distinct, yet were somehow connected to provide naturally scaffolded learning opportunities for students as they grew in the programme. "The vertical alignment helped us tweak or change our units, and made our teaching much more juicy" stated one participant. Teachers referred to having the ability to add to their curriculum, adding more engaging, hands on inquiry activities and learning experiences.

Additionally, participants mentioned that their planners continue to change and improve teaching and learning each year. "I think reflection has played a big part in the development of our learning. We are getting better every year" reflected one teacher. This commitment to continuous improvement with the IB has helped students and teachers strive to be better, think better and do better each year. Another teacher mentioned that "I stopped giving the answers and found myself asking more questions, like 'why do you think? Tell me more'…and it's making [students] think." The inquiry based teaching methods have enabled students to become more critical thinkers, able to solve problems and think at a higher level.

Impact on Learning

Learning was referred to as being more transdisciplinary and teachers were able to make more connections throughout the day. One participant referred to how learning used to be "an inch thick and a mile wide….but now it's a mile wide and a mile deep." The transdisciplinary nature of the programme enabled learning to "flow throughout the day." Teachers felt less time constraint when they were able to cross over subject areas to cover multiple subject specific standards throughout the transdisciplinary design.

Impact on Students

Students brought in more of their personal knowledge with the implementation of the IB PYP. For example, when students had a home connection, they brought it to school. Students also began to share learning more at home. Specific examples were given about students taking action at home. When they learned something in the classroom, they went home and wanted to teach family members. This involved actions such as doing projects, sharing learning, or going out into the community to do good

deeds, like shoveling walkways for neighbors. Parents took pictures and sent information back to school to show the difference the students were making in their home and in their communities.

Students also know the language of the IB to include the Learner Profile and the Key Concepts. Teachers report that students can use these words and apply how they use these different words, "You can see that they know it!" For example, students hold each other and themselves accountable for being *principled* and *caring*. Students have become living examples of the learner profile and have become more open-minded and accepting of others as a result.

Question 3: What strengths did you find in the programme implementation throughout the candidacy phase?

Leadership

Principal Leadership was integral to implementing the programme. "The principal was on board. He was very visible and had follow-up questions with both students and teachers to make sure we were doing what we needed to do. This was a huge accountability piece." Internal accountability from an authority figure as well as peers engaged participants in following through with building expectations. Field notes of PLC meetings show teachers asking each other about lessons and activity completion and artifact collection. Internal systems of accountability, as dictated by the teams, provided quality assurance and guaranteed fidelity of programme implementation.

The coordinator also provided regular feedback and facilitation of team meetings and was there to be "objective" and move the team forward. Participants noted that team meetings were not always easy at first, but [the IB Coordinator] "pushed back when she

got pushed back" helping the growth of the programme. Change was uncomfortable at first, and time was a challenge for everyone.   The IB Coordinator willingly gave up her time so that grade level teams had additional time to collaboratively plan. When teams needed it, the coordinator would cover classrooms to provide teachers release time to work on their unit planning. This was said to be "crucial" to preparing for teaching and learning. This also said something about the culture. One participant mentioned that "I think that changes our culture or at least helps us to appreciate our culture. It helped us be more positive when [the IB Coordinator was] understanding of our needs." Relationships between the coordinator and teams was an essential component to moving the implementation of the PYP forward.

Professional Development

Participants indicated that the IB Coordinator "went above and beyond" when it came to staff development opportunities. Learning experiences were varied, engaging, and "provided us with what we needed at the time that we needed it." Topics in staff development were broken down into "baby steps" and built off of one another so they became manageable. Additional comments mentioned the professional learning was "so fun;" ideas could be "easily implement[ed] in the classroom. These times were also a "bonding time" with other teachers. Participants began to look forward to IB Staff Development because they knew they would have fun and would take away something they could implement right away with their students.

Time

Participants mentioned they had a lengthy time to implement the programme. "I think IB gives us time." Field notes indicate that the Candidacy Phase needs to last at

least one year before the school applies for authorization. School leadership, however, chose to pursue a year as an interested school and two years as a candidate school. Participants were able to look at the timeline (visually posted in the meeting room) and said "we have three years." The Candidacy Phase was noted as "long and broken down into steps" by educators who took part in the focus groups.

Question 4: What challenges did you experience in the implementation of the programme throughout the candidacy phase?

Workload

An additional challenge as a public school included completing district mandates within IB Units of Study. "How to figure out how the [district] curriculum fit into each unit was a challenge at first but now I'm better at teaching the curriculum and the standards" said one participant. In regards to the amount of work that goes into the process, participants were concerned that they were unsure if "[the district] fully grasps what IB is" noting that they are required to do "everything that the district provides and more." Participants wondered if there are some district initiatives they could be exempt from, since being an IB teacher requires even more.

One teacher mentioned that their staff is "drowning in work" and its "additional responsibility without compensation." IB was also mentioned to be "emotionally and cognitively challenging" because of how much critical thought is going to the planning, teaching and assessment phases. Concern over teacher burnout, health and well being was noted.

Time

      Time was also mentioned as a huge factor in figuring out how to plan as a team. Due to the additional workload, teachers mentioned they were finding it challenging to fit everything into their common planning time and noted that they needed more time in the school day. Teachers mentioned their days got longer because there was so much to do, so they were getting to school earlier and working later in order to try to manage to get things done.

Confusion

      Participant comments included feelings of confusion with the new vocabulary, terminology, and figuring out how to implement all of the IB components. IB leaves a lot of ideas open-ended, wanting individuals to inquire to see if there is a concrete answer. One participant noted "I felt like [Category 1 IB training] was overwhelming because we had not fully grasped IB [concepts]so [training] was very challenging."

      Vertical planning was also a big challenge for participants. "I'm glad we caught things early before we got too deep into planning. Our standards are too similar, and the way our curriculum is repetitive, we had to have those conversations about what makes our units different. We were able to focus in on our area and add more to it." Participants mentioned that at first it was hard to give up some of the material that they were used to teaching, however, with the ability to add to the curriculum to make it distinct from what is taught in another grade level made planning for learning more interesting and engaging for participants.

Movement

Some teachers moved to a new grade level team throughout this process. "Moving to a new team was a challenge because you didn't know your team role yet, nor the curriculum." There was also perceived stress or pressure on [veteran teacher] leading a team with three new teachers whom needed coaching as well as familiarize with IB.

Question 5: In what ways has the programme changed your teaching?

Depth

Students are learning deeper skills and problem solving. "We go into things much deeper. We delve deeper into concepts and we are not limited to our curriculum." Participants noted they were able to add to their curriculum, create their own assessments and have more voice and choice in what they teach. "We are more intentional about learning and documenting our learning. We get a bigger picture of what our students understand. At first it was a challenge—it was a lot to add on. We are making it more manageable and now its just how we do things here" commented a participant. Educators noted that they examine the standards more and go in depth to ensure student understanding. Another participant stated "I think that I'm a juicier teacher than I would normally be."

Student Centered

One participant mentioned "I think we are doing a lot of things that are best practice, such as inquiry. We just do what's best for kids." Another teacher said, with tears in her eyes, "I know these kids are going to walk out of [school] better people. I care that a kid is going to be a good citizen. With the action piece—it's not about them. They are thinking about other people and I see a goodness in kids. I hear them talking

differently and they feel different too." The promises of IB to make an impact on the world community is developed and noticed in students.

Question 6: In what ways did your school culture change?

Commitment

At first it took awhile for staff to commit to the program. One participant mentioned "When teachers are not fully on board, it makes it hard for the team." It was mentioned that there were staff members "who weren't all in and they aren't here now, and that's okay." Teacher turn over happened for a variety of reasons throughout the candidacy phase.

Field notes indicate that throughout the process, staff members were asked to see where they were on the 5 point scale of "All in" to "I'll be pursuing other options next year." Staff members mentioned this "temperature check" and that they found themselves moving on the scale each time the questionnaire was sent out. One educator said she found herself "transforming and evolving" through the process:

> [Early on in the IB implementation] I knew it was good in practice and in theory, but I just wasn't there. As the program continued and the staff development continued, I would move myself on the scale...you keep going until it's kind of just what we do now.

This temperature check was beneficial for self-reflection and assisted teachers in helping them gauge their commitment to the programme.

Transformation

Participants mention that "[IB] is just good teaching. It's just part of what we do now." indicating that being IB is part of the school culture. One veteran staff member

stated that "It's nice to do something different and now each year will be different. It's nice to see that we are always changing and always improving." One participant even mentioned she could not imagine teaching at another school now, because she would want to teach the IB way. Many nods of appreciation came with that comment, and smiles were noted at this time.

Connection

Participants discussed that they feel a connection with other teachers because they have insight into what the others are doing. "I can congratulate them on what they are doing and make connections with other teachers and kids." Another staff member noted, "They are more our kids, just not yours or mine" and we have the ability to notice them with the common language of the learner profile. "I'm seeing a lot more learning in the hallways. It's not just good for kids, but its good for me as a teacher."

Having a second language is part of the school culture as well and helps to connect students grades K-5. "I've been trying to use the second language more in my classroom. One day, students started answering math questions in Spanish, so I just went with it. Another day I asked a student to count how many dots there are and she said she could do it in the language she speaks at home." It was mentioned that the IB Programme increased student diversity and with that a cultural appreciation of differences, including additional languages with opportunities to enhance connections.

Growth

"When you go through a big deal—you grow." Participants noted a productive struggle, and in hindsight, found that "It was ok to muddle through something because you'd get better at it. It's not all picture perfect. Yes, it's not easy, it's just that you

learn, and you learn how to trust. You are forced to make a change, and you need to become open-minded."

In regards to professional growth, the IB meetings were noted as "fun" and also as a "bonding time where we can celebrate each other." One participant noted that "we appreciate our culture more and understand the importance of it." Reflecting on the journey, one participant noted "you grew, your team grew. Other schools should really do it. You really learn a lot."

Question 7: What recommendations do you have for schools wishing to implement the programme? What additional supports might have been helpful?

Leadership

A support mentioned as incredibly valuable is to have a strong IB Coordinator. The comments mentioned in previous questions indicate leadership that was available to provide timely professional development, feedback, and opportunities for consistent growth. Consistent facilitation and meeting teams where they needed grew commitment to the programme. Leadership also enhanced accountability structures. When leadership visited classrooms, teachers and students were held accountable for their learning. Having visible leadership in the school challenges educators to utilize the language and practices of the IB.

Allocate Time

An additional structure provided was varied periods of time for teams to collaborate. "Take it slow. We had a lot of time, and additional planning days." Also, allocate subs for time to collaborate with other teachers and provide release time regularly. If the school is allowed an additional year in the candidacy phase, it is strongly

recommended, since a long implementation time can ensure that the programme is
implemented well.

Limit Additional Initiatives

Even though additional time was allotted, it was mentioned that "[the district]
needs to take something off our plates, for example, teacher work days or teacher
meetings." If an additional meeting required by district could be covered in-house by a
teacher expert, this could be seemingly woven into the IB framework and cover both the
district and building requirements, making the initiative not "another thing" but an
enhancement to the programme. An understanding from administration is also helpful in
moving both district and IB initiatives forward.

Limit Class Sizes

A recommendation from participants is to cap the class sizes because the IB
Programme draws in more people. Field notes show the school added over 100 new
students during the course of the candidacy phase, which made classroom management
(grading, conferences, and behavior management) more difficult. Limiting class sizes
would enable teachers to provide more personalized instruction and learning
opportunities for all students.

Phase 2 Summary Analysis

Participants concluded that "I have a sense of pride that we made it through the
other end. It was a lot of work, but now we can see the benefits and it feels good. It
makes it worth it." Additionally, "I feel like we just skimmed the surface and there's so
much more to IB that we need to uncover." This was said in a curious way with a smile,
not fearful or overwhelmed.

Overarching themes that emerged from the focus group interviews were time, collaboration, professional development/deepening learning, leadership and growth. Developing themes are having a common vision, scaffolding, making a difference, process over product, productive struggle, trust and teacher turnover. Due to the emerging themes alignment with the *Coherence Framework* the existing data will be analyzed in correlation with the framework's domains. Themes will be discussed in further analysis in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The conceptual framework in which this study is examined is through the lens of the *Coherence Framework* (Fullan & Quinn, 2016). "[Coherence] involves a combination of a small number of ambitious goals being relentlessly pursued, being vigilant about reducing distractors, helping with professional capacity building, using student and other data transparently for developmental purposes, building in strategies for implementers to learn from each other on an ongoing basis, and marking progress with lots of feedback and supportive intervention" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 7). This framework involves focusing direction, creating collaborative cultures, deepening learning, and securing accountability. At the center of the framework is leadership.

Combined Analysis

The Conceptual Framework is correlated with the IB Standards and Practices in Appendix D. Due to the nature of the correlation, the Framework will provide a guiding design in which the data presented in Chapter 4 is examined and interpreted. The first overarching theme that is examined through the Coherence Lens is Focusing Direction. Background information on the component of the Coherence Framework will be discussed before the combined analysis takes place.

Focusing Direction. Focusing direction, in other terms, involves creating a common vision. This directional vision includes shared purpose, vision, language knowledge and expectations. The Standards and Practices of the PYP involve shaping this common purpose, vision, language and expectations through the Philosophy of the IB PYP. In order to meet the standards and practices concerning philosophy, candidate

schools must create a common vision by aligning their school mission statement to that of the IB. Additionally, a common language base must be adopted to include the terminology of the IB including the transdisciplinary themes, key concepts, approaches to learning, and the attributes of the Learner Profile. The standards and practices set the expectations for the school, creating a sense of urgency to meet these standards, as developed per each school's unique context.

As uncovered in the questionnaire analysis of this study, overwhelming feelings of confusion and despair were noted throughout the thematic analysis. The absence of a common vision was apparent, as participants commented "Am I doing IB the right way?" and noted other statements of confusion.

As the programme evolved, however, participants began to see a difference in their teaching. Teachers commented that they were more energized and excited about teaching. Strengths of the programme highlighted include that IB is a more "comprehensive plan from K-5" indicating the development a common commitment, plan or vision. Teachers enjoyed that "the building is becoming more unified." Summary analysis indicates that creating a common vision takes time and commitment from all stakeholders.

Document analysis from the Report on School Authorization indicate that the school has found a common language with the natural discourse of the Learner Profile within the entire school community to involve staff students administration and parents. The presence of a common language, as stated earlier by Fullan & Quinn, is a component of building a common vision and achieving coherence.

As explained by focus groups "I think it was that it all went together. I didn't see it at the time, but now I see that I didn't need to see that yet. I just needed to see what I needed to see at the time." This statement as further discussed by the focus groups indicate that the vision was there, but it may have been muddled or unclear. The building leadership and IB coordinator had a common vision and were working to engage participants in the common vision through the productive struggle of an inquiry-based, constructivist learning design. Over time, however, participants began to see the entire picture and enhanced in their commitment to the IB, creating a common vision that is now part of the school culture. "We are more intentional about learning and documenting our learning. We get a bigger picture of what our students understand. At first it was a challenge—it was a lot to add on. We are making it more manageable, and now its just how we do things here." Creating a collective vision, involving all stakeholders, takes time in a constructivist based design because a personal vision is being created, piece by piece, over time.

Creating Collaborative Cultures. Creating collaborative cultures involves using the group to change the group. It is a requirement of the PYP to create structures for vertical and horizontal alignment, as led by the School's Pedagogical Leadership Team.

Capacity building is a key level for developing coherence because as knowledge and skills are being developed, the collaborative culture is deepened, shared meaning is clarified, and commitment is reinforced. Capacity refers to the capability of the individual or organization to make the changes required and involves the development of knowledge, skills, and commitments. Collective capacity building involves the increased ability of educators at all levels of the

system to make the instructional changes required to raise the bar and close the

gap for all students. (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 57)

Through the development of the Pedagogical Leadership Team, capacity is built within a

school. Pedagogical Leaders are empowered to contribute to the decision making

responsibilities of the school.

A commitment to collaborative planning is central to the philosophy of the PYP.

The PYP coordinator has a pivotal role in this process, taking responsibility for

ensuring the pedagogical aspects are discussed; information is disseminated; and

the programme is planned, taught and assessed collaboratively. Together, with

other members of the school's pedagogical leadership team, the PYP coordinator

is responsible for the development and whole school implementation of the

programme (International Baccalaureate, 2013, p. 9)

The Pedagogical Leadership Team enhances accountability and ensures that the

requirements of the programme that are executed. This collaborative, collective capacity

builds teacher leaders and ownership in the school. The Coordinator, along with the

Pedagogical Leadership Team, has the ability to secure the common vision and deepen

the learning along while securing accountability amongst the entire school.

As stated in this study, questionnaire analysis indicated that over time, more

teachers enjoyed the collaborative component of the IB and felt it was essential to

moving forward. In the 2nd questionnaire, teachers mentioned that they were excited

about the "collaboration and cohesiveness amongst the entire school." Field note

analysis indicated that over time, more structures were put into place in order to provide

educators time to collaborate as grade level teams. Teams were allotted time during their

PLCs weekly for IB planning time, facilitated every other week by the IB Coordinator.

Time was additionally provided at the end of every staff development session for team

planning in regards to the new content that was being learned. When teams needed it, the

coordinator would cover classrooms in order to provide release time for grade level teams

to collaborate. Additional time was given during whole staff meetings for vertical

collaboration and time to have discussions with specialists about transdisciplinary

learning.

Findings as reported in the consultant report included there was "dedicated

meeting time provided for teachers' collaborative planning." Additionally, the teachers'

timetables were "reviewed in order to establish collaborative planning practices that

fulfill the requirements for the successful implementation of the programme' that is used

regularly and systematically for collaborative planning and reflection."

Focus groups reported that time for vertical collaboration enabled teams to make

their units distinct from one another but also connect, providing a scaffolded experience

for students. For teachers, this meant having the ability to add to their curriculum,

enhance and deepen the learning. One participant commented "Together we were

stronger." This sense of togetherness builds a strong culture of collaboration, which is

essential for achieving coherence.

Deepening Learning. A school wishing to implement the International

Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme needs to make a commitment to ongoing

teacher professional development, to include authorized IB trainings for all certified staff

in addition to in-house development of the programme. "Deeper learning is the ability to

understand concepts, think critically, solve problems and apply learning in authentic

ways" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p.92). The Primary Years Programme, as previously stated, brings a common language, a new curricular framework, and an inquiry-based teaching design foreign to many educators when first implementing the programme. This newness enhances teacher's ability to think more critically about the standards, curriculum and pedagogy. In a time of change, however, the precise training should be immediately applicable and executable in order to become sustainable. "All training should be coherent, personal, and continuous, but this is especially vital to improvements that ask educators not just to change their materials and teaching techniques but to change their basic beliefs and the way they conceptualize their work" (Evans, 1996, p. 64). The continuous professional development required by the standards and practices of the IB enhance constructive meaning-making, thus impacting educator beliefs and ways of teaching. Studies by Calvert (2016) also indicate that the standards for professional learning call for development that is "ongoing, embedded, connected to practice, aligned to school and district goals, and collaborative" (p. 52). Job-embedded professional development, immediately connected to practice, designed in a collaborative environment can deepen learning for both teachers and students alike.

This study's questionnaire analysis provided an insight into the professional learning that was consistent, scaffolded, and had timely application. Deepening Learning about the IB Programme had been provided monthly during the interested phase, prior to and during Candidacy. Participants had monthly staff development meetings focused on one component of the IB. Participants were able to apply this to their prior knowledge of curricular content. Field notes indicated there were regular and systematic professional learning opportunities provided to staff. Whole staff had the opportunity to attend

Category 1 training together off-site in order to learn about the IB, and then had an

additional 2.5 paid days to work on writing unit planners.

Focus groups discussed the aspect of scaffolding when talking about professional

development. They mention that the whole concept of the IB was broken into little

pieces: "the support we got was like a ladder; it was just enough and in increments that

made sense." Educators mentioned that deepening learning was so fun and engaging that

they wanted to learn more. For teachers who were ready to take the next step, there were

additional opportunities provided to deepen learning, such as optional book studies,

webinars, and resources sent out and posted regularly. Analysis of the three components

indicate that learning needed to be modeled, absorbed in small doses that could be

applied immediately in unit planners and enacted with students in the present in order to

really develop an understanding for the component(s) of IB.

Securing Accountability. None of the other pillars of the *Coherence Framework*

can be achieved if structures for securing accountability are not met. "If you want

effective accountability, you need to develop conditions that maximize internal

accountability--conditions that increase the likelihood that people will be accountable to

themselves and to the group. Second, you need to frame and reinforce internal

accountability with external accountability--standards, expectations, transparent data, and

selective interventions" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p. 109). As uncovered in this study, the

Coordinator, as a non-evaluative member of the staff, acts as a facilitator of the

programme, with the responsibility of ensuring programme implementation within and

throughout the school. Scaffolded experiences were facilitated by the Coordinator as

teachers learned and grew through the continued implementation of the PYP.

Questionnaire analysis did not provide an insight into securing accountability, so field notes were examined to see what forms of securing accountability were in place throughout the candidacy phase to ensure the sustainability of the programme. Field notes indicated there was regular and systematic team reflection opportunities where planners would be completed as a team. Artifact collection would also be completed at this time, ensuring that all parties were documenting valuable learning experiences, formative and summative assessments, and student action. These artifacts were then put together in an electronic collection as well as a binder for each team to refer to during the authorization visit.

Focus groups discuss that these meetings had internal accountability structures put in place (accountability from team) as well as external accountability (Coordinator). The focus groups also mentioned that the building principal was also an essential component for securing accountability because the principal was continuously in classrooms, asking teachers and students about their units of inquiry and what was happening in the classroom. This visibility of the principal as well as the follow-up conversations that were had with individual teachers ensured the programme was being carried out with fidelity to the building plans.

Leadership. Leadership can ease the transition of change by providing teachers consistent structures for support. Leaders have the ability to meet the teams where they are, acknowledge confusion and stress, and support through a scaffolded model. Creating a shared vision by interpreting the standards and practices as best seen fit for the school makes a nebulous concept such as the PYP framework a more tangible structure for teachers. Strong relationships must be established before implementing change

initiatives. Starting with relationships first when implementing change assists teachers in achieving their goals.

The Role of the Principal in the PYP. Principal leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the school culture and driving organizational changes that ultimately lead to a more effective learning environment. Leadership for school improvement must be anchored in the school's academic mission and must be clearly communicated to all stakeholders in order to influence the school community (Murphy, Elliott, Goldring, & Porter, 2007). To truly shape and reform the school's educational culture, school leaders must be knowledgeable and inspirational to gain the following and support of the entire school community. During a time of change, such as adopting a programme of such as the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme, transformational leadership can assist in creating staff commitment, supporting staff, and maintaining the building culture throughout times of change.

The Role of the Coordinator in the PYP. In order to sustain a sizeable transformation such as the IB, the IBO recommends a distributive leadership style with the Head of School (principal) and the IB Coordinator leading the school in joint efforts (International Baccalaureate, 2013). Evidence suggests that distributed leadership is one potential contributor to positive change and transformation in school systems (Elmore 2004; Fullan 2006; Spillane 2006; Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007). The coordinator is meant to serve as a liaison between the IBO and school, as well as a facilitator of the programme implementation and is in no way evaluative of teachers in implementing the programme. The coordinator is instead seen as a supportive coach facilitating the development of the programme through the development and support of

the teachers throughout the school. Coordinator responsibilities include but are not limited to documentation, professional development, resource management and communication. Job descriptions vary as it is a requirement of each school to create their individual PYP Coordinator's job description based off of multiple resources, including IB handbooks, sample job descriptions, and the buildings' needs.

The coordinator meets with various teams in the building in order to build a collaborative culture. "A commitment to collaborative planning is central to the philosophy of the PYP. The PYP coordinator has a pivotal role in this process, taking responsibility for ensuring that pedagogical aspects are discussed, information is disseminated, and the programme is planned, taught and assessed collaboratively" (International Baccalaureate, 2013, p. 9). Teachers learn best from each other and can plan for students best with time allocated for collaborative planning initiatives. Building collaborative cultures thus secures accountability.

The Role of Pedagogical Leadership in the PYP. The PYP promotes distributed and collaborative leadership practices. Collaborative leadership, as discussed by Eilers & Camancho (2007) "emphasized an equal partnership in the process of leadership, acknowledging professionalism, knowledge and skill of others" (p. 617). Collaborative leadership is seen in the cooperative efforts of the Pedagogical Leadership Team in the PYP. Collaborative leadership has three key qualities: creating learning communities among the teachers, demonstrating his own form of collaborative leadership by learning through collaboration, and using knowledge of and access to practise based on evidence (Eilers & Camancho, 2007). Collaborative efforts increase a teacher's capacity to lead through empowering decision making abilities within the educational setting.

The IB recommends that a Pedagogical Leadership Team is established in order to make effective decisions through a democratic approach and is "crucial to the school wide commitment to change" (IBO, 2007b, p. 12). The Pedagogical Leadership team should comprise of a balanced view of grade levels, expertise and should include representatives of each teaching group. Tasks of the pedagogical leadership team include but are not limited to: policy writing, creating whole school structures and expectations, and implementing the standards and practices of the PYP.

> The model of shared pedagogical leadership that a school decides upon needs to be communicated throughout the school community. This will help the leadership team to establish objectives, delineate individual responsibilities, and articulate the responsibilities within the team. This transparency will alleviate misunderstandings, clarify channels of communication, prevent redundancy of effort, and save time. More importantly, it will project and promote a common understanding of the standards and practices of the PYP, and of their impact on the culture of school. Thus, the pedagogical leadership team is pivotal in shaping and strengthening the school community, particularly important in a time of significant change. (IBO, 2007b, p.5)

Pedagogical leadership teams are diverse in nature and most commonly have equal representation from all subgroups of teachers within the building as well as the building principal and coordinator. Teachers, as representatives of their teams, are involved in the decision making process, speak for their teams, communicate initiatives, and take charge of the cause. "Teachers involved in site-based decision making, for example, may

perceive higher levels of congruence between their goals and those of the school organization" (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002, p. 38).

Through this distributive model, individuals are tasked with communicating back to their individual teams, seeking feedback in a smaller setting, and bringing questions, comments and concerns back to the team for review. Perspectives are examined, changes are made, practices and policies are revised and finalized, and whole school initiatives are established.

> During the preliminary stages of becoming an IB World School, much of the energy of the pedagogical leadership team will be spent on bringing about institutional change that impacts on all the functions that take place in a learning community. Dread, inertia, fatigue, cynicism, lack of insight, and even unbridled enthusiasm need to be managed. It is a time of uneasiness--full of new expectations and compromises--but it can also feel like a breath of fresh air. The effect that a commitment to implement the PYP has on a school culture is substantial in all cases and breathtaking in some. (IBO, 2007b, p. 23)

Research by Graetz (2000) presents distributed leadership as a positive channel for change. He notes that "organizations most successful in managing the dynamics of loose-tight working relationships meld strong personalized leadership at the top with distributed leadership" (p. 6) Rozenholts (1989) argues even more forcibly for teacher collegiality and collaboration as a means of generating positive change in schools. Her research concludes that effective schools have tighter congruence between values, norms and behaviors of principals and teachers and that this is more likely to result in positive school performance (Harris, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, & Hopkins, 2007). This is very

different from the traditional managerial and evaluative role of the principal and may possibly enhance the school culture during times of change. Lee & Li (2015) discuss that the key to the success of school education depends on a good quality school culture, since school culture influences what people pay attention to (focus), how they identify with the school (commitment), how hard they work (motivation) and the degree to which they achieve their goals (productivity). While implementing the IB, exceptional leadership traits are necessary for a principal and coordinator to not only create the change, but to execute initiatives in a timely manner with the intention of sustaining long term initiative.

In this study, questionnaire analysis provided an insight into leadership throughout the candidacy phase. Positive comments were stated about the Coordinator and how staff development and team facilitation meetings were essential to moving the programme forward. In a non-evaluative role, educators felt free to speak their concerns to a peer and work through difficulties without seeming to be against the programme or seeming inadequate to an evaluator.

Field notes indicated that a Coordinator was appointed informally during the interested phase and formally during the first full year of Candidacy. The Pedagogical Leadership Team was established during the first full year of Candidacy in order to develop structures of sustainability for the programme and create a distributed leadership model where all voices had the opportunity to be heard.

Focus groups discussed the Coordinator as being "crucial" to implementing the programme. The coordinator provided regular feedback and facilitation of team meetings and was said to be "objective" and move the team forward. Teams also mentioned that the Coordinator "pushed back when she got pushed back" helping teams grow. "I think

that it helped us be more positive when [the coordinator was] understanding of our needs." When the teams needed time, the coordinator gave them time and "went above and beyond" when it came to moving the whole initiative towards coherence.

Discussion

In revisiting the central phenomenon of this study, educators describe the process of implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme as challenging to implement, but rewarding for both students and teachers alike. Strengths of the program involve the inquiry-based curricular framework and the intentional character education of the learner profile. Participants in both the questionnaire as well as the focus group interviews indicated that the inquiry-based framework teaches students how to think, and the intentional character education with the Learner Profile teaches students how to be good humans.

Continuous professional development was also noted as a strength. Once participants began to understand the scaffolded nature of professional learning opportunities, they were able to see the connection between the components of the IB and how they functioned together. By deepening learning, participants felt like they could manage IB and the additional components. A common understanding, or vision, had to be collectively constructed through a productive struggle. Since the PYP builds on each school's unique contexts, educators involved in the candidacy period had to figure out what worked in their individual school setting instead of simply replicating what another school created. This created voice, choice and ownership, or teacher agency, and enhanced the IB implementation to become a part of the school culture.

Leadership was a strength of the programme implementation at this school because a culture of trust and systems of accountability were created early on in the form of the Coordinator and Pedagogical Leadership Team. Building leadership had support moving forward with the programme, and had an understanding of the IB as a priority to be made, thus additional funds for planning days were worked into the school's budget for teachers to be able to collaboratively plan, write, and reflect for an additional day(s) each year.

Time was noted as a strength as far as having time to implement throughout the interested and candidacy phases but it was also noted as a challenge in regards to finding time throughout the day to plan and collaborate with teachers. Some teachers liked the additional planning days at the end of each school years, yet others would have rather built it in to the regular contracted school year. Regardless of which was preferred, the additional days were extremely important in creating, writing, and revising unit planners.

Challenges faced throughout the candidacy phase were time and workload. Teachers, however, became more positive in achieving their additional tasks when structures for time were woven into the school day. When the coordinator covered classes in order to provide release time for teachers to collaboratively plan during the school day, teachers became more appreciative of their time, more productive with their workload, and achieved a greater cohesion and alignment as a team.

Teachers did perceive a personal and cultural transformation throughout this process. They perceived a personal transformation throughout the candidacy phase. As indicated in focus group interviews, teachers felt themselves increasing in commitment to the programme over time. It eventually became part of the school culture, and was

thought of as "it's just what we do now." Comments on the initial questionnaire became more positive over time and less concerns came up in the written narrative.

Recommendations

Create Structures that Support Time

IB has been perceived as requiring substantial preparation for teachers as well as being highly challenging to teach (Culross & Tarver, 2007). "Time to collaboratively plan is essential when implementing transdisciplinary teaching and learning" (Savage & Drake, 2016, p. 15). Making time for teachers to collaboratively plan is essential in the adoption of the PYP. Teachers tend to feel more successful when they have had sufficient time to plan and prepare to execute lessons and craft engaging experiences for their students.

There are many facets to consider when implementing the IB PYP. In order to enhance school culture, meet the standards and practices of the PYP, and sustain the programme, teachers should be allocated sufficient collaborative planning time in order to restructure their curriculum into 6 transdisciplinary units, find conceptual connections across the curriculum, incorporate approaches to learning into the classroom and teach character education through the Learner Profile. Time can be difficult to find in a school day. Recommendations from the IB involve: scheduling early release or late start days so that teams can plan together; build time into the weekly and yearly calendars; build in time for planning together during orientation days; allocate additional funds for substitute teachers to provide release time for teams' collaborative planning and reflection; organize staff retreats away from school for collaborative planning and reflection; alternate the focus of staff meetings; release some teachers during assemblies; members of the

leadership team cover classes providing release time for teachers; support face to face planning with technology (International Baccalaureate, 2007b). It is important for each school to find structures of time that will work for their school and build these structures into the implementation plan.

Provide Continuous, Scaffolded Professional Learning Experiences

Professional educators are also lifelong learners. As best practice teaches us, it is important to scaffold material for students so they have the ability to build on prior learning. Educators, as well, need to have scaffolded learning experiences that build off one another so they have something to latch on to, making learning stick. Having continuous professional learning deepens educators' understanding of the IB. When educators have time in the professional learning experience to apply their knowledge to their classrooms, they can successfully implement an initiative as vast as the IB PYP and create a sustainable programme.

Appoint Strong Coordinator with Sufficient Release Time

Within the IB, a Coordinator is seen more as a coach as opposed to an administrator. It is highly recommended that the Coordinator does not take on any form of evaluation as it can change the relationship between the teachers and coordinator. "As trust develops, organizational members become increasingly confident that they can take risks and experiment with new ideas without fear of reprisal" (Dee, Henkin, & Pell, 2002, p. 40). The Coordinator, as a facilitator, develops trust in teams, helps coach teams through the process of implementation, questions to expand thinking and moves each team forward. Scaffolded experiences can be facilitated by the Coordinator as teachers learn and grow through the continued implementation of the PYP. This scaffolded

facilitation helps to create commitment and enhance a positive school culture through empowering teachers and building educator confidence through times of change.

The IB promotes collaboration between teachers and the PYP Coordinator. This culture of collaboration involves mutual support, offering constructive feedback, developing common goals, and setting realistic limits of what can be achieved (Pepper, Hamilton & Thomas, 2002). Collaboration can impact the school culture. When teachers feel like they have a sense of ownership in school initiatives, they feel empowered to make a positive change. This empowerment increases teacher confidence and self-efficacy. This collaboration can enhance a teacher's abilities by helping them become more aware of their practices and strive to improve upon them. "Collaborative consultation can promote an inclusive school culture if the concept of inclusion embraces how professionals collaboratively examine their practice, strategies, and values" (Von Ahlefeld Nisser, 2017, p. 874). Facilitation, on the part of the Coordinator, can help to build an inclusive school culture and build consistency throughout the school.

It is important that school leadership focuses on the relationships between staff members in order to increase the positive school culture during a time of change. Leadership needs to be transparent in expectations, and transform the school through a gradual release of responsibility through collaborative and distributed leadership practices. Enhancing leaderships' understanding of the change process is vital in developing understanding of change processes. Recommendations include training building leadership (Head of School, Coordinator and Pedagogical Leadership Team) in organizational change. Book studies of experts in organizational change, implementation dips, and enhancing school culture can help building leadership put structures into place

prior to implementation. A well-established, positive school culture and climate, enhanced with strong relationships can transform school change, sustain a program through difficult times, and promote the programme and its effectiveness within the entire school community.

Implications for Future Research

Studying teacher perceptions of strengths and challenges during a time of change could be generalizable to any school or programme undergoing change initiatives. Possible thoughts for future research include validating the generalizability of this study to other PYP schools worldwide to see if their experiences, structures, strategies and systems of support were similar to those uncovered in this study. Comparative analysis could also be performed to include public, private, magnet, and charter school experiences. Since this study could be replicated in any school setting undergoing a change initiative, future research in a differing program could be performed to determine if similar results are found, which would enhance the validity of this study.Additional supports, structures and strategies could also be uncovered throughout future research.

Conclusion

"Change is a process, not an event" (Fullan & Quinn, 2016, p.27). Developing a leadership team with common vision, structures embedded into the school day in order to provide time and collaborative opportunities for professional learning, enhanced with relational support and structures for accountability will build coherence, thus leading to a sustainable programme. The major factor is gradual change. According to Reeves (2009) "policy change without cultural change is an exercise in futility and frustration" (p. 37). A culture that values change, that understands the importance of changing not

only the framework or curriculum for what they teach, but also changing teaching styles and belief systems is a challenging task that takes time. "Sustainable change, therefore, is a function not of a willful authority figure but of a shared value system" (Reeves, 2009, p. 52). "Sustainable change, after all, depends not upon compliance with external mandates or blind adherence to regulation, but rather upon the pursuit of the greater good" (Reeves, 2009, p.125). The IB Learner Profile has been stated to be a "beacon of hope and humanity" (Walker, Lee, & Panjwani, 2014, p.11), a greater good that will impact our futures. Creating good humans capable of making change in our world is what our future needs and depends on, which is worth the time and effort upon any educator willing and wanting to make a difference in our world.

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APPENDIX A

STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

IB Staff Survey

Date Specified

* Required

What are you most excited about when thinking about becoming an IB World School? *

Your answer

What are you most concerned about when thinking about becoming an IB World School? *

Your answer

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

IRB # 657-19-EX

Informed Consent for ███████████

Date: September 11ᵗʰ, 2019

Dear Educator,

My name is Nicole Beins and I am the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme Coordinator at
████████ Elementary. I am taking courses to obtain a doctorate in Educational Leadership at the University of
Nebraska at Omaha. As part of my coursework I am researching how teachers describe the process of
implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme during the candidacy phase in a public
school setting.

For this study, participants will be asked to take part in focus group interview sessions outside of the school day
hours. During these interviews, a series of open ended questions will be asked about the implementation
process. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed for analysis. Upon analysis, the findings will be
presented back to you to ensure the validity of the statements.

Although there will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study, the researcher will learn about how
teacher perceptions change throughout the process of implementing the International Baccalaureate Primary
Years Programme. This research could benefit other schools worldwide in programme implementation.

There are no anticipated risks in this study. Your identities will remain anonymous and there will be no
individual identifiers attached to your participation in this study. Findings will be generalized in the written
report. Upon completion of the report, the recordings and any written data will be destroyed.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to refuse participation altogether or discontinue it at any time. The
choice to participate or not to participate will not impact any relationship with the researcher, nor with the school
site, district, or affiliated institutions.

Signature _____   Date _____

6001 Dodge Street | Omaha, NE 68182
(402) 554.2800 | Fax: (402) 554.2722

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

- What supports are provided to educators during the candidacy period of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme?

- How have these supports impacted teaching and learning in the classroom?

- What strengths did you find in the programme implementation throughout the candidacy phase?

- What challenges did you experience in the implementation of the programme throughout the candidacy phase?

- In what ways did your school culture change?

- In what ways has the programme changed your teaching?

- What recommendations do you have for schools wishing to implement the programme?

    - What additional supports might have been helpful?

APPENDIX D

COHERENCE FRAMEWORK

Coherence Framework Component Correlating to IB Standards and Practices.	
Coherence Framework Component	Correlating IB Standards & Practices
Focusing Direction - Purpose Driven - Goals that Impact - Clarity of Strategy - Change Leadership	Standard A: The school's educational beliefs and values reflect IB philosophy. Practice A.1: The school's published statements of mission and philosophy align with those of the IB.
Deepening Learning - Clarity of Learning Goals - Precision in Pedagogy - Shift Practices Through Capacity Building	Practice B2.3: The school ensures that teachers and administrators receive IB-recognized professional development.
Collaborative Cultures - Culture of Growth - Learning Leadership - Capacity Building - Collaborative Work	Practice A.3.b: The school as a community of learners is committed to a collaborative approach to curriculum development. Practice B2.4: The school provides dedicated time for teachers' collaborative planning and reflection.

	Standards C1: Collaborative Planning: Collaborative planning and reflection supports the implementation of the IB programme(s).
	Practice C1.1.a: The programme of inquiry and all corresponding unit planners are the product of sustained collaborative work involving all the appropriate staff.
	Practice C1.2: Collaborative planning and reflection takes place regularly and systematically.
	Practice C1.3: Collaborative planning and reflection addresses vertical and horizontal articulation.
	Practice C1.4: Collaborative planning and reflection ensures that all teachers have

	an overview of students' learning experiences.
	Practice C1.5: Collaborative planning and reflection is based on agreed expectations for student learning.
	Practice C1.6: Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students' learning needs and styles.
	Practice C1.7: Collaborative planning and reflection is informed by assessment of student work and learning.
	Practice C1.8: Collaborative planning and reflection recognizes that all teachers are responsible for language development of students.
	Practice C1.9: Collaborative planning and reflection addresses the IB learner profile attributes.

Securing Accountability
 	
    • Internal Accountability
 	
    • External Accountability
	Practice C1.1.b: Planning at the school makes use of the PYP planner and planning process across the curriculum and by all teachers.
	
	Practice C1.4.b: The school ensures that PYP planners are coherent records of student learning.
	
	Practice C2.1.d: There is documented evidence that the curriculum developed addresses the five essential elements of the PYP.
	
	Practice C2.9: There is a system for regular review and refinement of the programme of inquiry, individual units of inquiry, and the subject-specific scope and sequences.
	
	Practice C3.2.a: The school ensures that inquiry is used across the curriculum and by all teachers.

	Practice C4.1.b: Assessment addresses all the essential elements of the programme. Practice C4.1.c: The school provides evidence of student learning over time across the curriculum.
Leadership	Standard B1: Leadership and Structure: The School's leadership and administrative structures ensure the implementation of the IB programme. Practice B1.1 The school has developed systems to keep the governing body informed about the ongoing implementation and development of the programme(s). Practice B1.2: The school has developed a governance and leadership structure that supports the implementation of the programme(s). Practice B1.2.a: The responsibility for pedagogical leadership within the school

	is a shared responsibility, including at least the PYP coordinator and the primary school principal. Practice B1.2.b: The governing body places the responsibility for the implementation of the Primary Years Programme on the pedagogical leadership team. Practice B1.3: The head of school/school principal and programme coordinator demonstrate pedagogical leadership aligned with the philosophy of the programme(s). Practice B1.4: The school has appointed a programme coordinator with a job description, release time, support and resources to carry out the responsibilities of the position.