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Learning to Think Like a Leader is Career-Sustaining

By Douglas Fisher, Nancy Frey and Ian Pumpian

We have been the co-administrators of Health Sciences High & Middle College, in San Diego, California, for 11 years and counting. Our school enrolls over 700 students, 80% of whom qualify for free lunch (a measure of poverty). The school is located in an economically stressed area with a high crime rate compared to surrounding communities. We are a health-career focused school and our students have internship opportunities weekly, starting in 9th grade. We also offer community college classes on our campus and nearly 75% of our students graduate with 9 or more college credits. There is much to be proud of at HSHMC and there is much to worry about.

According to the National Education Policy Center (Fuller, 2012), only 27% of high school principals remain on the job for more than five years. That means that nearly three-fourths of the leaders of secondary schools leave before they have had a chance to create positive changes in the culture and climate of the school. Policy and research advocates suggest that it takes upwards of seven years to create lasting systems change (Fink & Brayman, 2006). Poignantly, we know that it is much faster to cause harm to the climate of the school. But to change the very nature of the way school is conducted, whether that be the integration of new technology, or discipline policies, or collaborative learning structures or new assessment systems, the time required exceeds the tenure of the vast majority of school leaders.

To maintain our focus to lead HSHMC year after year, to maintain the drive, energy, motivation, and commitments required a new way of thinking. Several years ago, with a group of colleagues from other school systems and universities, we engaged in a series of exercises and discussions about the role of the school leader. We identified a number of actions and behaviors but more importantly, we identified ways of thinking that effective leaders develop. We needed to think differently, and that has made a difference. As we reflect on our decade of site-based leadership, we realized that the thinking habits of leaders is key to sustaining true leadership. We will explore the five types of thinking that we identified and then turn our attention to the ways that we use this time of thinking in our leadership of the school.

Five Types of Leadership Thinking

We have identified five non-mutually exclusive areas of thinking focus. Of course, they each impact other types of thinking. We see systems thinking as the organizational tool that holds the others together. However, we have found it useful to separate these types of thinking so that we can develop our skills and provide each other with feedback that is humane and growth-producing. The types of thinking that have

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editor's comments

Dear Colleagues,

I hope you enjoyed the excitement and energy generated around the 52nd Annual Conference. Seeing old friends, remembering others, celebrating milestones and achievements as well as meeting the next generation of leaders for international schools was uplifting. Going to the UN was a highlight for me, what were highlights for you?

One of the curiosities that has emerged in my own work and in the work of others is how we sustain leadership. We spend a great deal of time discussing the skill sets, how you get to be a leader in your school or region but we spend a lot less time discussing how one sustains the capacity, interest and abilities required while being a leader. What do excellent leaders do to nurture themselves? How do leaders find the strength or capacity to lead; some for over thirty or forty years in our field. What do they draw upon to rebuild and maintain their spirit?

In one of my favorite blogs by Sue Brightly, *Cornell Sustainability* <sustainability.cornell.edu>, she discusses the notion of personal sustainability. She defines sustainability as the process of supporting a system that doesn't deplete or damage it over time. She gives a good example of some of the days I experience, perhaps you do too, "imagine someone who is always working long hours, constantly checking mobile devices, engaged in a stressful environment that in the long term *might* result in higher income or better career opportunities." From a sustainability standpoint, it is like eating fast-food, losing sleep, missing exercise and being spiritually, physically, emotionally and intellectually depleted! This is not a good recipe for sustainability or for leadership. No matter how invincible we think we are, we cannot drain our personal capacity to the extent we have nothing more to give.

For this issue, we are drawing from wisdom in the past through excerpts of Elsa Lamb's columns in *InterED*. Her lifelong legacy and commitment to international schools is evidenced in her reflections. She also left us some tips for sustainability. We also solicited an interview with a 35+ year veteran of international schools as seen through a conversation with his son who seeks to become a school leader in international schools. Our research colleagues from San Diego State University shared their research that reveals ways of thinking that engender longevity for leaders. Other authors examine the development of trust, the development of sustainable pipelines; evaluation of leaders; and research on the home teacher connection. Cary Reid's Keith D. Miller Innovative Award winner speech is included for those of you who might have missed his presentation in 2017. Closing out this issue are thoughts on leadership, the A/OS Advisory Board and one of our most popular features; the great work of GIN.

As you think about the things, people, places or activities that provide sustainability in your life also think about sharing those 'nuggets' and insights with the next generation of leaders. Finding ways to recharge, unplug, preserve and conserve your capacities as a leader is instrumental in effective leadership. All of the research on how to become a leader is moot if you cannot figure out how to stay in leadership as a healthy, positive and willing participant in the international schools.

Warmly,

Bev Shaklee

Beverly Shaklee, bshaklee@gmu.edu,
Editor

With thanks to Betsy Scotto-Lavino, graduate research assistant, Center for International Education, George Mason University.

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I am writing this just about one month after our wonderful 52nd Conference and Expo in New York City.

Once again I would like to thank Yolanda, the AAIE Team, our Conference Advisory Committee and the AAIE Board of Trustees for their passionate engagement, planning and expertise in making the 52nd Conference such a wonderful collaborative learning event for all of us. I would also like to thank all of our many sponsors and vendors for their loyal engagement with international education and an especial thank you to those who came in with us for the first time this year. A final thank you, of course to all of our AAIE speakers, attendees, and strand leaders.

This was a different conference this year, a different format and we wanted to engage in real work at the conference. The idea being is that this work will continue in some of the strands this year and inform our planning for the 53rd Conference in San Francisco in February 2019.

The theme of this year's conference was Leaders United: Transforming our World Together.

Thank you for completing your conference feedback survey. We use this feedback to improve our services and conference for next year. Your feedback over the last two years led us to a new model for our 52nd Conference in NYC. Let us know what you thought of it!

In NYC at the UN and on Times Square we talked about shifting the old fashioned paradigm of education from teacher led to student driven, thus providing our students with real world opportunities to create, collaborate, innovate and solve the issues and problems that they care about. This idea of learning for action and impact—a way of learning, a mindset and way of being in the world that our students will carry forward to their colleges, workplaces and future lives.

We talked about building the systems and cultures of practice in our schools to get at this. There was much talk about the two hundred year-old systems of education we have inherited that were designed for a post-World War II industrialized society that really no longer exists. We talked about the single biggest challenge being the shift in mindset and practice of ourselves, our teachers and our parent communities as our mindsets and ways of being in the world were, indeed, shaped by those last century systems.

There was one strand that focused on the human side of these systemic changes we need to make. That we need to seek those vocational educators for whom this great work is their way of life and way of being. We discussed the need to value our grow our educators professionally, that we value them and that they need to see their career progression as a clear path in our schools. The way in which we recruit and onboard our professionals to get at this creative, collaborative, innovative mindset—one which puts the students and the students' choices, questions and explorations at the forefront of their pedagogical practice was much debated. The conclusion: if we can do this with our professional educators, our ability to not only recruit and grow our professionals, but also retain them, will be markedly enhanced.

AAIE is the place where we can come together to creatively collaborate, collide and discuss the work that matters most to us all.

The systemic changes we are talking about lead to learning for action and impact becoming central to our schools, our schools becoming schools of purpose where our faculty model lives of purpose and it becomes our students' way of being in the world. We shared exemplars and ideas for student driven social activism, social entrepreneurship and seeking the win-win for the community from both the societal and economic standpoints. Making the business case. If we could do this we would then truly articulate the real value add of what our schools bring to the table for our students and families and that we, collectively, are making a positive difference in the world.

We talked about ensuring our professional learning for our adults is based on best practice and research and models the type of learning activities we would be engaging in with our students. The idea of adult learners being coaches and being coached—just the way a truly great teacher does with a class or team of students. We talked about the power of Executive Coaching that would allow us as leaders, and our leadership teams to become the highest performing leadership teams we can grow and engender in our schools.

We also talked about the role for AAIE in helping us, as leaders, our teams and our communities transform our practice to become the most impactful collection of international schools and educators on earth. AAIE is the place where we can come together to creatively collaborate, collide and discuss the work that matters most to us all.

It is the place where we can bring the best and brightest of vendors, products and support services and organizations together to engage in this work with us. It is where we come together to honor and celebrate colleagues and their contribution to our industry. It is the place where we remember and honor those giants upon whose shoulders we stand. It is the place where we renew old friendships and connect with, network and welcome new friends. It is our extended family.

I am delighted to be able to, once again, formally welcome Mark Ulfers as our next Executive Director. Mark will be taking over the reins in August 1 of this school year. I am also honored to be able to thank, once again, our outgoing Executive Director Yolanda Murphy-Barrena, for her three years of tireless service on our behalf. Thank you Yolanda!

Best regards for the rest of the semester and thank you for your work for our international school students, families, faculties and communities. Together we can transform our world.

Kevin Glass is President, AAIE Board of Trustees and Headmaster of Atlanta International School, kglass@aischool.org

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Dear Colleagues,

At the recent 52nd AAIE Conference: *Leaders United – Transforming Our World Together*, we explored the importance of collaborative and inclusive leadership and celebrated the unique contributions of our diverse community. Our Opening Session that took place in the United Nations was simply electric…with the historic meeting space of the General Assembly buzzing with the passion and hope of over 600 participants who were excited to renew their commitment to fostering communities of peace and learning.

The urgency of our work as leaders in shaping the next generation of leaders was celebrated and reinforced by the messages of Isha Sesay, Homa Tavangar and Will Richardson. Attendees spent time in deep conversations at the 52nd on how we push our schools and each other, to stay dynamic and relevant for the learning of tomorrow's learners today. During his *2018 International Superintendent of the Year* address, Dr. Paul Fochtman summed this up well when he said, "Let us find a way to implement a curriculum and a culture that helps our students mature into individuals who can heal the divisions that continue to splinter our world."

I would like to thank our members for working together so beautifully to make the 52nd a truly memorable and meaningful global homecoming. The high quality sessions, dynamic panels, engaging deep dive *Solution Sessions* and inspiring keynotes were the collaborative fruit of so many AAIE community member's hard work and willingness to share, sponsor and engage.

May your work and that of our colleagues around the world always contribute to the healing of divisions, the open sharing of resources and the development of knowledge toward learning, leadership and the betterment of humanity.

The theme of *United Leaders* who are *Transforming our World Together*, continues in this edition of *InterED* and will no doubt echo in conversations and practice within our global community well into the future. Please reach out to thank our wonderful editor Bev, and the many, many members who contributed the excellent content in this edition for their time, passion and commitment to the advancement of international education.

Although this will be my last *InterED* Message as the Executive Director, I assure you of the organization's commitment to keep pursuing the modernization and optimization of AAIE to best serve you, our members and our mission. Dr. Beverly Shaklee is staying on as the editor and will to ensure this is a uniquely international and high quality collection of articles, stories and research to inspire you as you lead. I extend a warm welcome to the 11th Executive Director of AAIE, Mark Ulfers. He will be joining and officially taking the reigns in August of 2018. Please watch for his ED message coming in the Fall 2018 edition of *InterED*.

Warmest regards,

Yolanda
Yolanda Murphy-Barrena
AAIE Executive Director
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THINK, continued from pg 1 ▸

allowed us to sustain our leadership include:

1. **Data and Design Thinking**. The leader must have the ability to (1) access and interpret diverse forms of data to identify existing equity gaps and iteratively design programs, products, and initiatives, and (2) inform decisions that contribute to optimal learning conditions for all.

2. **Culture and Climate Thinking**. The leader must have the ability to (1) understand and positively influence the current state of the school culture and climate, and (2) drive collaborative actions through relational leadership with students and adults.

3. **"Learnership" Thinking.** The leader must have the ability to (1) create the conditions and opportunities for all adults and students to learn and perform at ambitious, academic levels to achieve in school and life, and (2) utilize instructional leadership practices that are driven by the belief that student and adult voice are both an *input* and an *outcome*. If you look up the word "learnership' in the dictionary you won't find it- yet! Since the lifeblood and mission of every organization, especially schools, is focused on promoting learning, we decided a new word to draw attention to this type of thinking was warranted.

4. **Operational Thinking**. The leader must have the ability to (1) orchestrate equitable, fair, legal, honest, ethical practices to promote student voice, and (2) create spaces for shared decision-making and stakeholder influence.

5. **Systems Thinking**. Leaders must have the ability to (1) conceptualize schools as complex organizations comprised of a network of dynamic and interdependent thinking components, (2) pursue school change and improvement through systemic change and capacity building, and (3) create and articulate a shared vision of a school as a place where all students are fully engaged, inspired, empowered, and their voices are heard.

These definitions may be helpful, but we find the questions that leaders ask to be even more instructive. Here are some of the questions we use to continuously develop our expertise in each type of thinking.

Data and Design Thinking.

- What can I know through reliable data sources to inform the decisions I make?
- How can I encourage calculated risk through a process of innovation?
- Am I demonstrating a commitment to sustained inquiry and the iterative improvement of our programs, products, and initiatives to ensure all learners are able to perform at the
- ambitious academic levels needed to succeed in school and community?

Culture and Climate Thinking.

- How can I assess the school's "feel" to students, staff, families, and the community to guide decision-making resulting in a positive culture and climate?
- What systems do I have in place to continuously improve the climate and culture of the school?
- How do I insist that gaps in opportunities to learn are eliminated?
- How is the school an emotionally and physically safe place for everyone?
- As a "dream manager," how do I help others realize their aspirations?

"Learnership" Thinking.

- How do my leadership practices maximize student and adult learning?
- How am I nurturing the growth and capacity of each individual to reach his/her fullest potential?
- How do I demonstrate the attributes of an equity-driven lead learner?

Operational Thinking.

- In what ways do decisions impact teaching and learning and foster equity?
- Whose counsel should I seek regarding operational decisions?
- Who are the obviously affected and possibly overlooked stakeholders in decisions and actions?
- What are the unintended consequences of decisions?

Systems Thinking.

- How do I conceptualize my organization as a system with internal and external influences?
- How do I tie the other *types of thinking* together to pursue school change and improvement through systemic change?
- How do I adapt my leadership when circumstances require changes in what, why, or how things need to be done?
- How does our vision to promote every student's voice drive our long-range and short-term strategic thinking and execution?
- How do I articulate and model beliefs about the value of every student's voice as a critical element to educational outcomes?

Thinking in Action

Let's start with a fairly simple example, one that school leaders are confronted with on a routine basis (and one that is the source of much frustration). A group of students has failed an exam or did not do well on a progress monitoring assessment. In too many places, the principal is frustrated, knowing that parents will be emailing, but does not take action because of the perception that grading is the purview of the teacher. Given the five types of thinking we have outlined, we believe that the principal *can* take action. From a systems perspective, the fact that a group of students failed an exam means that the leader needs to think about the impact that this has on other classes, on attendance, on school culture and on graduation. Certainly the impact on the student's own sense of agency must be considered. That is to say, there is an impact on the entire school system and therefore merits systems thinking. Some students may be less motivated to try in their other classes if they feel like failures. Some students may turn their attention to the class that had the exam and neglect their other classes. There are all kinds of implications from this event. The systems response engenders each of the other types of leadership thinking. The process would begin by analyzing

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the operations that are currently in place to prevent failure and whether those were followed. The process is likely to end with determining whether those processes were followed, and if they are adequate to better avid or handle the problem in the future.

Data and design thinking would focus the leaders on analyzing data for trends. What if only a certain group of students failed the exam? At HSHMC several years ago, when we examined the failure in a specific class, we realized that it was the basketball team and that they were leaving class early for games. That realization allowed us to implement changes, including lunch time tutoring provided by the coach and other players.

Creating a sense that failure is more than an option across a student body requires leaders to think about the overall impact on culture and climate. How does the school recreate a sense of commitment and opportunity to be strong, capable and successful learners? And, finally learnership thinking requires leaders to ask themselves if students were provided appropriate opportunities to learn and if every possible resource of the school had been mobilized to ensure that students learned. In this way of thinking, leaders assumes major responsibility for student grades by identifying ways to ensure that more students have more opportunities so that next time the likelihood of failing is reduced. It may seem that this example could cause more stress for the leader, but our experiences is that stress comes from not being able to do something about the problems that arise on a daily basis. After all, there is a popular definition of absurdity, which suggests that doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is not only frustrating but also a significant source of stress.

A more complicated situation arises when a fight breaks out, or there is online bullying, or when two teachers are having a conflict. Each of these situations requires careful negotiation and the ability to make decisions that are in the best interest of the organization and that do not take a psychological toll on the school leader. Leaders must go beyond reacting to and managing these situations by examining their system wide impact, by looking for emerging trends and by examining how we have enabled these situation and how we can be more effective going forward. We need to make decisions, based on the best information available, and then feel good about those decisions. And, when we are confronted by these situations, we also need to think about how to prevent the situation from occurring again (a systems thinking approach).

As an example, we were required to redesign some of the career and technical education courses at our school to meet new accreditation requirements. This is a high-stakes situation, as failure to have courses accredited places students at risk and would compromise our school budget. The person tasked with completing the course revisions indicated that she was fully prepared to engage in the work and had the support she needed to complete the task in a timely manner.

We were thrilled when we heard that the work was completed and the person who coordinated the efforts told us that she was ready to submit the revised course of study to the state. But the operational thinking lens required us to review some of the submissions as a test. We randomly selected a course to spot-check its accuracy. We were frustrated to see major gaps in the course outline, with incoherent course objectives that read "Students will To acquaint the student with the roles, duties and responsibilities of a professional mental health counselor." In addition, the course had incorrect information included in the content. It was frustrating, to be sure. We didn't know how many other classes had similar problems and we had a deadline.

In some schools, the principal would have taken it upon him- or herself to do all of the work. In other schools, the principal would take it personally, with a resultant increase in stress level. The five types of thinking tell us that there was a breakdown in the system and that we had to make changes to complete the required tasks. We provided a list of errors we found in the sample course and asked for these errors to be addressed in all of the other courses. We then selected a different course, at random, to check. The previously identified errors were no longer present. But we noticed errors in this second course related to the standards that were being addressed, requiring an additional review of all of the courses.

We tell you this because these types of situations drive leaders away. They impact their evaluations and their aspirations. They get frustrated and do not see any progress in the work being done. When school leaders feel paralyzed and like they are on a treadmill, they quit and go elsewhere. When they take a different perspective, one that allows for systems to be created and monitored, it's less frustrating. And quite frankly, when the systems are in place and people don't follow them, there are different consequences. When the systems are not in place, leaders can make changes.

Sustaining the Effort

Teachers become school leaders because they want to increase their sphere of influence. When leaders are able to realize their aspirations and have the impact that they had hoped for, job satisfaction is high. When they do not have any impact, and instead solve the same problem over and over, leaders become disillusioned and look for other outlets for their efforts. We have found that developing habits of mind--the five types of thinking--provides leaders with the confidence they need to analyze any situation and to make the hard decisions required of the job. In doing so, they realize that they can and do have a positive impact on the school and the students who attend there, sustaining a desire to remain the leader for years to come.

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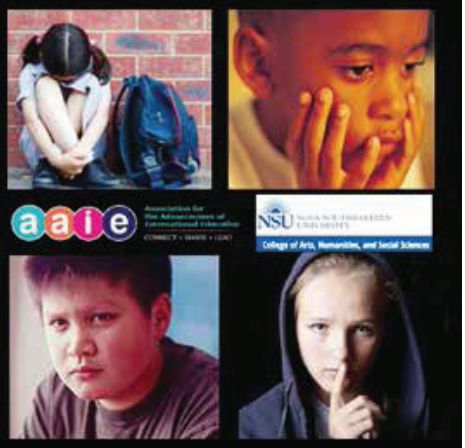

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Workshop Facilitators

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Ms. Susie March

Dr. Scott Poland

Dr. Peter Collins

Dr. Jordan Greenbaum

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ELSA LAMB

Elsa Lamb was the former Executive Director for AAIE and education leader extraordinaire. She left a legacy of commitment to international schools – she also left us words to think about…

On the end of the school season…

Whatever season it is where you are, in schools it is usually a time when the pressures of meeting yearly goals, wrapping up projects and programs, and the preparation and taking of tests begins to take its toll on staff and students everywhere. Patience and energy levels tend to wane. In my view, it's a time of year when the head needs to be even more visible than usual, and actively work to remind staff and students of their support and of their appreciation for all the hard work that has gone into the school year. They need your encouragement!

On working with others…

I am reminded of something Woodrow Wilson once said, "I not only use all the brains I have, but all I can borrow." Frankly, in my 22 years as a school head most of the success I had was due to just this, i.e. my 'picking the brains' of others. Without fail once faculty, colleagues and others provided me with feedback/input on my 'great ideas', they were always far better ones!

On sustaining your leadership capacity…

How many of us take the time to give attention to our staff and students and in the process, take care of ourselves as well? Generally, heads measure their success by the number of hours they put into their jobs. While hard work is important, equally important is taking the time to reflect, revise, and think. How can you be a morale booster for staff and students if you do not take the time to seek balance in your own lives?

It's a challenge for those of us who choose a career in international school leadership but taking care of ourselves must be one of our priorities. This will not happen if you do not plan for it by putting it on your work and personal calendars. From experience, I can tell you that if time for yourself is not actively planned for, your work will consume what precious little personal time you have. Your family, your staff and students, and most importantly, you deserve better.

A section in Generative Leadership: Shaping New Futures for Today's Schools (2008) speaks to 'Stepping Beyond Your Boundaries.' It describes generative leaders as 'knowing the value of taking time to think, write, listen to music, paint, walk, create.' The book encourages us to 'become playful' and states that 'in a relaxed state, your brain taps into more creation relations…' Don't' we all want to be more creative?

Let's start with taking the time to care for ourselves and our families as well as the staff and students in our schools – and by being more playful!

On caring for others…

It is moving to see the outpouring of support our community members offer to one another. This gives a whole new meaning to AAIE. It also serves to remind us that an international school education offers much more than a high-level curriculum, prestigious college acceptances, innovative, committed faculty members and resource rich environments.

It is the personal connections built among the members of the diverse cultures in our schools, as well as the shared values and experiences that are part of such an education that makes international schools unique.

Clearly, the key to building the peaceful, ethical, and sustainable future we all wish to achieve lies in our sustained commitment to the network of international schools around the world.

All the best,

Elsa

Elsa Lamb International Leadership Scholarship Fund

The **Elsa Lamb Leadership Scholarship Fund** was established in February of 2018 by the AAIE Board upon the passing of former Executive Director Elsa Lamb. By creating a scholarship fund to support future leaders in their education to become international school leaders, we celebrate Elsa's legacy of leadership and dedication to ensuring that future generations of international school leaders are given the opportunity to learn, receive mentorship and serve the international community well into the future.

If you would like to donate to the Elsa Lamb International Leadership Scholarship Fund, please send a check or wire transfer to AAIE with the memo/subject: Elsa Lamb Scholarship Fund Donation.

Checks can be mailed to: Ron Marino, AAIE Treasurer, 7150 Estero Blvd. #900, Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931 - USA
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Sustaining School Leaders: From the Pipeline through the Search Process and into the Profession

By Liz Duffy and Beth Pfannl

The first day of school for a new head typically represents not only the result of an extensive search process, but also the culmination of decades of experience and preparation for the role. That first day of school also marks the start of what everyone involved in the search, including the board, the selection committee, and the broader school community – faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni – hope will be a long, successful tenure for the new head, because frequent leadership transitions take a significant toll on schools.

Together, we have served as heads of schools for 22 years and in other educational leadership roles for an additional 24 years. In considering the theme of this edition of *Inter ED* and our experiences leading schools, it struck us that the various meanings of "sustainability" could shed light on how we can collectively prepare, recruit and support a robust pool of well-prepared school leaders for the fast-growing international school sector. ISC Research Limited projects that the number of English-medium international schools will increase from 8,653 in 2016 to 12,339 in 2021 to 24,659 by 2013, necessitating the development of many more school heads (ISC Research Limited, 2016-2017).

The School Leadership Pipeline

It takes years of preparation and experience to develop the broad range of skills required to effectively lead an organization as complex and as consequential as an international school. The multi-faceted nature of school leadership is evident by the scale and scope of a head of school's responsibilities and by the range of constituents she or he must work with and consult. The importance of the role is inherent in a school's purpose and in the impact that leadership has on the success of a school and its students. That combination of complexity and consequence is also what makes the head of school role both so challenging and so rewarding.

There are both typical and atypical paths to become a school leader, as evidenced by our own journeys, one of which was fairly standard and the other relatively unusual. The vast majority of school leaders start as teachers and gradually assume increasingly broad, more adult-focused, rather than student-centered, responsibilities. The conventional school head trajectory resembles the career pipeline of many professions, in which employees are promoted as follows:

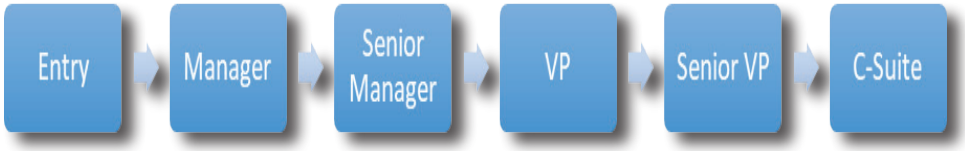

Figure 1. Adapted from *Women in the Workplace 2017*

The archetypal pipeline for school leaders is similar:

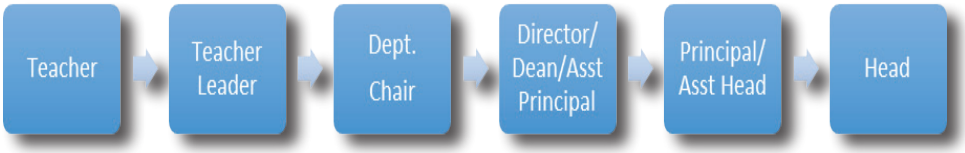

Figure 2. Adapted from *Women in the Workplace 2017*

Since most heads follow this common path, it's essential that a sufficient number of educators persist through each step in order to ensure an adequate supply of head candidates. To that end, everyone in the latter stages of the education pipeline has a responsibility to mentor and sponsor their junior colleagues.

There have been many studies done of the corporate leadership pipeline. For example, for the past three years, LeanIn.org and McKinsey have published comprehensive studies on the state of women in corporate America, entitled *Women in the Workplace*. For the 2017 edition, 222 companies employing more than 12 million people shared their pipeline data and completed a survey of human resources practices. In addition, more than 70,000 employees completed a survey designed to explore their experiences regarding gender, opportunity, career and work-life issues. As vividly evident in the summary data below, the key findings of the study were that in corporate America, women fall behind early and continue to lose ground at nearly every step. The pipeline persistence for men of color also lags that of white men, and the challenges are most pronounced for women of color.

There have also been numerous studies done of the leadership pipeline in public schools in the United States. Since the early 2000s, for example, the Wallace Foundation has published a series of articles, reports and podcasts focused on the pipeline for school administrators. By working closely with six large school districts, they have identified four key parts of a strong principal pipeline: "apt standards for principals, high quality pre-service training, rigorous hiring procedures, and tightly aligned on-the-job performance evaluation and support."

(Wallace, 2017). In 2012, the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education and the University Council for Education Administration released a white paper entitled *The Professional Pipeline for Educational Leadership*. The report recommended that districts develop a comprehensive pipeline plan for school leaders, including recruitment, selection, preparation, selection and research-based professional development (UCEA, 2012). The main conclusion from these and other studies was that encouraging more people to pursue school leadership requires a comprehensive, coordinated approach.

Although to our knowledge no formal study has been conducted of the leadership pipeline in international schools, the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) has explored the diversity of independent school leadership primarily in North America through a pipeline perspective. In a presentation at the 2017 NAIS Annual Conference, NAIS VP of Equity and Justice Caroline Blackwell and VP of Studies, Insights and Research Amada Torres shared demographic statistics on a variety of leadership positions at independent schools from NAIS's 2015-2016 school-year data:

Position	Females	People of Color
Head of School	34%	7%
Business Officer	54%	10%
Associate Head	53%	7%
Assistant Head	58%	11%
Upper School Head	38%	9%
Middle School Head	55%	10%
Lower School Head	84%	11%
Director of Development	76%	7%
Director of Admissions	78%	14%
Director of Diversity	68%	88%

Figure 4. Adapted from *New NAIS research offers keys to bolster opportunity for headship among people of color and women* by Blackwell, C., & Torres, A., 2017, March

As suggested by the NAIS data, the advantage of a pipeline approach to understanding leadership development is that it allows you to identify where members of different groups fall behind and therefore at what stages interventions might be most effective. With the exception of Head of School and Upper School Head, for example, women are well represented in senior leadership roles at independent schools, suggesting that the challenge for aspiring North American female heads may be a "glass ceiling." The data on aspiring heads of color, on the other hand, suggests that interventions are needed at all levels of leadership to fill the pipeline, because the only leadership position in which people of color are overrepresented is Director of Diversity. Although that position is not part of the traditional pipeline to become a head of school, arguably it should be, because the Director of Diversity position requires much of the same breadth and political deftness that a headship entails.

One definition of *sustainable* is "pertaining to a system that maintains its own viability by using techniques that allow for continual reuse and renewal." Sustainable agriculture for example, ensures the ongoing production of food by using farming techniques that protect the soil and environment. Similarly, sustainable development is conducted in such a manner that it doesn't deplete a community's resources. Given that most school leaders come from within the education sector and follow the common career trajectory described above, a sustainable education pipeline would ensure that teachers of all backgrounds persist through the leadership pipeline, so that there is the broadest possible pool of candidates for headships.

	Entry	Manager	Sr Mngr	VP	Sr VP	C-Suite
White Men	36%	47%	54%	61%	70%	67%
White Women	31%	26%	26%	23%	18%	18%
Men of Color	16%	16%	13%	11%	9%	12%
Women of Color	17%	11%	8%	6%	4%	3%

Figure 3. Adapted from *Women in the Workplace 2017*

Current school leaders have an essential role to play in supporting, mentoring and sponsoring educators at all levels of the leadership pipeline. As a first step, leaders at international schools might examine the pipeline patterns at their own schools to see if colleagues of different genders and backgrounds are pursuing leadership opportunities at differential rates, and if so, at what stages those differences emerge.

One of us, for example, discovered that many of her male colleagues in their late thirties/early forties would schedule a meeting to discuss their aspirations to become a school leader, whether or not they had significant managerial roles or not. I was happy to have those conversations and to create opportunities to fill in the gaps in their experiences to make them both better prepared for a head role and more competitive in leadership searches.

After a few years, I noticed that few of my female colleagues of a similar age had approached me about becoming heads, even if they had significant leadership roles, so I began more pro-actively to reach out to my colleagues of both genders who had done well in mid-level leadership positions to discuss their aspirations. Those discussions reinforced what the research shows; that women will often only consider positions in which they already have substantial experience in every aspect of the job description, while men will consider roles for which they have much more limited prior experience, reasoning that they can grow into the job (Williams).

The discussions also revealed some misperceptions about the role of a head, such as that it is extremely difficult to be a head with young children and becomes increasingly easier as children grow up. For the record, my experience was nearly the opposite – with young children being the easiest to incorporate into many of the community expectations of a head, such as attending athletic and performing arts events. Being a head with middle-school-aged children was perhaps the most difficult, because they have their own lives and have started to separate from their parents, but they aren't as independent yet as older children.

The point of these stories is that if we want a robust pipeline of head candidates, current and former heads must take responsibility for encouraging and preparing their colleagues for such roles, and that educators of different genders and backgrounds will often require varied types of support to persist through the pipeline.

The Search Process Funnel

Like leadership development, the search process often follows a predictable pattern, usually portrayed as a funnel, beginning with as broad a candidate pool as feasible and ending with a "best fit" hire:

At International Schools Services (ISS), where we both now work, our head and administrative search process very much resembles that pattern, starting with a wide call for candidates, then an initial screening of resumes, applications, and often the

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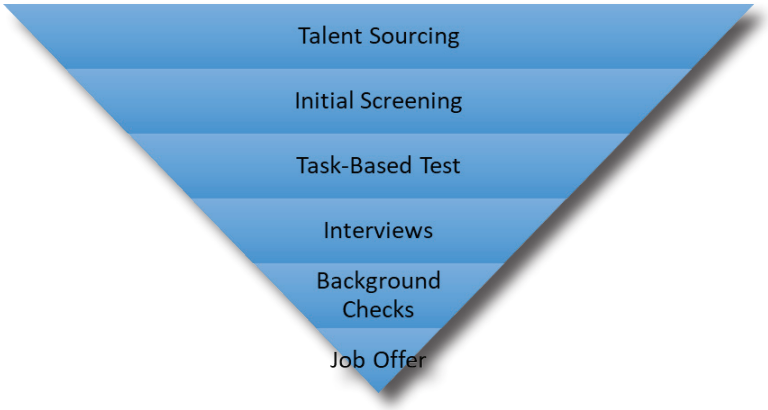

Figure 5. Adapted from *Recruitee.com Recruitment Dictionary*

answers to a set of specific questions tailored to the school's particular needs. That screening culminates in Skype or Zoom interviews with the most promising candidates in order to create a short list of usually 5-10 semifinalist candidates for the search committee to review and consider. The search committee then narrows the list down further, sometimes based just on the candidates' materials and our interview notes and reflections, other times conducting their own Skype and Zoom interviews to reduce the pool further. Usually 2-5 finalists are invited to visit the school and meet with various school constituencies.

In considering the search funnel, a second definition of "sustainability" seems most apt: "the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level." Since like a pipeline, a funnel is a one-way process, who emerges at the bottom is determined both by who enters the funnel at the top and who is eliminated at the various stages along the way.

It is beholden on search firms like ISS to present a diverse pool of candidates to a search committee. In order to do that, it is essential that search firms source candidates broadly and eliminate as many biases as possible in their screening processes. It is also helpful to understand that candidates from diverse backgrounds might present themselves differently and might require varied types of support and encouragement to even consider applying for a head position. One thing is certain; the only way to guarantee that you not get a job is not to apply for it.

Once the semifinalists are presented to the search committee, then it is the search committee that determines who is ultimately selected to be head. Thus, it's important to review the composition, biases and processes of the search committee to be sure that they don't prematurely limit whom they will consider. One of the complicated issues facing international schools is the strong preference of some search committees to hire a head who looks Western, because of the admissions and prestige advantages of such a hire. That preference works against not only educators from non-Western cultures, but also Western and Western-trained educators from Asian and African backgrounds. Recognizing that dynamic, search firms can mitigate it by pointing out the many potential benefits of diverse leadership, such as role modeling, cultural competency and decision-making.

To date, most of the information of the search funnel is anecdotal. Just as the international school sector would benefit from having more systematic data on the leadership pipeline, it would also benefit from having data on the search process. The only way to design effective initiatives to augment the search funnel is to understand, beyond anecdotes, how candidates of different genders and backgrounds fare at the various stages of the search process.

The Life of a School Leader

Preparing and recruiting school leaders are two essential steps in cultivating school leaders, the final critical step is supporting them once they are hired. At this stage, an additional meaning of the word sustainable seems most applicable – "the ability to be maintained or kept going, as an action or a process." By the end of the school year, many school heads – including each of us at various point of our careers – have felt like we were running on depleted batteries at best and on fumes at worst. Nonetheless, there are a few strategies that heads can use to keep their batteries charged throughout their tenures.

First, heads should clearly understand their myriad roles and responsibilities and with their board chair identify which aspects of their responsibilities they will prioritize each year given the school's particular challenges and opportunities. One of the features of headship that makes it so exhilarating is the breadth of the role. On the flip side, that is also what can make it so exhausting. A helpful resource to assist in the process of understanding and prioritizing a head's responsibilities are the new AISH Standards of Excellence for the International School Head and the accompanying website that AISH has developed with illustrative evidence and artifacts for each standard (AISH).

Being a successful, long-serving head of school also requires understanding yourself, so you can find the right fit – not just in terms of location, type of school and compatibility with the school culture, but as importantly in terms of leadership needs. Markus Buckingham, author of *Claiming Your Strengths*, defines strengths and weaknesses in an unconventional way. According to Buckingham, strengths are not what you're good at, and weaknesses are not what you're bad at. Rather, strengths are activities that strengthen and energize you and weaknesses are activities that weaken or drain you…even if you are good at them. You can't turn weaknesses in to strengths, but you can stop doing them by teaming up, delegating or reframing (Buckingham, n.d.). Joanna Barsch, author of *Centered Leadership*, relates Buckingham's strengths and weaknesses to purpose, explaining that purpose comes from using your strengths and minimizing the impact of your weaknesses (n.d.). By extension, we suspect that heads who find their jobs more "purposeful" are able to sustain themselves better and have longer, more successful tenures.

Finally, heads should take advantage of the many networks available to them, because such connections provide critical information, counsel, perspective and inspiration. When we were heads, both of us served on the boards of local, regional and national/international associations, because despite the time commitment, we recognized the value of such networks to our schools and ourselves. The international school community is fortunate to have many strong regional and global associations as well as vibrant online communities that nurture, support and ultimately sustain heads.

Herminia Ibarra, Professor of Organizational Behavior, INSEAD Business School, has done considerable research on networks. She distinguishes between three kinds of networks:

- Operational – relationships with people at work that allow you to get today's work done
- Personal – relationships of your choosing, people you like to hang out with informally
- Strategic – relationships that help you envision your future, sell your ideas and get the information and resources that you need

While all three types of networks are essential, strategic networks are the most important for career development and advancement (Ibarra, n.d.).

According to Ibarra strong strategic networks have three common traits (n.d.). First, they are broad, that is they are connected to a diverse range of people, including importantly those for whom you only have weak ties. Second, they are connective, that is they are linked or bridged across people and groups that would not otherwise connect. Third, they are dynamic, meaning that they are responsive and adaptive, growing as you grow (Ibarra, n.d.).

Most international school heads, at many points in their tenures, face issues with cultural dimensions, because they are typically working in a country outside their home countries and they are usually interacting with students, parents, faculty and staff from a broad range of cultural backgrounds. The challenges and opportunities of leading a school in such a multicultural/multinational environment is outside the scope of this article. Suffice it to say, that just as it is instructive to understand the differential experience of educators of different genders and backgrounds in the education leadership pipeline and the hiring funnel, it would also be illuminating to understand better how such factors affect the experience of heads, their access to networks, and the sustainability of their roles.

Conclusion and Next Steps

The concept of sustainability has multiple shades of meaning. Together, the definitions help elucidate the processes of developing, hiring and supporting educational leaders. If we are to meet the growing need for international school leaders, we must collectively do all we can to make sure that the education pipeline, the hiring funnel and the headship itself are all "sustainable" in the fullest sense of that word.

As a first step, in the fall of 2018, in collaboration with other educators and organizations, International Schools Services launches a Diversity Collaborative to create a more inclusive and diverse environment among the leadership of international schools. Anyone interested in helping to organize the collaborative should contact Beth Pfannl at bphannl@iss.edu or Maddy Hewitt at maddy@nesacenter.org.

Liz Duffy, ISS President, lduffy@iss.edu.
Beth Pfannl, ISS Vice President, bpfannl@iss.edu

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The Challenges of Trust, Fear and Transformation

[Excerpted from her newest book, **Transforming Schools: Leading and Learning in Complex Systems**]

By Fran Prolman

Transformation cannot occur without a strong culture of trust. Trust has the potential to address the inevitable fear which will arise from change that comes with transformation. And yet, building trust is one of the biggest challenges that hold back organizations and teams from being healthy and successful. Trust is the foundation of strong relationships, collaboration, and honesty. Without trust, there is no psychological safety, and colleagues are afraid to take risks, try new things, learn, and grow for fear of retribution. Trust can be illusive. People can sense if it is there or not, but few leaders truly take the time to study it, embrace the components of it, and grow it intentionally and consciously.

Stephen Covey in his groundbreaking book *The Speed of Trust* (2006) unpacks the complexity of trust so that it falls into five organizational categories.

Self-Trust

Our ability to trust ourselves starts with believing in our own capacity, integrity, and honesty. This includes making and keeping commitments to ourselves, standing for principles that are bigger than ourselves, believing in our own inner strength and skill sets to do our job, and being open to learning to continually hone our craft. We can't foster an environment of trust or build an organization on the foundation of trust if we don't trust ourselves. This is where each and every one of us needs to start. Self-trust begins with an internal strength and a belief system, which states "I am my hope for my future", "I am my best advocate and problem solver", "If I have to be left on a desert island alone to survive, I thank the Universe that I am with me".

Relational Trust

It's all about relationships when it comes to a positive work culture, working together, collaborating, sharing expertise, asking for and providing one another with assistance. None of that will occur unless we are skilled in the area of relational trust. Since relational trust is the bedrock of every organization in the business of people, it comes with complexities at every turn. Relational trust depends on a combination of qualities based on character and competence.

Character-based qualities

Character-based qualities are about whether we talk straight and tell the truth or not. Just one lie damages trust. Character-based qualities also include treating every person with respect, being transparent in terms of why and how decisions are made, and actively seeking to name, own, and correct mistakes and wrongdoings which inevitably happen, despite the best of intentions. In addition, character-based qualities model loyalty to the organization, its people, and principles.

Competence-Based Qualities

Even though a leader and a colleague may demonstrate the highest level of character, without the nuts-and-bolts skill sets to do the job well, there would be no relational trust. Trust starts with knowing how to produce results. This trust models continuous learning in order to stay on targeted improvement, no matter how depressing the failed attempts might be. Competence-based trust clarifies the expectations for each employee and the task at hand and acknowledges everyone's merit for the work well done.

Character and Competence Behaviors

The winning combination, which fosters relational trust, is when you have a plethora of skills in both categories. This combination becomes the key to transformational work. It starts with listening well and seeking to understand rather than judge. This takes the form of inquiry and paraphrasing. Making and holding to commitments models a sense of honor, honesty, focus, and purpose. This equally holds true with commitments made to family, to the parent community, and to the colleagues with whom you work. Lastly, this combination of character and competence addresses the ability of extending trust to others. Extending trust is a compliment. It says, "I believe in you and your capabilities."; "I am willing to take a risk and believe in your judgement". The opposite of this would be giving colleagues a task to do and then micromanaging them. The script, answers, and thinking is already outlined, and the people asked to do the work are watched over their shoulders to make sure it is all followed to the letter. Micromanagement is an insult to one's competence and erodes trust instantly.

Organizational Trust

A trusting organization models transparency. A "No Secrets School" makes it plain how you are evaluated, what type of feedback you receive, what kind of thinking stands behind the decisions made. "No Secrets Classrooms" do the same with rubrics, criteria for success, exemplars, and consistent descriptive feedback to the students. Facts and information are shared fully and accurately, as opposed to manipulatively and partially. A psychologically safe environment embraces mistakes as reflective learning opportunities, so that they are not repeated. Credit is abundantly shared.

Market Trust

On a macro level, market trust is all about the reputation your organization has built for itself. Real estate agents earn a living by it when they sell homes to families with small children based on the reputation of the school system. Embassies around the world embrace it as they send diplomats and foreign service employees with children to different international postings. The word travels based on the reputation of the school that is waiting for the students when you arrive. On a micro level, market trust is apparent in each and every classroom. That is why some parents beg a principal for a certain teacher placement over another teacher with poor market trust. Market trust or reputation fuels perception. Perception fuels the reality of each of us.

Societal Trust

Societal trust correlates with our interest and contribution to help the society we are part of and the world as a whole. Service learning projects, government laws

to take care of its country's inhabitants, and the concept of "giving back" are all prevalent here. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, U2 lead singer Bono and his fundraising efforts to eradicate hunger, and Oprah Winfrey building a school for girls to become leaders in Africa or funding "Morehouse Men" to go to Morehouse College are all examples of our trusting that our society will be enhanced by virtue of our contributions to it.

Naming And Addressing Our Fears

The challenge with any transformation is that change will occur, and most people don't appreciate the symptoms of change even if they seek the outcome which the change brings. Marilyn Ferguson captures this perfectly in her seminal book The Aquarian Conspiracy (1980) when she says, "It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear. It's like being between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to."

It is that space in between that makes our hearts beat faster and our anxiety levels and blood pressure go up. We are not totally sure how this will turn out. There is an inherent leap of faith. That is why a psychologically safe environment, fostering a blanket of trust is so critical. The trapeze has a safety net to catch trapeze artists if they fall. It is a reminder that they are safe and protected. Building trust and a psychologically safe environment is the only way to welcome

Being Comfortable With Mystery And Ambiguity

Michael Gelb analyzed seven major thinking processes of Leonardo da Vinci in How to Think Like Leonardo da Vinci (2000). They all have a direct correlation with transformation. The one I will highlight here is what da Vinci called sfumato. Literally, it means "going up in smoke" in Italian. In practice, it means being comfortable with ambiguity, paradox, uncertainty, and focusing on the process rather than the destination. Da Vinci would say that the means are the end, because we hope that our learning never ends. A number of important thinkers agreed with him. Consider the following:

St. Catherine of Siena: "All the way to heaven is heaven."

Cervantes: "The road is better than the inn."

Garcia Lorca: "I will never arrive at Cordoba."

Kazantzakis: "Ithaca is the voyage itself."

Building A Psychologically Safe Environment

Robert Marshak (2006) says, "To create a psychologically safe environment requires at a minimum that you establish trust, boundaries, and a sense of control in the team or the social environment."Building a psychologically safe environment means that all challenges and frustrations are reframed as a learning problem, approached through a spirit of inquiry. Some school questions might include: "How can we best foster learning given the existing obstacles?"; "How can we be respectful when we have different viewpoints and belief systems?"; "How can we invest in each other's professional growth?" Schools and the learning variables that they present bring enormous uncertainty. This is a great equalizer for every teacher. Uncertainty walking hand in hand with faculty interdependence lessens the feeling of being overwhelmed, isolated, and hopeless. We are all here to learn from each other, support each other's growth, and help think through the learning challenges our students face. Uncertainty and interdependence invites everyone's voice, which fosters psychological safety.

Psychological safety is also fostered when a leader courageously and openly models fallibility. We all bring our best selves to the table and could all be missing something as we think through a problem. Brené Brown's research on vulnerability and the power of imperfection proves that strong leadership embraces our own imperfections as courage and strength. She says, "Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they are never weakness."1 She also explains that vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change.

Lastly, a psychologically safe environment is built on the consistent modeling of curiosity. Asking questions from a place of curiosity rather than interrogation becomes the key to learning and growing. Open-ended, reflective questions be- come the key to building voice among the adults. Seeking answers to questions strengthens the environment to become a true learning organization.

Transformation means we need to honor and embrace this process, and the process isn't a straight line. There is ambiguity along the way that gets addressed and realigned. A psychologically safe environment invites this kind of reflection, adjustment, and continuous learning. The acceptance of ambiguity and openness to the outcome directly correlate with innovative thinking, curiosity, and inquiry. Acknowledging our uncertainty encourages us to experiment, and we are transformed by our own experiments. We are free not to know the answer, we are free to change our position, and we learn to reframe our problems.

In this line of thinking, we don't need to be certain where it will all end up. It is a skill which enables transformational leaders to sit with a significant question, knowing there won't be an unequivocal answer. This is a transformational skill worth celebrating and expanding.

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TIECARE INTERNATIONAL

Sustainable Leadership from the Perspective of an International School Director

By Steven J. Nagy
and Joseph J. Nagy

Having been a product of international education, it is rare to find others in my PhD program that fully understand the nuances of attending international schools. Being enrolled in Dr. Shaklee's class last semester was then a welcomed respite that not only allowed me to meet other international students to share common ground with, but it was also extremely refreshing to engage in discussions with her as she seemed to know so much about the tight knit community of international teaching, particularly from the leadership perspective. Attending her class reaffirmed why I have such a passion for international education, and why I strive to also become an educational leader in overseas schools.

Born and raised in Colombia, I am the product of a bi-ethnic teaching couple, one of whom has been a school administrator for close to 30 years. Which is why when Dr. Shaklee suggested I submit a paper about sustainable leadership with only three years teaching experience in international schools, I figured I'd get my father involved. Not only does he continue to etch out a name for himself in the international community, but he's also part of what I like to deem the golden age of international education in Colombia. A time that saw many educators quickly rise to prominence due to high teacher and administrative turnover as a result of the social and political uncertainties of our nation. Having taken a mere two-year contract as a kindergarten teacher at the age of 25, he is currently in his 36th year as an educator overseas, most of this time has been spent as an administrator.

The following exchange highlights our conversations relating to what we deem essential components of sustainable leadership in U.S. schools in Colombia:

Steven: Ok Joe, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you ended up in Colombia.

Joseph: I am currently the Director of Colegio Bolivar in Cali, Colombia, a position which I have held for fifteen years. After graduating with a degree in elementary education in 1980, and a year of teaching in a public school in South Carolina, I returned to graduate school to complete a master's degree. While in graduate school, I met a teacher working at an American overseas school in Barranquilla, Colombia. My then graduate school classmate, spouse of the secondary principal at the school, posted a job listing on a bulletin board. Within the week and two phone interviews later, I accepted my first overseas teaching position in 1982. Since then, my career in overseas education includes three years as a teacher, nine as an elementary principal, three as a high school principal, and twenty as the director in four different schools in Colombia. The relationship between the Inter-Regional Center for Curriculum Development directed and operated by Dr. Burton Fox, and Western Carolina University in Cullowheen, NC lead to my career in overseas education.

I don't know if the readers of InterEd know this, but after WWII the world experienced the expansion of U.S. industry abroad with the greatest zone of influence being in Latin America. To support the growing expatriate family populations abroad, the U.S. State Department established the Office of Overseas Schools in 1963. The Office of Overseas Schools offered direct and in-kind assistance to schools worldwide to support the many families requiring high quality education at U.S. accredited institutions. The establishment of American schools abroad has had a tremendous, yet unquantifiable effect on U.S. political relations in developing nations. While American schools abroad were initially established to serve expatriate families, the type and quality of the educational experience provided quickly became attractive to host nation families and students. Many American schools found in Latin America are now educating the third and fourth generation of host-country national families. Many of those alumni are high level politicians (including presidents), ambassadors to foreign countries, world-renown scientists, scholars, artists, filmmakers, inventors, and industrial leaders. What most of them have in common is their appreciation for an American style education steeped in democratic principles.

Steven: What is it about international education that has been so appealing to you?

Joseph: One of the most appealing aspects of working in the international school setting is the amount of unencumbered freedom from local and foreign government controls and regulations. Most of the reputable international schools are accredited by one or more of the major U.S. based agencies (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Council of International Schools, Middle States Commission, New England Association, Northwest Commission, Western Association). These regulating bodies provide standards beyond local regulations and impetus for continual improvement. Such freedom promotes the liberty of each school to develop as quickly and profoundly as conditions permit. As a school administrator, such freedom is invigorating and stimulating, thus avoiding early burnout. In my experience, I have focused on implementing changes based upon solid educational research thereby helping my school stay ahead of the competition, promoting student advancement and solidify the school community.

Steven: Because the issue of the upcoming publication is sustainable leadership, what does the term mean to you?

Joseph: To me sustainable leadership is not only how you intrinsically motivate yourself to keep doing the job, but also how you maintain buy in from all stakeholders over a long period of time. And when that is the focus or the goal, then leadership becomes a whole lot less about the individual, in this case me or my principals, but about the mission of the school, or the vision you set out to accomplish. And part of my philosophy as an educator that I've tried to inculcate in

my team and in our school is that that vision is always evolving. It is something we continuously strive to improve on, almost like a destination we know we're never going to get to or want to get to.

Steven: So you're halfway through you 22nd year at your school, and 15th at the helm as director. Apart from what you previously described, what else do you attribute to your success and sustainability as a leader in this environment?

Joseph: In my personal experience, I have found great satisfaction and success in building a strong leadership team. It is impossible for a school head to be an expert on all matters, but one can surround him or herself with strengths and experiences that complement one another. I have found that a diversity of styles and ideas among leadership team members has proven to be the most productive as well as interesting. Such diversity challenges one another's way of thinking and allows for better problem solving. Another thing that I attribute to the success of our leadership is how much we aim to empower our teachers, our executive assistants, our principals, you name it, to feel like they can handle things on their own, or that we have their back when it's time for them to carry out decisions. As you're well aware, my work hours seem to always be getting longer every year, but believe it or not, this school year is scheduled to be one of the years I'm most absent from school. This has been a long recruiting season, but apart from the regular director conferences I attend, I am traveling in search of new collaboration opportunities such as the one we just established with IMG academies, I'll be back on the road serving on several accreditation teams for AdvancED, and frankly, I'll be taking some time off in between travels so that I'm not going back and forth between South America and North America that often. If years of empowering and trusting other individuals had not been a constant focus since becoming director, there's no way I would be able to be away for that long. So what I'm trying to say is that sustainable leadership is also about how your school operates when you're not there, which also serves well for when you no longer will be there.

Steven: As a school leader then, in this case director instead of principal, what are some of the greatest challenges you face regarding sustainability?

Joseph: One of the greatest challenges that international school administrators face is managing the Board of Directors. This often results in short tenures for school heads or directors. The Journal of Research in International Education estimates the average headship tenure in international schools is around 3.7 years (Benson, 2011). With school board members often serving less than 5 years, school heads rarely survive three rotations of board presidents. Imagine having a group of eight to ten bosses with approximately two to four of them changing each year! It is often incumbent upon the school director to help set long-term goals and objectives for the institution as few if any board member has experience in educational settings.

High teacher and administrative turnover is also one of the greatest handicaps to institutional progress. Unfortunately, and too often, school boards underfund salaries to support a quality lifestyle of foreign hires that seeks both professional development and savings opportunities. Staffing research indicates professional development, travel and savings opportunities as some of the most critical factors in choosing an overseas teaching position (Chandler, 2010). It is no longer only the intrigue and excitement of living abroad attracting teachers to foreign destinations, but benefits and opportunities for advancement.

Steven: As a director, most of your job revolves around operating your school how you see fit. However, since you brought up the board of directors, have there been situations with the board that have caused you to rethink your position?

Joseph: Absolutely! As you know, it is often said being in the right time and place makes a world of difference. In my case, being prepared and in the right place afforded our family and me opportunities that don't always come along. Five years after receiving my undergraduate degree and after my first year as an administrator, I was offered the position as school director before reaching age 30 in one of the cities on the Atlantic coast where you and your brother were born. After five years at the helm though, we made the choice to leave and challenge ourselves with other opportunities, all which have been enriching. But the cause of that move boiled down to certain members on the board of directors trying to circumvent my responsibilities. Essentially they wanted to run the school their way, and a core tenant of this job is abiding by the notion that the school director's job is to run the school as he or she sees fit. It is the board of directors' job to hire and fire the director and approve our budget. That is it! Unfortunately, too many times some members fail to adhere to that distinction, creating friction that has the ability to undermine the leadership team. Being that our board members tend to be from large corporations that founded these schools, many have sought to try to run these schools like businesses, which ultimately loses focus of our main goal, which is providing the best learning environment for our students.

Steven: So how do you sustain leadership in the face of that kind of adversity?

Joseph: Learn how to make a good martini? In all honesty, you have to maintain your integrity in those harsh times. Once you fold or allow for that line to be crossed, in my opinion there's no recovering from that. As a 35-year-old director with 3 young sons, it was extremely difficult to walk away from a director's position, but that's what you have to be willing to do in order to stand up for what you believe in. Secondly, you have to be able to check your ego on a constant basis. And I attribute a lot of this to your mother who has served as a sounding board, but also an ego checker from time to time. At the end of the day, these private schools are a business, and whether you like it or not, a time will come when it is your turn to bow out and give up the reins. If you're lucky, that'll happen on your own terms, but more often than not, that isn't the case. You have to be able to accept that and remember that it's not about you, it's about the work.

Steven: Lastly, I want to touch on sustainability within the host nation of Colombia. The world over knows about our troubled history, yet not as many know how remarkable of a place it also is. Describe how living through some of our worst history has affected your job?

Joseph: Well the unique personal and professional experiences afforded me, as well as many of my colleagues in Latin America have lead to my long-term residency in Colombia. Like thousands of other U.S. born and educated teachers that have forged career paths outside our native country, I have found the unique set of challenges incredibly challenging and

rewarding. The challenge of thriving in a foreign environment requires an additional set of skills not everyone is willing or able to acquire or even desire to.

That being said, the history of civil unrest has made Colombia a particularly difficult destination for many foreigners seeking job opportunities there. After nearly three tumultuous decades of wide unrest, the country had seemingly settled into a more controlled and attractive place to reside. Yet, the years of widespread illegal drug production, decades long battle with leftist insurgents, and government corruption has taken a huge toll on the nation's resiliency. The recent signing of a peace accord with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) has deeply divided opinions on the sacrifices of law-abiding citizens. Many fear the government has given too many concessions to the FARC that are resulting in increased taxation and alleged stagnation of the economy. Nevertheless, during our worst of times, management and sustainability of our school depended a great deal upon the type of leadership we provided. To a great degree, we had to reassure our school community we would not only survive, but thrive when given the chance. During our sons' formative years, which occurred during the most difficult of times in Colombia, we rarely thought of abandoning our post. It would never occur to me to leave an institution in a worse state than in which it was received. Being part of the culture and community was key to my family's success in international education, and it is something we have worked hard to foster. You and your brothers are a testament to that sense of community, and it's an integral component of our success as a school.

For both my father and I, sustainable leadership isn't so much about the person in charge, but about the governing philosophy of an institution. The main responsibility of all education leaders is to create an environment where not only students, but educators are engaged intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Sustainable leadership goes beyond temporary achievement gains and aims to create lasting and meaningful learning opportunities (Glickman, 2002). In order for this to happen, leadership cannot stem from one single individual or a handful of individuals. Sustainable leadership should spread, ensuring that others share and help develop their personal vision. It means more than just grooming a successor when the time comes to retire. According to Spillane, Halverson, and Drummond (2001), it means distributing leadership throughout the school's professional community so that others may carry the torch after the principal or director are gone.

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Standards of Excellence in School-Head Evaluations for Sustainable Leadership and Student Achievement

By Michael Horning, Jr.

Effective and sustainable leadership is an essential and critical element to the success of any initiative, organization, and/or institution. In the recently published meta-analysis research article, Çoğaltay and Karadağ (2016) provide quantitative evidence that effective leadership is proven to significantly impact a number of organizational variables. This research only adds to a large body of existing academic literature on this subject. These studies continue to drive the value of effective leadership as a desired commodity and special asset to any organization (Northouse, 2016). Sustained effective leadership can have a direct impact on many aspects of a school including student achievement. Foundational in supporting sustained leadership in schools is the fair and meaningful evaluations for the head of schools. Following standards of excellence for effective school-head evaluations will ensure a healthy leadership team resulting in a longer tenure for the school head and higher student achievement.

The Importance of the School-Head Evaluation

The annual evaluation of the head of schools, known predominately in the United States as the superintendent of schools, remains one of the most important functions and responsibilities of the school board (Moffett, 2011). A school head may have all the knowledge and skills necessary to be an effective educational leader, and very well might be effective, but it is the perception of the school board members which matters the most (Hendricks, 2013). One of the primary reasons a school head leaves his/her employment is due to the conflict with the school board or an individual board member (Hendricks, 2013). Hendricks states,

In order to maintain a successful relationship, it is imperative that a well-designed performance evaluation tool is implemented. Therefore, it is essential that formal guidelines are established because they can provide both guidance and standards throughout the superintendent performance evaluation process (2013, p. 64).

In considering Hendricks' statement, one of the most urgent priorities of any school or school system is a sustained leadership team that includes the head of schools and the school board. The effective evaluation of a head of schools that follows standards of excellence not only keeps the leadership team stable, but it also affects student achievement.

Student achievement is one of the foundational core elements to every school's purpose. As such, every decision by the leadership team, including the school board, as well as administrators, teachers, and the entire educational community should be made to support student achievement. Based on several research studies, there is a significant correlation between the tenure of a head of schools and student achievement. (Waters & Marzano, 2006; Myers, 2015). In their 2006 study, School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement, Waters and Marzano confirms "that the longevity of the superintendent has a positive effect on the average academic achievement of students in the district. These positive effects appear to manifest themselves as early as two years into a superintendent's tenure" (p. 14). Following the work of Waters and Marzano with his own study, Myers (2015) reconfirmed the significant correlation between the tenure of the school head and student achievement. These studies underscore the importance of having an open and strong relationship between the school board and school head increasing the likelihood of a longer tenure for the head of schools.

As Hendricks (2013) found, the key to this relationship and continuity of leadership is an effective annual school-head evaluation. By employing best practices in evaluation, it ensures the school-head evaluation process isn't based in bias, conjecture, interpretations, and personal feelings of board members leading to subjective feedback in the final evaluation; but rather, a fair, objective, and evidence-based evaluation focused on professional leadership practices with defined performance indicators. When the evaluation process includes well-defined and clear expectations of the school board that are objective and evidence-based, the evaluation process evolves into a catalyst for important and focused conversations among the leadership team. Clear expectations and focused conversations are foundational to healthy relationships between the school board and the head of schools.

Current Practices of School-Head Evaluation

In order to have effective and productive evaluations of the school head, the school board needs clearly defined performance indicators of effective leadership practices and conduct evaluations based on best practices or standards of excellence. Unfortunately, this appears to be more rare than common practice in school-head evaluations as most school board members receive little to no training in conducting an evaluation (Moffett, 2011). Without this proper training and, in some cases lacking a strong evaluation instrument, school boards remain unaware of best practices in evaluation. Creating a reliable and meaningful evaluation becomes even more challenging considering the school board members do not observe the day-to-day work of the school head.

In a past national study within the United States, Roberts (2010) found significant differences within the content, processes, and outcomes of school-head evaluations. This conclusion by Roberts (2010) mirrors other researchers' studies including Opstad (2010). Roberts (2010) revealed the primary method of evaluation continues to be a written critique absent of the school head's commentary or reflections. These narrative letters from the school board to the head of schools tend to be focused on subjective feedback and the overall school board's personal feelings on how the board views the head is performing as the school's primary educational leader.

In addition to narratives from the school board to the head of schools as identified by Roberts (2010), numerical Likert scales are also widely included as an evaluation method (Opstad, 2010). Likert (1932) was credited as a pioneer in developing an approach to measure people's attitudes about a particular statement. When used in school-head evaluations, school board members are provided with a statement regarding the performance of the school head and then are required to make a selection on a scale commonly ranged from one to four or one to five. The more "points" given, the more the board member is in agreement with the statement. The total points reflect the school board's level of support for the school head.

The drawback of using a Likert scale in this manner is the lack of performance indicators or descriptors of what each number represents regarding a superintendent's professional practices. This diminishes the inter-rater reliability of the individual board members during his/her individual scoring for each of the defined leadership competencies. Two board members might agree on their observations of a school head's practice however, one might score the school head as a "3" while the other might score a "4." This process drives a subjective evaluation based on numerical values which lack any specificity with descriptors or performance indicators. In addition to the numerical values not being properly defined or calibrated in agreement with all school board members, the values are generally averaged to create an overall score for the school head. The school head's leadership and importance within the school community is then reduced to a single quantitative value. It is often difficult to characterize effective leadership, nevertheless, it must never be reduced to a single numerical value void of important descriptive language! In the field of education, this is already done too often when evaluating professional practices or assessing student achievement.

Peterson's (2014) research identified and compared perspectives of school heads and school board presidents in Iowa's public schools regarding essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the head of schools. The wide-ranging results from the study's surveys demonstrated the lack of widespread consensus on what constitutes the effective performance of a head of schools (Peterson, 2014). This supports the importance of having clearly defined performance indicators prior to the start of the school year which define effective leadership performance as well as articulating the clear expectations of the school board.

With the lack of clear performance indicators of success or effective leadership practices, this can lead to a deterioration of the relationship between the school board and head of schools. As a result, the school head could likely find himself/herself at odds with the school board or being blamed for forces outside the head of school's control. Researchers Hino and Hidetaka (2013) found that establishing healthy relationships between the leader (head of schools) and governing board (school board) will help to mitigate blame for situations or events outside the control of the leader. The authors' research finds that leaders are more harshly blamed when organizational failures are due to internal factors rather than external factors (Hino & Hidetaka, 2013). In other words, if the organizational failure was due to employee performance then the organizational leader would be targeted for blame rather than external factors such as economic forces (Hino & Hidetaka, 2013). Leaders are often blamed for negative outcomes even if the individual is not directly responsible (Hino & Hidetaka, 2013). This study underscores the importance of maintaining a healthy leadership team in overcoming future challenges by having clearly defined performance indicators of effective school-head practices.

A poorly designed or implemented evaluation process for the head of schools leads to unfocused, and seemingly random, conversations among the leadership team which could result in briefer tenures within the school's system. With a continuous change of school heads, recent initiatives are disbanded and replaced with newer initiatives in a never-ending-cycle of attempts for "school improvement." This dysfunction within the highest levels of the school's leadership team is felt the most at the classroom levels by the teachers and students in this frenzy of new initiatives and continual school change.

Establishing Standards of Excellence in Superintendent Evaluation

With the established importance of evaluations for heads of schools coupled with the widespread lack of established practices, Horning (2017) suggests adopting and applying the following standards of excellence in the school-head evaluation process. These ensure the evaluation is not an event in time but rather a professional development experience resulting in focused conversations among the leadership team.

Establishing a Defined Process

When discussing the school-head evaluation, it is commonplace to think of the accountability of the school head to the school board. Nevertheless, there is also accountability of the school board to the school head. Often, this accountability is identified within the school head's employment contract. Horning (2017) believes an established process ensures a shared mutual accountability between all parties throughout the year. This objective is accomplished through a collective commitment to specific dates for each step within the defined evaluation process.

Creating and Aligning Annual SMART Goals

At the beginning of the school year and evaluation cycle, the school board and school head should co-create annual SMART goals to align with the evaluation. SMART is an acronym used as a framework ensuring goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Ensuring the annual goals are SMART goals allows the school's leadership team to focus on the longer-term school or board goals (Horning, 2017). As a best practice, Conboy et al. (2014) noted that no more than five annual SMART goals should be included within an annual evaluation. Aligning SMART goals to the school-head evaluation process drives a performance-based evaluation specific to the direction and needs of the individual school community. This allows the leadership team to define areas of focus for the year while allowing the head of schools to maintain that focus throughout the year.

Choosing an Evaluation Instrument with a Leveled-Performance Rubric

School-head evaluation instruments should include a leveled rubric defining performance indicators (Horning, 2017). This drives consistency among evaluators while moving away from the school board's use of numerical Likert scales (Horning, 2017). The evaluation rubric should clearly define effective school-head practices for each competency predetermined to be part of the evaluation process (Horning, 2017). The Council's

Superintendents Model Evaluation Rubric (Conboy et al., 2014) created by the New York State Council of School Superintendents is one of the more notable leadership evaluation instruments to consider when evaluating the head of schools.

Employing the Reflective Practice Theory

As previously noted, Roberts (2010) observed that most school-head evaluation processes are absent of any commentary or reflections by the head of schools. It is essential that the school-head evaluation employ the reflective practice theory to, "transcend a process from evaluation into a model of continuous improvement and learning" (Horning, 2017, p. 5). Purposeful evaluation has the intended outcome of professional learning and growth (Horning, 2017). The reflective practice theory is well-documented in research literature for promoting new knowledge and insights into one's own professional practices (Horning, 2017). Throughout the year, the head of schools should reflect on each of the competency descriptors defined by the evaluation rubric. Since these represent the expectations of the school board, the school head should provide a reflective narrative on the leadership practices for each evaluation competency.

Assembling a Professional Practices Portfolio

Horning (2017) states, "much of the day-to-day work of a superintendent is not evident to the school board, yet the board members are required to evaluate the work of the superintendent" (p. 5). School heads should establish a professional practices portfolio to continuously organize their "illustrations of professional practice" (Picone-Zocchia, 2014, p.8). In other words, the school head drives an evidence-based evaluation leading to a more authentic assessment of his/her leadership practices. This allows a school head to present a body of work to the school board which contain exemplars and evidence aligned to each of the identified competencies within the annual evaluation (Horning, 2017).

Conducting a Self-Assessment

At the end of the year, the head of schools should review the reflections and evidence before conducting a self-assessment for each of the competencies on the evaluation rubric. This meaningful self-assessment positions the school head and school board for an end-of-year conversation. Of special focus are the similarities and differences between the school board's consolidated evaluation and the school head's self-assessment (Horning, 2017). Objectively comparing the views of the school board with the self-perception of the head of schools naturally leads to the final standard of excellence, engaging the school board in a year-end review.

Engaging the School Board in a Year-end Review

The final, and important, step in the evaluation process is the year-end conversation between the school head and school board (Horning, 2017). All the quantitative and qualitative data along with the reflections and evidence "provide an excellent catalyst for conversation" (Horning, 2017, p. 5) in reviewing the school-head's performance. This relevant and focused conversation derived from this evaluation process inclusive of these standards of excellence is intended to keep the leadership team strong and stable (Horning, 2017). The year-end review also provides the opportunity to begin the conversation on next year's annual school-head goals triggering the beginning of the next evaluation cycle.

Conclusion

Following standards of excellence for effective school-head evaluations will ensure a healthy relationship between the school board and head of schools. According to Hendricks (2013), conflicts with the individual members or the entire school board is the primary reason for a head of schools to leave his/her employment positon. A healthy relationship among the leadership mitigates this primary reason for shortened school-head tenures. Effective school-head evaluations based on standards of excellence keep a leadership team healthy leading to a longer tenure for the head of schools. Sustained leadership of the school head has many advantages. Nevertheless, the most important advantage is the direct impact on student achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006; Myers, 2015). Student achievement is the crucial principal foundational to all decisions made within the educational community. In short, sustained leadership matters; it has an important impact on many organizational variables and is a desired commodity for any organization (Çoğaltay & Karadağ, 2016; Northouse, 2016). As this fundamental truth becomes universally known and accepted, it increases the importance of having an effective and fair evaluation process for the head of schools.

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Teacher Engagement and the Pursuit of Happiness

By Ash Pugh

Recruitment and retention go hand in hand: something I've witnessed time and time again throughout my decade working in international education at Teach Away. Get your recruitment strategy right, we always say to our partner schools, and you'll go a long way to ensuring strong retention rates. And this still holds true. However, as the following story illustrates, recruiting the right teachers for your school is only half the battle.

Way back in 2008, Teach Away worked on a large-scale hiring campaign for a government program undergoing massive educational reform. While we had no trouble attracting the volume of qualified candidates required to help this particular program meet their ambitious hiring targets, their nascent post-hire support process contributed to a dropout rate that was much higher than they wanted.

The following recruitment year, we worked together with our partner to create a tailored pre-departure program for successful hires through a series of theme-based webinars and outreach. Our efforts paid huge dividends; dropout and turnover rates dropped dramatically. By aligning expectations to the reality on the ground, retention rates shifted to where we needed them.

A cautionary tale for international schools and programs everywhere: without quality recruitment, onboarding and retention processes, hiring new teachers becomes a never-ending cycle of wasted time and money.

I was excited to have the opportunity to co-moderate a series of sessions with Dr. Ann Jurewicz at the 52nd AAIE Conference in February of this year, exploring the interconnected topics of teacher recruitment, engagement and retention alongside international school leaders from around the world. Dr. Jurewicz recently completed her dissertation, where she surveyed nearly 1,000 teachers on critical factors influencing contract renewal. As luck would have it, Teach Away had also recently completed a survey of over 10,000 educators, diving deep into their motivations for teaching abroad, what matters to them when seeking employment and what makes them happiest at a school. What we wanted to do together was to take a holistic approach to mapping out and understanding the journey from job seeker, to candidate, all the way through to a teacher's first year at your school, to help you figure out what you can do to ensure a smooth transition from new hire candidate to an engaged, committed educator. Over the course of our combined research and discussions, we uncovered a common thread winding through retention, engagement and recruitment - the secret sauce for teacher retention, if you will: Happiness.

You might think that cultivating a happy teacher workforce is an elusive (and arguably subjective) goal. But, as our research shows, when it comes to keeping teachers at your school, the pursuit of happiness is a worthwhile one. If your school has a retention problem, it's a relatively safe bet that you likely have some work to do on the happiness front. Your teachers must be given the training and tools they need to be successful. They also need to be satisfied with their work environment and compensation. Which leads us to our next question: Why does your teachers' happiness matter now more than ever?

1. It's time to brace for change.

It's important for school leaders to understand that the international education recruitment landscape is changing - and changing fast. Until relatively recently, an oversupply of teachers put the power in the hands of international schools to have their pick of teachers, on their terms. Over the last few years, we've seen a fundamental shift in the balance of power from hiring school to candidate. We're experiencing a time of unprecedented growth in the international school market. According to ISC Research, which has tracked and analyzed data on the world's international schools for over 20 years, the biggest challenge facing international schools over the next five years will be finding enough skilled teachers.

In fact, in order to keep up with the demand for English-speaking K-12 teachers, international schools are going to need to source an additional 150,000 qualified teachers by 2021. That's an increase of 36% in less than four years. It's clear that hiring schools no longer hold all the cards. With qualified teachers in high demand and more opportunities available to them than ever before, you need to understand what matters most to candidates and harness that information to attract and keep them at your school.

2. It's also time to start thinking about your long-term growth.

It's important to keep the big picture in mind. As a school head or principal, you're striving to build and sustain a community. This community does not just happen by happy accident and it's certainly no small task. It requires vision and intent. Knowing what your community culture and values are and hiring according to these is a key first step to getting the right teachers at your school. It won't guarantee they'll stick around for the long term, however. To build a strong and lasting community, you need to ensure that your teachers are engaged and excited to come to work and that student learning outcomes are met. In turn, you'll have satisfied parents and rising

Source: Rainer Strack, October 2014 at TED@BCG

enrolment rates.

So, what is exactly it that makes new teachers happy? And how can you evaluate and improve your existing recruitment and onboarding processes to ensure a positive experience for candidates and new hires? Let's take a closer look.

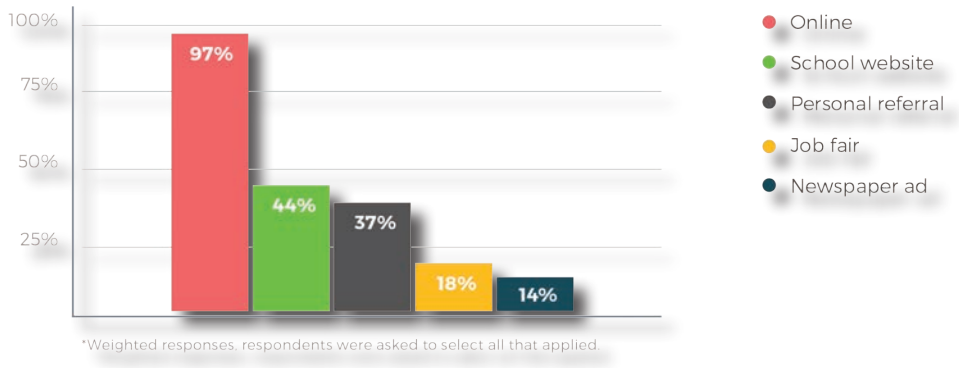
Why teachers stay and why they go.

Conventional wisdom might suggest that salary and financial perks are the biggest indicators of whether or not a teacher chooses to stay at your school. In fact, top indicators of happiness, as outlined by Rainer Strack, aren't financial at all. Especially among the generation currently entering the job market - our future teachers - key indicators are things like appreciation for their work and building quality relationships with colleagues. As shown to left bottom, salary comes into the picture further down - as the eighth most important item on the list. Don't make the fatal flaw of assuming that teachers stay solely for money.

Berlin. The workforce crisis of 2030 and how to start solving it now.

Teacher recruitment, onboarding and retention don't happen in a linear sequence. They are interwoven and cyclical:

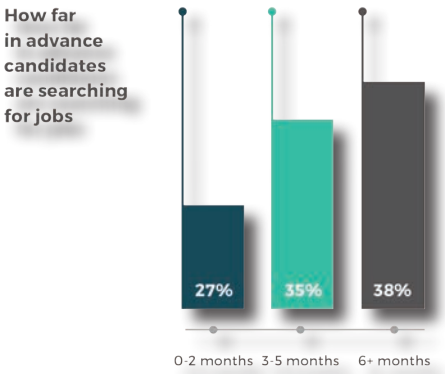
How well you, as a school leader, manage each stage of this lifecycle is not only key to attracting and retaining teachers. It will also become an increasingly important factor in determining which schools thrive and which struggle to maintain sufficient talent levels in an increasingly competitive space. Think about it. By optimizing your hiring process to attract and engage candidates who are a close fit for your school culture, the likelihood is that these are the very candidates who will seamlessly integrate into and become productive members of your staff. And the better your onboarding process works to help these new staff members adjust and find happiness in their new role and environment, the more likely they are to stay. Finally, the more happy and productive teachers you can keep around, the less recruitment you'll need to worry about - freeing up time and money for your school to focus on other ways to grow.

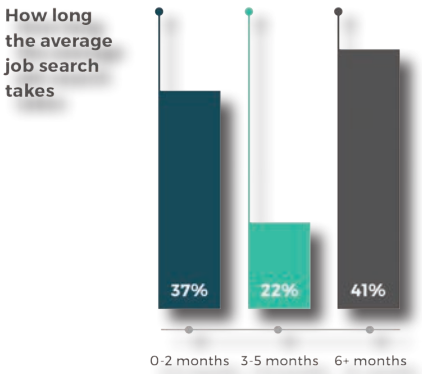


Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.

How can you make your hiring work better for you?

To help international schools understand what candidates are looking for and how to engage them, Teach Away recently surveyed over 10,000 educators. The results, published in our International Education Recruitment Report, outline a number of data-driven strategies to help you improve your recruitment process. Let's look at a few things you can do, right away, to stay competitive:





Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.

1. Make recruiting a year-round process

Our research shows that 73% of candidates prefer to start their job search anywhere from three to six months ahead of time and 41% of job seekers say it takes them over six months from when their job search begins to when they accept a job offer. Candidates today want the ability to search for and apply for jobs on their own terms, not on the schedule that is most convenient for schools.

2. Post your vacancies in the right place.

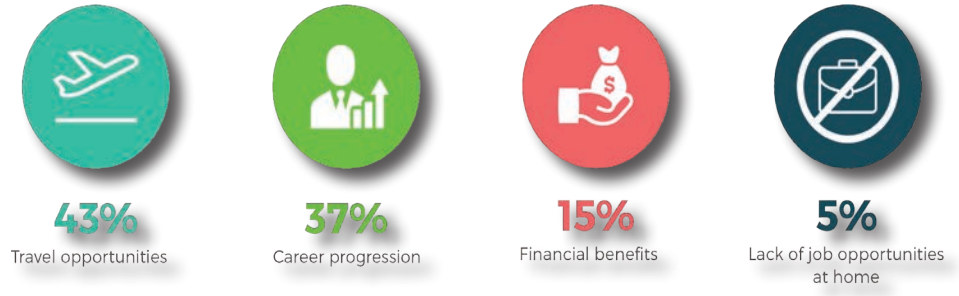
Relatively few candidates continue to use traditional job search methods, such as newspaper ads (3%) and job fairs (4%). Among your target candidates, online recruitment is the new norm. Our research shows that 97% of teacher candidates are searching for jobs online - and education-specific job boards took the #1 spot as the most effective way to find teaching jobs abroad. This is a trend that rings true across all industries: 2015 research from the Pew Research Center revealed that 90% of all recent job seekers were searching for jobs online. If you haven't already done so, it's high time to take a close look at the recruiting channels you're using and ask yourself whether these are truly driving the highest number of qualified candidates to your school.

3. Don't forget that travel is a key motivator.

Candidates aren't teaching abroad out of economic necessity - our research revealed that financial reasons and a lack of opportunities trailed behind, in third place and fourth place, respectively. Today's

international teaching candidate embraces the prospect of broadening their horizons and is serious about their career progression. If you aren't already doing so, it's time to revamp your job postings to include compelling job content that showcases the benefits that make a position at your school impactful and rewarding. Write a job posting that's more than just a list of the things that you want in your ideal candidate. You need to get today's travel-motivated teaching candidates excited about the place they'll be relocating to.

Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.



4. Help candidates see the big picture

Your candidates take a variety of factors into account when deciding which schools to apply for, including salary, location and career progression opportunities. While compensation undoubtedly plays an important role in a candidate's decision, other benefits could ultimately have a greater impact. Schools that can't compete on compensation or location alone should bear in mind other factors - like culture among the staff - when positioning their school to candidates. That said, you should aim to keep your salary offers competitive with other schools in your region.

Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.

5. You need to make your candidate feel wanted

On average, Teach Away candidates submit more than five applications to teach abroad per year, so it's worth keeping in mind that the best candidates will likely have several options to choose from. How candidates feel about you throughout the recruitment process will influence how they feel about you as a potential employer. Are applications being acknowledged? Are candidates being kept informed of their status in the process? Are they being treated as though they're genuinely valued, appreciated and wanted? If the answer to any of these questions is no, you're risking losing out on the best candidates to other schools.

Once you've signed a candidate you love, your work is done, right? Not necessarily. The truth is, your work has only just begun. At Teach Away, the average lead time between a candidate accepting an offer and their start date is 123 days - that's plenty of time for new hires to get cold feet. We asked our teachers to identify the way schools can help them adjust to their new environment:

New Arrivals

As community builders, you need a pre-onboarding program to get your new hires comfortable and invested in their new role and environment. By doing so, you're not just more likely to avoid dropouts before candidates start. You're also setting the stage for prolonged happiness when your new hires ultimately arrive at your school.

1. Make new hires feel like part of your school community.

Personal touches, such as setting up their school email address so they receive communications and can engage with the community, or sending them a t-shirt with your school logo, can go a long way towards making new hires feel welcome and engaged.

2. Prepare new hires for life in their new surroundings.

New teachers undoubtedly have questions about what life will be like when they arrive at their new home. You can alleviate a lot of anxiety on their part by making a concerted effort to prepare new hires for life abroad. Look into creating opportunities for existing staff to share their experiences with incoming staff. You could try hosting themed webinars run by current staff to share ideas about what entertainment options are available in your location, activities for families, what affairs to get in order at home before you leave or tips and tricks to help get set up when you arrive. You could also set up groups for incoming and outgoing staff to interact. Facilitating the passing on of rental homes, sale of cars or furniture, or even just providing a way for a new teacher to find out how to bring their beloved pet with them can be of great assistance to both incoming and outgoing staff.

3. Have an effective onboarding process in place.

We've seen that international schools with a comprehensive onboarding process experience a significantly reduced likelihood of attrition within the first few months, compared with schools with a weaker - or nonexistent - onboarding process. As recent hire turnover continues to be a significant issue for many international schools worldwide, having a structured onboarding process cannot be overlooked. The first days, weeks and even months can often determine whether a teacher decides to stay at your school long term. Onboarding isn't just about the practical elements of the job that need to be taken care of - securing a work visa, signing the paperwork and outlining professional duties. It's about facilitating a "soft landing" and making a teacher (and their family) feel safe and comfortable in their new school and location.

4. Take the shock out of culture shock.

Culture shock can have a profound impact on new hires. You need to be aware of the

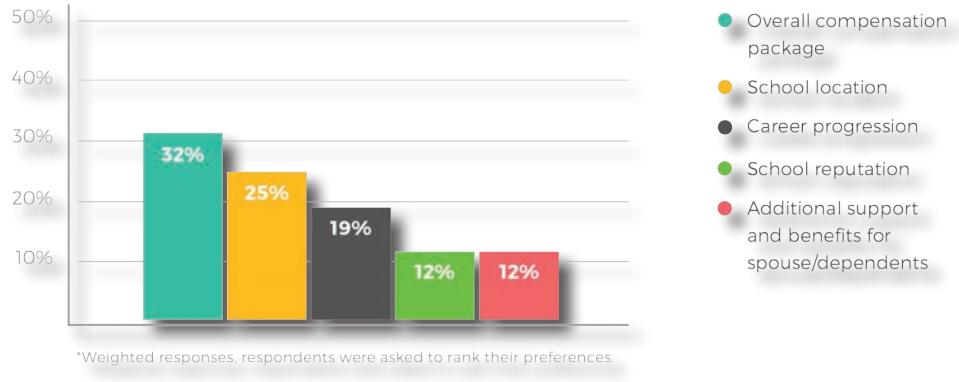
effect it can have on new teachers and be sure to talk to them about it. The support of peers who've been through the same thing and felt the same way they're feeling cannot be understated. And remember that culture shock doesn't only kick in at the beginning of the year, so ensure your efforts are sustained to account for the ups and downs that your new teacher hire will experience throughout the year.

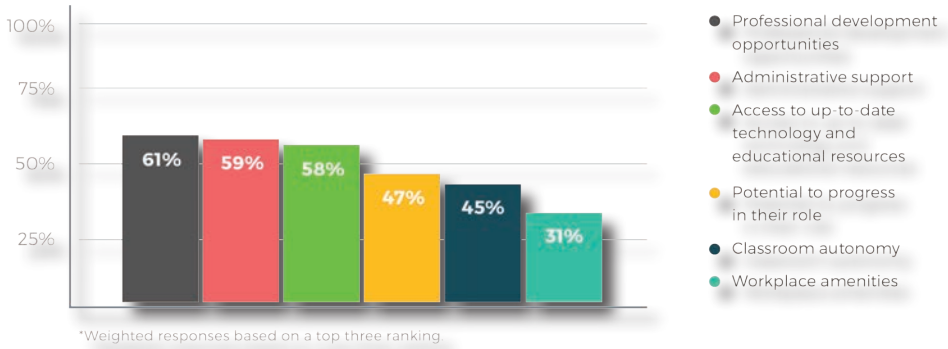
5. Foster relationships among your teaching staff

As we see from Rainer Strack's research, employees value good relationships with colleagues and their superiors. Knowing this, you should ensure you're establishing and maintaining relationships with new employees. You should also provide opportunities, both inside and outside the school, for new teachers to build relationships with their colleagues. This could take the form of formalized social events or creating a teacher-led social committee to schedule informal gatherings that allow colleagues to connect.

According to Dr. Jurewicz's research, 63% of teachers surveyed intended to stay in their current roles beyond two years. Conversely, only 43% of teachers intended to stay after year three. This highlights the challenge that international schools face on a regular basis when it comes to sustaining staff levels. Even when teachers are relatively happy, the lure of travel (among many other potential factors) can draw them away. So, what can you do to entice teachers to stick around longer and maintain the strong foundation of faculty that you've worked so hard to build at your school? To help answer that question, we asked our candidates what they value most in their jobs:

Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.





Top factors for on-the-job happiness

Source: Teach Away, International Education Recruitment Report 2017-2018. Download the complete report at www.teachaway.com/report.

1. Make opportunities for growth at your school.

By training teachers and investing in their career development, you can make them feel valued by your school. Beyond training, it's vital to ensure your new hires know that there's room to grow professionally through opportunities to lead within their department or subject area. It also stands to reason that when your teachers feel they're able to do their jobs more effectively, they become more confident and secure in their roles and are less likely to look elsewhere.

2. Involve teachers in the hiring process

You depend on your teachers for input on other vital school matters. So why not involve them in the hiring of new employees? Think of it - they're going to be working alongside any new hires and will be just as invested in finding the right teachers as you are. Their familiarity with your school culture and values also gives them unmatched insight into the candidates who could be a great fit for your school community. This can also be a great way to relieve yourself of some of the demands of recruitment. More than that, though - you're keeping your current teachers engaged and allowing them to develop a new skill set, to grow professionally by encouraging them to stay invested in your school's future success. In short, you're making them want to stay around. Professional growth for your teachers leads to retention for your school.

3. Let them be responsible for new teacher onboarding

Nobody knows the challenges of relocating abroad better than those who have already done it. Empower your existing staff to take the lead on passing along their experiences and preparing incoming staff for their new environment. Again, you'll see dual benefits as your new hires are supported with a robust onboarding process and existing teachers are able to take on leadership roles.

So there you have it - by embracing these actionable teacher recruitment, onboarding and retention strategies, your school will be well on its way to attracting and retaining the best international teachers, even in an increasingly competitive hiring landscape.

Ash Pugh, Director of Operations at Teach Away, can be reached at ash@teachaway.com.

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Meaningful Innovation

By Cary Reid

Innovation in education is something about which we are all excited. We, as educators, know the problem that we are trying to fix and we have a clear idea of the changes that we want to make in our schools. So, we have a pretty good idea about . . . what . . . to . . . do. If we are honest, things start to get a bit murky when we try to nail down the steps to get there or the sacrifices it will take. We know that we have to improve the way we work. However, change is complex and it becomes more difficult when the stakes are young lives with which we have been entrusted. How do we innovate meaningfully and responsibly? Getting the right people together may be the one of the best ways to sustain innovation in your school.

Innovation is more than change. While change can be good; innovation is structural. Organizations are different, school boards vary, and student bodies run the gamut. However, the need to improve the fundamentals of how teaching supports learners is widespread. The points of leverage and catalytic opportunities, as with any change, are familiar. We know the answers to many of these questions:

Why? *Our students' future employers are demanding it.*

For whom? *Our students*

With whom? *Faculty and staff*

Where? *In a classroom that should look different than it did in the 1800s*

When? *This year*

When faced with the difficulties of "How to…?" or "What…?", our duty as stewards usually outweighs our desire to make radical changes to the systems designed to support children.

Schools are interesting places, being simultaneously dynamic and static. This makes change more interesting. The entire student body moves every year. On the other hand, most of our classrooms still look Victorian. Somewhere between these two poles are many smaller changes and more areas of stickiness. Moving from a computer in every school, to every classroom, and now a laptop on every desk, while maintaining the same pedagogy and assessment requires evolution - natural adaptation. Within this constant change, sometimes we forget that slow gradual evolution is not innovation. And innovation is what we are looking toward.

I have found that it makes more sense to try to innovate rather than make incremental changes. In the face of problems, such as standardized curriculum or a lack of classroom space evolution will immediately be more attractive than fighting against longstanding structures. Evolution is easier to manage and reduces the potential for damage, but it is not a panacea.

Over the last hundred years, the school day has remained about the same length. During that time, we have made small additions to content, added a few subjects, and increased the number of assessments. Seemingly harmless changes. However, a hundred years later, we are realizing that these changes in workload and academic requirements without changes to the underlying system have contributed to worsening health outcomes for our students. Small changes that avoided the fundamental problems had significant effects.

Complexity makes innovation the way to go. Any change, big or small, to how we teach will shake some other part of the system. We are going to break something. We have to be honest about that. There are also many things in school that no longer support today's learners. If we do nothing, we are not educators. We have to be honest about that too. Let us try to address some of the core problems that we see in our schools.

Meaningful and responsible innovation is possible. I have found that "With whom…?" –rather than "How to…?" or "What…?" – has been a more constructive starting point for innovation. We work in the people business. A room of smart, resourceful, committed, reflective, and forward-looking educators focusing on how to improve their practice is the best thing to put between the problem that you identified and the future that you envision.

While you plan your staffing needs for next year, think about how your team will support your plans for innovation. Having the right people in the room fosters creativity, builds courage, keeps the program moving, and creates a culture of forgiveness for when your plans do not turn out the way you planned. Prioritizing getting the right people in the room gives you a better chance of creating something worthy of your time and safe for your students.

A creative and courageous team will contribute to meaningful and responsible change. The right team can work around the things that cannot be changed and can create responses to the things that can be changed. The right people can adapt their teaching ("How to…?"), connect novel concepts to standardized curriculum (What…?), and use spaces differently (Where…?) to improve student outcomes. The right people can reduce the stickiness, immediately and continually.

Speaking to colleagues in other schools, I realize that I had the perfect combination of school leadership, teachers, school board, parents, and, most importantly, students. The great team already in place was the reason we were able to challenge so many traditional educational structures and get so much done.

Not having the perfect mix of people is not a good reason to abandon the journey. I have found that the best way to create the team needed for the journey is to break the process down into keeping the right people, attracting the right people, and helping the right people transition.

You probably have much of the team already. Your staff will be in two camps, those who will be supportive of your plans to improve, and those who fundamentally disagree with the vision that you have. The former group will consist of teachers who are waiting to start working on the project

with you. However, a few of the supporters are getting ready to leave because they want to change the status quo and have not heard your plans for innovation. It is time to start sharing your ideas for how you want to move forward. Unfortunately, you also have a small cadre who are not here for change and will actively work to frustrate innovation.

The first thing to do is determine the people you already have in the room. Who is ready for this? Who keeps asking for a bit more flexibility to try something different? Those are the easy people to identify. As with any innovation, many things will not work. Everybody will break something. Try to identify the people who are more resilient to failure and understand that failure is a part of the process. Those are good people to help create a culture of forgiveness, which everybody will need. The stakes are already high because we work with children. However, the current program, flawed as it is, gives cover if something does not work. Changing the system eliminates the cover and requires you to be even more rigorous. Innovating without jeopardizing your school's reputation is going to require the most responsible people you have on board to keep the team focused. All these people are already on board. They may not agree with your idea of the destination, but they are looking for the train headed towards progress. Desire ignites creativity. Agreement comes much later, if at all. Select for desire.

If you are not able to identify the team within your existing staff, then focusing on developing culture when you hire should be your priority. Mindfully incorporate the qualities that support innovation during your annual recruiting. Every year, you have a chance to add to the culture that you want to develop. Finding exceptional teachers who also fit within your school culture is, sometimes, challenging. I appreciate that. You have also had the experience of realizing someone you have hired is not a good fit as soon as you meet in person. I often see schools miss this opportunity to develop their culture and are surprised that they end up with good teachers who are unhappy. Ability and talent are necessary. Ensure that your staff has both, but ability and talent are not enough. Ensuring they are a good cultural fit is equally, if not more important.

The final part of getting the right people in the room to support innovation is uncomfortable. Support people in their need to be somewhere else. While you appreciate that your innovation journey will be unpopular, it may be unacceptable to some members of your staff. You know these people. You can already see their picture. They make your life difficult. If they cannot work within the framework that you want to have, they will make achieving it difficult and they would be a better fit in another school.

They are also correct. Even though you may disagree with them, you both care deeply about education and about your students. However, yours may not be the right environment to nurture their ideas. They are good at what they do, but they may not be good at what you want to get done. An important part of innovation is recognizing that there is no single way to educate. Learning is about creating options for students. Whatever the nature of the innovation towards which you work, you should be adding another color to the palette. Some of your faculty should be somewhere else making an existing color even richer. You should be helping them to transition to the right room.

Losing good people, even those with whom you disagree, is frustrating because recruiting is hard. Do not allow that frustration to motivate you to keep people in the room who should not be there. Acknowledge the educators who have worked with your students by supporting them to be somewhere that suits them and their ability. I appreciate that this time of year is difficult enough without adding more work. This may be unconventional but reaching out to colleagues in other schools and letting them know that a good teacher is available helps them to get the right people on their team. It is also the most respectful way to make space for the right people in your room.

Innovation is exciting but less easy to do well. There are a lot of questions to answer and many stakeholders with whom to collaborate on this dream. Our tradition of education is one of a few reasons that innovation may be more difficult in the education field. Layers of complexity make the problem of how to innovate seem even more overwhelming. There are many constructive entry points to begin trying to improve your school. I have found that in the face of many options, assembling a team of good people may be the best place to start this journey. As you prepare for next year, plan how you will keep the right people at your school; how to bring on new talent who fit within the culture that you are building; and how to truly support your current teachers who are looking for a better fit. Practices or encouragement that supports your staff and faculty who believe in your principles will create the environment in which meaningful and responsible innovation can succeed in your organization.

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Teacher Preparation for Home-School Partnerships in an International School

By Sharon Canadine, Audrey Rabas, Julia Britt and Toni Carr

Background

In her research, Price-Mitchell (2009) defined partnership between parents and the school as an equitable relationship. In a home-school partnership, this means that the input of both home and school is valued, and the focus is on what both parents and educators can do to promote student learning (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). Price-Mitchell (2009) provided evidence to support the need for home-school partnerships. Additional research by Mattingly, Prislin, McKenzie, Rodriguez, and Kayzar (2002) found correlations conclusive that that home-school partnerships have multiple levels of proven benefits for the school community. Price-Mitchell (2009) stated that the integration of a home-school partnership is the great hope of the future of education and Epstein (2005) writes that it is seen as a prerequisite for children's academic success

Shared-decision making (Blase & Blasé, 1999; O'Brien, 2004) provided the foundation of the home-school partnership (Feuerstein, 2000; Murray, McFarland-Piazza & Harrison, 2015; Powell, 1978) by setting up the rules of engagement within a proactive systematic approach (Knoff & Raffaele, 1999). In an international school community, where the school serves as home to the transient community members, the onus rests with the school to share proactively the ethos of the school for others to adhere (Knoff & Raffaele, 1999).

When the school leadership accepts responsibility to create mechanism to identify and systematically address the establishment of such partnerships (Pattni-Shah, 2008), educators are charged with the responsibility of sustaining the partnership. Educators are also better prepared to foster the expectations of the school community when they receive adequate teacher preparation in building the home-school partnership (Chavkin & Williams, 1988; Epstein, 2005; Epstein & Sanders, 2006; Hiatt-Mitchell, 2001; Willemse, Vloeberghs, de Bruïne & Van Eynde, 2016). This conclusion led to an investigation of teacher preparation for fostering the home-school partnership in an international school community and the role of school leadership to define the culture through a systematic approach to teacher preparation.

Context

The research on the benefits of the home-school partnership is conclusive (Mattingly, Prislin, McKenzie, Rodriguez, & Kayzar, 2002). The historical research (Epstein & Salinas, 1992; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Reynolds & Clements, 2005; Van Roekel, 2008; Zinth, 2005) was compelling enough that it led to educational policies and educational agendas in the United States that mandate that the home-school partnership have presence in the school community (Act, E. S. S., 2015; National Parent Teacher Association, 1997). The research behind the federal interest in the home-school partnership (Epstein & Salinas, 1992; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Henderson, Mapp, Johnson, & Davies, 2007; Reynolds, Arthur, & Clements, 2005; Van Roekel, 2008; Zinth, 2005) affirmed the benefit of the involvement by parents and supports the argument that parents are a critical component of a child's educational success (Goals 2000, 1994).

Further, research by Hiatt-Michael (2001) and Epstein and Sanders (2006) provided evidence that universities did not adequately prepare educators for their future partnerships with parents. The MetLife Survey of American Teachers (2013) confirmed that educators remain frustrated and challenged with the home-school partnership. Broussard (2003) reported that educators enter the field without concrete knowledge and skills about how to establish and facilitate home-school partnerships with them.

Missing from research is evidence of efforts to prepare the teachers to foster the home-school partnership. The lack of systematic efforts (Blase & Blasé, 1999; Goldring & Shapira, 1993; Gordon & Louise, 2009; O'Brien, 2004; Shatkin & Gershberg, 2007; Price-Mitchell, 2009) to prepare educators for this evidence-based benefit to education seems to be a missed opportunity on behalf of teacher preparation and schools. Educators seemingly remain ill prepared (Epstein, 2005; Willemse, Vloeberghs, de Bruïne & Van Eynde, 2016) to develop the home-school partnerships as they enter the profession.

In the international school environment where teachers come from diverse teacher preparation programs and educational systems, the knowledge of education systems or other formal and informal experiences, that provide teacher preparation in the area of the home-school connection, if uncovered, can help to guide other education systems to improve their preparation as it pertains to the home-school partnership. Without school leadership guiding preparation, teachers offer a haphazard style of communication to parents (Kraft & Dougherty, 2013); teachers express dissatisfaction when they engage with families and rate the home-school partnership as one of their greatest challenges (MetLife, 2013); and students do not reap the benefits of the home-school connection.

School leadership in an international school should be mindful that this lack of teacher preparation for the home-school connection could have a greater consequence in the ad hoc transient community developed in International Schools (Kester, Sloep, Van Rosmalen, Brouns, Kone, & Koper, 2007) where the core of the community relationship is the defined by the school (Gellar, 1996). The parent perception of boundaries created by the lack of systems in place could lead families to feel like outsiders of the school community (Cunningham, 2014).

Preparation for Educators to Foster Home-School Partnership

Six decades of research from 1988 to 2013 evidences the need to prepare educators for the home-school partnership. Chavkin

and Williams (1988) used data from a six-year study conducted by the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) in which 3000 parents and 4000 educators responded to queries about the inclusion of the home-school partnerships in their coursework. The research concluded that there was not enough preservice preparation on the topic of home-school relationships for educators. Hiatt-Michael (2001) surveyed higher education heads and deemed that legislation was needed that prepare teachers to meet necessary requirements to work effectively with families in the United States.

As a leader in the field of research pertaining to the home-school connection, Epstein (2005) drew conclusions using a study conducted with leaders of schools, colleges, and departments of education (SCDEs) about their courses on the parent-school connection. Epstein's research concluded that teachers enter the profession of teaching ill prepared to develop and foster the parent-school partnerships (Anderson & Minke, 2007; Epstein, 2005; Willemse, Vloeberghs, de Bruïne & Van Eynde, 2016). The same study by Epstein (2005) conducted in the United States was mirrored by Willemse, Vloeberghs, de Bruïne and Van Eynde (2016) in Holland and Belgium and found similar findings, extending the conclusion that without preparation, the teachers only know how to react to parents when the expectation is to collaborate. The researchers stated that the core of teacher preparation should take place in universities. Epstein and Sanders (2006) explored preparation of pre-service teachers by conducting a survey of 161 schools, colleges and departments of education in the United States to investigate current courses and content offered to preservice teachers. Most deans surveyed stated that their preservice teachers were not well prepared to build and foster a partnership with parents. The surveys note that there is a widespread belief that courses are vital but not offered in universities.

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership (2013) evidenced through surveys that both elementary and secondary school teachers view communicating with and involving parents in education as their greatest challenge. New teachers' answered that their third most common source of stress is parents. While only 3% of new teachers mentioned parents as a source of satisfaction, 20% say they are among their greatest sources of stress or anxiety. The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership (2013) report stated that 68% of elementary teachers, 72% of principals and 82% of secondary school teachers state that engaging with parents is very challenging and as a significant leadership challenge for teachers and principals. It is evident from the research that the teachers are ill prepared to develop and sustain a home-school partnership at the time they enter the teaching profession.

With the above research in mind this study was designed to examine three questions and subsequent areas of elaboration in the context of an international school:

- How do teachers perceive systems such as process and procedures, in the school to have an impact on the home-school partnership?
- How are teachers informed about the expectations of the home-school partnership?
- In what ways are the teachers encouraged to foster home-school partnerships?
- In what ways is the current school culture similar or different to other school cultures?
- What is the perception held by teachers about preservice or point of instruction experiences or trainings presented that have led to their personal level of preparedness for the home-school partnership at international schools?
- What preparation has supported the role of teachers to foster the home-school partnership?
- How comfortable are teachers in fostering the home-school partnership?
- What is the perception held by teachers of how preparation for the home-school partnership could be improved in international schools?

Descriptive Data

As an ethnographic study, purposeful sampling was employed to ensure that the interview subjects represented a cross-section of the culture of the school. Using a non-random selection criterion, the final 21 participants are representative of the teacher population at this international school setting. The group contained six males and 15 females. The participants represented nine different nationalities. The group contained ten teachers with school-aged children and 11 teachers without school-aged children. The group represented experience at the site ranging from one year to 15 years. The group also represented novice and experienced teachers in a breakdown of eight novice teachers and 13 expert teachers. To ensure the confidentiality of each participant, each person determined a pseudonym of their own choosing and was assigned a participant number.

Interpretation of themes from research question one.

The purpose of research question one was to understand systems in place at the school and to further understand expectations set by the school for the Home-School Partnership. The perception of the teachers regarding the systems in place and expectations of the school fell into five different categories:

Familiar with the expectations at current school, 2. When familiar, cited school to home (not home to school) expectations only, 3. Not familiar with expectations, 4. Familiar with the expectation at previous school, and 5. Expectations were part of their professional conduct.

Research question one focuses on the systems and expectations of international schools. The data demonstrated that teachers possess varied perceptions of the systems and expectations in the school regarding the home-school partnership with the majority of teachers remaining unclear of systems and expectations at the site school. The systems and expectations that were clear to some teachers were those related to communication from the school to home and not from the home to school. School to home communication expectations were found in documents such as calendars and school guidelines. Because of the varied perceptions of systems and expectations, teachers offer haphazard partnership opportunities to parents, such as ease of access and availability to parents. While the teachers perceive the site school to lack the systems and expectations regarding the home-school partnership, teachers also stated that from their experience, the school did not differ from the majority of other international schools. Teachers

perceive that systematic approaches to the home-school partnership are sparse in the international schools and when they exist, expectations can be a direct reflection of the current school leadership or philosophy of the school.

Research question two pertains to the experiences of teachers that lead to preparation to foster the home-school partnership. The responses regarding the experiences or trainings provided that would lead to teacher preparation fell in to two categories: 1. Formal and 2. Informal experiences A third category that emerged continually related to the feeling of preparedness by the teacher.

The data from the open-ended interviews, used to analyze question two, evidenced a lack of systematic formal preparation at the preservice level. Based on these findings it is clear that consistent, formal preparation is not taking place in the universities for the pre-service teachers. Nor did there exist a systematic process for informal preparation at the school site. Because of this, teachers seek to understand the systems at the school through collegial support and through a process of trial and error. This approach leads to greater inconsistency due to the varied perspectives of the colleague and experiences of the teachers. A 'trial and error' approach to learning to work with parents was greater among male teachers which was followed by many negative experiences in the first few years of teaching for these teachers and the families they encounter. Teachers who are parents have a depth of insider information to assist in developing protocols and teacher preparation. Most importantly, it is critical to prepare the novice teachers for their experiences with parents increasing the confidence of novice teachers in their ability to foster the home-school partnership. Utilizing teachers who are parents, as well as expert teachers has been seen to offer site-based knowledge.

When participants were asked to speak to improving the preparation of the teachers for the home-school partnership, participants readily shared areas they felt needed attention. This was coded into five categories: 1. Improving the first years of teaching, 2. Improve by educating on culture, 3. Explicitly prepare teachers for parent conferences, 4. Improve beginning of each year structures, and 5. Developing a shared mindset.

Research question three focused on how preparation for the home-school partnership could be improved in international schools. The teachers responded that the first years of teaching were very difficult when it came to teacher partnerships with parents. In each school the community culture, the parent culture and the school culture coexist. As stated by one participant, "each international school is vastly different, it would be hard to train a person to understand this culture unless they are at the school site." Teachers say they would benefit from front loaded information on the culture when they arrive in a new school community. Parent conferences create negative feelings for teachers and they would benefit from explicit learning opportunities around the conferences. Data evidenced that a shared mindset voiced by the school administration would lead to greater clarity and consistency schoolwide. The mindset of the teachers plays a role in how they create the parent partnership. Teachers perceive that by improving the practice of sharing cultural information, improving preparation and the systems for parent conferences, as well as developing a shared mindset on school values they would have improved preparation.

Moving forward, a collaborative, systemic approach to teacher preparation for the home-school partnership should be implemented. Without a collective consciousness around the partnership, the offerings by teachers could remain varied and haphazard leading to confusion by the parents and the teachers. The responsibility of school leadership is to set the stage to ensure quality teacher preparation and continued support for the home-school partnership.

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N=a novice teacher defined as one with zero to three years teaching experience (Berliner, 1988; Kagan, 1992; Korevaar & Bergen, 1992; Michel, 2013).

E= Experienced teachers are teachers who have taught for at least five years (Arani, 2017; Michel, 2013; Podsen, 2002).

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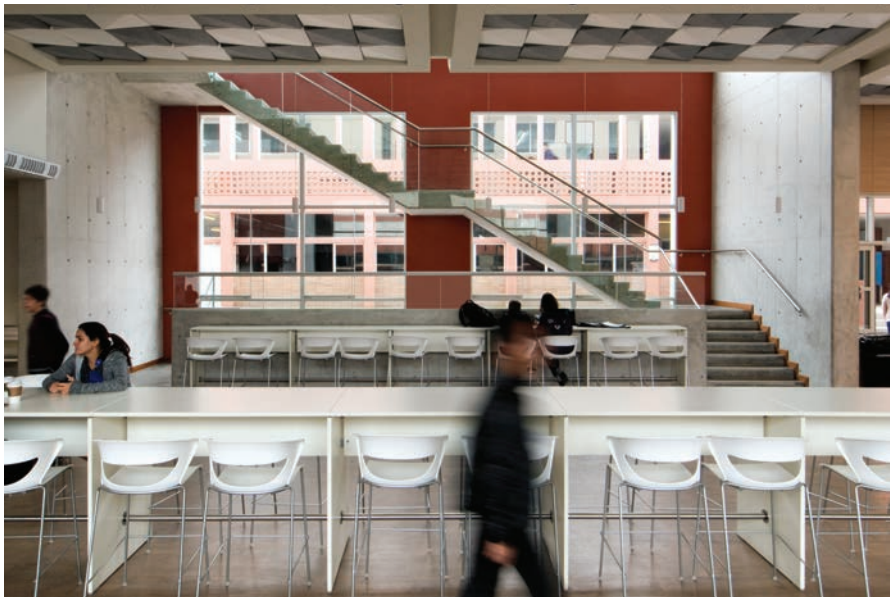

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Connections and Implications of Praise on Mindset: Ideas for Sustainable Leadership

By Lori Cooper

Educators are constantly looking for areas for improvement. Oftentimes the focus is how to make the biggest impact that will make a difference in the long-term with the resources available. Yet, how do we make positive change in a sustainable and meaningful way?

There are many ways to answer that question, but one such intervention, shifting the way we praise students, can have lasting change that can impact students and schools for years to come. What if we reframe the way that we speak to our students and faculty to help them to develop a mindset of growth to allow for increased motivation and likelihood to take on challenge? Is it really that simple?

Let's take a closer look.

Scenario

Imagine for a moment that you have accomplished something that you have been working hard on for quite some time. You tried a new, delicious recipe that was well-loved by your family; you finally were able to reach that student that was struggling to read; you were able to navigate an unfamiliar country, language, and transit system on a recent trip; or whatever accomplishment generates pride within you. Now imagine you contact the person closest to you who is your biggest cheerleader such as your spouse, your parent, your sibling, or your best friend.. When you finally get them on the phone, they respond to your great news in the following way: "You're so smart!" That's it. No engaging conversation to determine what steps you needed to take to get there, no listening to the obstacles that you overcame, and no celebration of your accomplishments other than "You're so smart." How did that feel?

Now let's imagine a different scenario. You just accomplished the very same heroic feat as in the last scenario, but your loved one instead said "Wow, you must have had quite the challenge with that, but you were willing to take it on!" How did that feel? Did you notice a shift in focus? The first scenario elicited a response of evaluation and non-specific feedback. It was not harmful or rude, it just didn't provide you with meaningful feedback that wanted you to share. It also didn't generate your own sense of pride in the accomplishment. The first feedback focused on the output and forced an evaluation of it. The second scenario offered an avenue for you to not only be reflective and proud, but to also share more about the experience. The focus in the second scenario was on you and your ability to try something new. It focused on the process and effort that you used to overcome challenge.

Implications in Education

Let's transfer this to classrooms for a moment. A child climbs across the monkey bars for the first time, is finally able to master long division, obtains their driver's license, or earns a good grade in a class that he has been struggling with for some time. A common and simple response could very easily be "Good job" or "You're so smart". This is meant to praise the child for their hard work, but does it help to foster a sense of ownership of the accomplishment and true success or does it impose our views of what success is?

Let's dig a little deeper into praise for a moment. Praise is an expression of favorable judgement, as defined by Merriam-Webster (2018). When we impose our own judgement on the work or act a child has done, we are praising their end-product or ability such as intelligence or talent. If, on the other hand, we encourage their efforts by modifying the language to encouragement of the process or perseverance, we shift the focus from our evaluation of their end-product to language that helps to support their growth and determination.

Praise of ability and praise of effort are subtly different, but can have lasting and vast impressions on the mindset of our students. Below are some examples of praise and encouragement to show the differences between them. Consider how it feels to receive each example and feel the difference between the two.

Ability Praise	Effort Praise
You're a great soccer player!	You tried so hard to get that goal!
You are so smart!	You must have worked hard on that!
Excellent grade!	Your efforts really paid off!
You are such an excellent trumpet player!	You must have been practicing hard for that concert!

Mindset

Carol Dweck (2006) noted in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* that the way challenge is viewed by the student impacts the way they address the issue. According to Dweck (2006), how one perceives themselves e.g. smart, hard-working, good at reading, tenacious, impacts the level of risk they are willing to take and the ways that they view any challenge or failure. An example of this could be a student is struggling with understanding a math concept; she can either think "I'm bad at science" or "I'm struggling with this concept; I need to learn more to improve my understanding." Both statements, if thought by the student, would note the challenge faced regarding science, but the former denotes a fixed mindset that one cannot be successful at something because they don't exhibit the knowledge. The latter mindset, a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006), is one in which the student acknowledges the hardship as something to overcome, but a challenge to work through-not a definition of who they inherently are. In other words, a growth mindset is one in which students might not know it yet, whereas a fixed mindset is one in which a student would believe that they will never "get it."

When students accomplish something, we often react in a way that we hope will build the student up and help them to be proud of their accomplishments. If we give them feedback such as "good job" or "nice work", we are imposing our views of the evaluation of their work and praising the product or output. We also unintentionally sabotage their willingness to try new things and persist if challenged when we praise outputs such as intelligence (Bronson & Merryman, 2007). If, instead, we were to acknowledge the work that went into the effort or encourage the student to feel their own emotions regarding the work done, then we foster the growth mindset that they can evaluate their own work and strive toward continuous improvement and internal satisfaction.

Shifting Language to Support Students

In order to help students be more motivated and eager to try new things, we need to foster a growth mindset in each student. If we change our feedback from "you're so smart" to "you really worked hard on this", for example, we can shift the focus from a fixed mindset (I'm smart) to a growth mindset (I am a hard worker and can keep trying until I "get it"). This shift in language not only helps to validate our students for the effort they put forth, but it also helps them to be inspired to keep working hard. This inspiration to be motivated gets to the heart of what education is all about.

There are other ways to help foster a growth mindset in students, and increasing opportunities to do so only help educators to help build the tenacity and grit within students to encourage more growth and challenge than can be done with a fixed mindset approach (Blackwell, Trzesniewski, & Dweck, 2007). If effort and difficulty are seen as ways to improve oneself instead of deficits in fixed intelligence, we could transform the way that children view challenge and work in general (Dweck, 2014).

Alignment with International Education

In International Baccalaureate (IB) schools, the Learner Profile emphasizes ten attributes in the development of the whole child. These ten attributes are for students to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013). Fostering a growth mindset only supplements these attributes by helping students to be more motivated to develop them. In addition, growth mindset closely aligns with being a risk-taker who explores innovative ideas and strategies, while being resourceful and resilient when challenged (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2013). As international educators and leaders, we could potentially transform the futures of our students by helping them to adopt growth mindsets.

If effort and difficulties are seen as ways to improve instead of deficits, we could transform the way children view challenge and work in general (Dweck, 2014)

Sustainability

Shifting our praise from ability to process helps us to be sustainable educators and leaders by motivating others to continue to strive for excellence with persistence. We can help our students to be more motivated and eager to try new things by helping them to adopt a growth mindset (Dweck, 2007) by transforming how we praise students and focusing on process over product. Because "sustainable leadership secures success over time" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003, p. 4), we can help the future of our schools and communities by simply shifting the way we speak to our students. This shift can transform not only our classrooms and schools, but even our communities.

While growth mindset has been discussed for quite some time, finding additional ways to incorporate this shift in our language as educators only helps our students to potentially increase their motivation, seek new opportunities to learn, allow themselves permission to fail and try again, improve their work resiliency, and help us all to be more sustainable educational leaders. Let us harness the "power of yet" (Dweck, 2014) and empower our students to be motivated, persistent, and transformative.

Dr. Lori Cooper, Assistant Professor, Wilkes University, Lori.Cooper@Wilkes.edu

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Exceptional Children & Youth

By Lawrence Hobdell and Susan Grant

"The mission of the Advisory Committee for Exceptional Children and Youth is to provide consultative support and onsite professional development to American overseas schools for the expressed purpose of recognizing and meeting the needs of students with exceptional educational challenges. This longstanding committee is an extension of the Office of Overseas Schools (OOS), the purpose of which is to promote quality educational opportunities at the elementary and secondary level for dependents of American citizens carrying out programs and interests of the U.S. Government abroad."

Throughout the year, members of the advisory committee travel at the request of the REOs to all regions of the world. Committee members not only support professiol development (PD) through preconference, conference workshops and keynotes at major regional leadership and teacher conferences, they also provide on the ground training and related professional development to international schools.

In 2017, OOS Region Educational Officers (REOs) sponsored participation by advisory committee members at the NESA, MAIS and EARCOS conferences in addition to a regional conference in Montenegro. Experts in their fields in learning disabilities, dyslexia, math challenges, differentiated instruction, assessment and diagnosis, learning strategies and executive functions presented to teachers, special educators, directors and administrators. Email and skype follow up was available to and utilized by participants, reflecting a significant indicator of their engagement and benefit of these strategic opportunities.

Specifically, committee members provided consultation with administrators and directors to assist with developing and expanding resource support programs for children with exceptionalities to NESA, MAIS, EARCOS member schools and in Eastern Europe in schools in Tirana, Albania, Podgorica, Montenegro and Tbilisi, Georgia, and in Central America, with a visit to Panama and the Balboa Academy. Consultation with teachers to address individual student concerns was provided as well as meetings with parent groups and individual parents including questions about supports for gifted children.

The advisory and associate members provide a large collective pool of expertise in the fields of special and gifted education, differentiated instruction, second language learning, specific learning disabilities, dyslexia, executive functions and assessment, diagnosis, and remediation. The advisory committee meets with the REOs twice a year in Washington D.C., in the Office of Overseas Schools, and members are available throughout the year to travel at the behest of the REOs to their regions.

Dr. Lawrence A. Hobdell, Regional Education Officer, East Asia Pacific and American Republics-Central America, hobdelll@state.gov. Dr. Susan Grant, Chair, Advisory Committee on Exceptional Children and Youth, DrSGrant@gmail.com

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Reflections on the Empowerment of Youth

By Linda Sills
and Ashley Sills

I began this journey of empowering students by asking them to accept their Global Citizenship twelve years ago. Always an optimist, my faith in the abilities of youth began as a teacher, grew as a counselor, and now as the Director of the Global Issues Network, continues to grow exponentially.

Each day, the world learns of MS&HS students' initiated discoveries, advocacy, and projects. Increasingly their voices are being heard, and we see their efforts truly are changing our world. On a daily basis, news and social media share the amazing efforts of youth to improve our world.

Our student-led GIN Conferences, growing both locally and regionally, are now on five continents. At each GIN Conference, students from middle and high school present with their team their sustainable projects **globalissuesnetwork.org/what-is-a-gin-project/** impacting the global issues found in their local community through empathetic observation and local interviews. Empathetic action is then taken by the team of students, which has a local-global impact. We have an article and photos from two are most recent conferences in Shanghai and Nairobi. Please enjoy attending vicariously, thanks to their articles and photos.

Students are forever changed after taking part in the Global Issues Network(GIN) and creating a "local-global" project. Thus, we are seeing GIN continuing to grow around the world as students move to a new school. These students, knowing they are empowered, are beginning new groups in their new schools. In addition, students heading off to college have now started a Global Ambassador Program (GAP) in Universities around the world! UGAP is taking off! Contact us to join in!

Accolades and Congratulations to our Amazing GINTerns-

All graduates of the Class of 2018!

Our GINTerns truly personify what it means to be a globally empowered student. All four of them deserve all of our highest **accolades** for their dedication and exceptional abilities to grow the Global Issues Network. As graduating seniors, we wanted to give them the highest of honors and recognition for their contribution. Valeria began working with us in 7th grade and Gui, Ro, and Rafa joined Ashley's GINterns in grade 9. Ashley deserves our profound and lasting thanks as their talented and empathetic mentor. Together they have created so many innovative materials for the Global Issues Network, as you will read in their bios. Their bios and their individual Program Overview share their innovative individual contributions to our GIN program and the entire GIN Community.

Linda Sills is Executive Director, GIN, lindasills@gmail.com

GIN Africa 2018: Global Issues Service Summit

January 18-20, 2018 Hosted by International School of Kenya

GIN Asia 2018: A Place to Stand (HS)

January 20 - 21, 2018 Hosted by Concordia International School Shanghai Contact Us: ginasia@concordiashanghai.org

GIN Asia Local 2018: GIN Kansai Conference

February 3rd, 2018 Hosted by the Canadian Academy in Kobe, Japan

Our Team of Youth Directors

Rafaela Damasceno

Social Media Program Youth Director

GIN Project Leader, GINtern, GAP Course Co-Developer and Mentor

Rafaela is an 18-year-old senior at the International School of Curitiba, in Brazil. As an individual captivated by the international environment, Rafaela enjoys meeting people with different backgrounds, nationalities, and experiences, to widen her cultural and social view of the world. She has been involved with GIN since 2013, when she first attended a GIN conference in Quito, Ecuador. Rafaela is most fond of the networking and sharing opportunities provided by the conference environment. Most recently, her interests have expanded to marketing and communication. She plans to study both in college. In her role as the Social Media Youth Director, she is working to grow global learning, dialogue and action with the Global Issues Network and beyond.

Social Media Program (SMP) Overview

The Social Media Program will engage the Global Issues Network community and provide ongoing support for students and their GIN projects through the course of the year. Students around the world will actively leverage the power of social media when working to solve local-global issues. GIN recognizes that students face challenges in both creative and active stages of their GIN projects. We will answer this challenge by creating global access to successful tools, strategies and network members to address local-global issues.

The program consists of a focus on three major areas of empowerment by social media: active participation, effective marketing, and the use of media. Corresponding to the three branches of the program, these areas will be taken up by the GIN Social Media Team, with the purpose of helping the GIN community by sharing examples, successes and challenges of project-based solutions. With the concept of leading by example, this program will also serve the purpose of developing GIN's own social media activity.

If you would like to join Rafaela in her efforts as a Social Media Program Team Member please contact Rafaela at: ***rafaela@globalissuesnetwork.net***

Guilherme Grupenmacher

Global Mentors Program Youth Director

GIN Project Leader, GINtern, GAP Course Co-Developer and Mentor

Gui is 17 years old and was born in the southern Brazilian city of Curitiba. He has been an active member of GIN since 6th grade, participating in several conferences around Latin America and the world. He believes that genuine global citizenship comes as a result of meaningful interactions between individuals of different backgrounds and perspectives, and strives to fulfill this in several segments of his extracurricular life. One of Gui's main GIN Projects, presented at GIN Argentina 2015, led him to establish an NGO accredited by the Brazilian Government that helps break social barriers that limit the well-being of kids with disabilities in his local community. Currently a senior at the International School of Curitiba, Gui plans on attending university in the United States and plans to continue to collaborate as a GIN leader working to provide fulfilling experiences to global citizens all over the world.

Global Mentors Program (GMP) Overview

The Global Mentors Program seeks to provide determined, engaged and passionate GIN students a unique opportunity to receive one-on-one mentorship from professionals who are working to address the same global issue(s) they've selected for their respective projects. The Global Mentor Program strives to create collaborative intergenerational partnerships that grow sustainable impact and a global culture of engaged global citizenry. We will guide the GIN student experience and understanding as community-centered leaders through the GIN Levels of Engagement and GIN best practices approaches within the mentorship experience.

If you would like to join Gui in his efforts as a Global Mentor Team Member please contact Gui at: guilherme@globalissuesnetwork.net

Rodrigo Rose

Creating Connections Program Youth Director

GIN Project Leader, GINtern, GAP Course Co-Developer and Mentor

Rodrigo Rose is 17 years old and lives in Curitiba, Paraná, Brazil, where he was born and raised. He is currently a senior at the International School of Curitiba (ISC),

which has given him all the opportunities he could hope for to have a promising future. He has attended two Global Issues Network conferences and served as a facilitator in the UNESCO Center for Peace Summer Program, since becoming an intern with GIN in 2014. This has provided him important skills and abilities in solving issues on both a local and global scale, and has shown him how each and every one of us, regardless of our differences, can work together to create a better planet. This involvement, together with his passion for learning and growth, motivates him to help GIN develop. It is also the reason he devotes time and effort to make GIN better for all students through the GIN Creating Connections Program. He believes that all things in life, good or bad, help us grow, and wishes to see the entire world become a place everyone shares and enjoys together.

Creating Connections Program (CC) Overview

The Creating Connections (CC) Program is a GIN initiative providing our global community with high-quality, multifaceted resources and materials that empower students, teachers and administrators worldwide to create positive sustainable change on a local-global scale. This youth led and designed program is structured into three spheres of influence, each responsible for different aspects of the development of GIN resources: education and learning, communication and design, and research and enGINeering. The CC Program manages and perfects resources through these lenses, and works collaboratively with the GIN community and other programs to ensure the most effective and widespread impact.

If you would like to join Rodrigo in his efforts as a Creating Connections Team Member please contact Rodrigo at : rodrigo@globalissuesnetwork.net

Valeria Wu

Global Ambassador Program Youth Director
GIN Project Leader, GINtern, GAP Course Co-Developer and Mentor

Valeria is a senior studying at Colegio Roosevelt, in Lima, Peru. Her work with GIN dates back to 2011, as a 6th-grade photographer for the first AASSA GIN Conference hosted by F.D.R, The American School of Lima. Since then, she has built a strong connection to the program and participates actively as a GIN community leader. She has attended five GIN conferences in Costa Rica, Peru, Mexico, United States (UNESCO GIN) and Brazil. As part of her own GIN project, Valeria co-led an installation of 14 solar water heaters in her school that save approximately 75 metric tons of Co2 annually. The project was selected as a finalist of the, "Americas for the Zayed Future Energy Prize in 2014", and received a 50,000 USD grant to expand renewable energy at her school.

Global Ambassadors Program (GAP) Overview

GAP aims to create a network of student leaders at every international school who will promote service, leadership and broaden accessibility to Global Issues Network programming. In two years, the program has already served over 80 students from 30 nationalities and has been presented at 10+ conferences across the world. As GAP Youth Director, Valeria has been invited to keynote, present and facilitate GAP workshops in the Speaker Series hosted by the Singapore American School in Pulau Ujong and the Singapore and GIN Bali Conference hosted by Canggu Community School in Bali, Indonesia.

If you would like to join Valeria in her efforts as a Global Ambassador Team Member please contact her at: valeria@globalissuesnetwork.net

GAP has been an incredible experience, filled with learning, unique opportunities, collaboration on a global scale, and has been unforgettable thus far.

The project fosters development within individuals as people, before allowing them to form themselves as leaders. In the process of learning who we are, what kind of people we want to be, we accumulate the knowledge and qualities required to be a leader of the next generation.

GIN Asia 2018: GINBali (MS)

March 2-4, 2018 Hosted by Canggu Community School Bali, Indonesia

GIN Central Am 2018: Breaking Mindsets, Empowering Change

March 8-10th, 2018 Hosted by Pan-

GIN Euro 2018: Luxembourg

March 8th-10th, 2018 Hosted by International School of Luxembourg Deadline to Register: December 1st 2017