

**INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT #624**



**WORK-STUDY
MEETING PACKET**

February 26, 2018

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the White Bear Lake Area School District, a leader in innovative education and community partnerships, is to ensure our students:

- **develop a love for learning,**
- **excel academically,**
- **are inspired to realize their dreams, and**
- **become engaged citizens with a global understanding**

by challenging each student with a dynamic, respectful and inclusive environment that nurtures the unique talents and abilities of every student.

To: Members of the School Board

From: Dr. Wayne Kazmierczak
Superintendent of Schools

Date: February 15, 2018

A work-study session of the White Bear Lake Area School Board will be held on **Monday, February 26, 2018**, at 5:30 p.m. in Community Room 112 at the District Center, 4855 Bloom Avenue, White Bear Lake, MN.

WORK-STUDY AGENDA

A. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

1. Call To Order
2. Roll Call

B. DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. International Baccalaureate (IB) Program Review 5:30 p.m.
 - a. Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI)
Presentation of IB Review
 - b. Overview of IB Program Costs
2. White Bear Lake Sports Center 6:45 p.m.
3. Negotiation Study Session* 7:15 p.m.

C. ADJOURNMENT

7:30 p.m.

<p>*This portion of the meeting may be closed to consider strategy for labor negotiations, including negotiation strategies or developments or discussion and review of labor negotiation proposals, conducted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 179.A.01 to 179.A.25.</p>

AGENDA ITEM: **International Baccalaureate (IB) Program Review**

MEETING DATE: **February 26, 2018**

SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: **Discussion Item**

CONTACT PERSON(S): **Tim Wald, Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations and Sara Paul, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning**

BACKGROUND:

Assistant Superintendent Sara Paul will introduce researchers from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) who will be sharing their research results of our District IB Programs focused on Teacher, student, parent, and administrator perception data.

After the CAREI research presentation, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Tim Wald will share a financial report regarding District IB expenditures.



CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH
AND EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

WHITE BEAR LAKE AREA SCHOOLS' INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM: STAGE 2 EVALUATION REPORT

February, 2018

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Research, Development and Engagement to Improve Education

How to Cite this Report

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the results of Stage 2 for an evaluation of the International Baccalaureate programs offered in three schools in the White Bear Lake Area Schools district: Matoska International IB World School (K-5), Central Middle School IB World School (6-8), and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School (6-8). The White Bear Lake School Board contracted with the University of Minnesota's Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) to conduct this study, as well as an earlier stage of the study that was completed in March 2017 (Desjardins, Ingram, & Madrid, 2017). The purpose of the evaluation in Stage 2 was to provide the school board with information regarding IB implementation, stakeholder satisfaction, and preliminary student outcome data in the three schools mentioned above.

The Stage 2 evaluation design included data collection using online surveys, focus groups, in-person interviews, and a review of documents. Data were gathered from student records, teachers, and parents at the three IB schools, as well as district and school administrators. CAREI began data collection in summer 2017 and this stage of the study was completed in mid-January 2018. In addition to presenting the evaluation results for Stage 2 of the evaluation, this report includes a brief summary of the evaluation findings from Stage 1. The discussion of the evaluation results and the recommendations for program improvement integrates the findings from both stages of the evaluation.

Overall, the Stage 2 evaluation results provide evidence that middle school students and their parents at Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School and Central Middle School IB World School, and students and parents at Matoska International IB World School, are satisfied with the learning experiences and the school environment present in the district's IB schools.

Results for the Middle Years Program

With regards to implementation of the Middle Years Program (MYP), the evaluation data from students, teachers, and parents indicate that many of MYP-related practices measured in this study are being implemented in the two middle schools. In addition, the middle school teachers generally feel prepared to offer these types of learning activities effectively. However, most middle school teachers felt that MYP contributed very little to their engagement in these practices.

Other aspects of MYP, particularly those that are more unique to IB programs, are being implemented to a lesser extent; for example: service learning, MYP grading systems, collaboration among teachers who teach different subjects, incorporating world issues into teaching practice, and emphasizing the importance of global citizenship. These practices were also the practices the teachers felt least prepared to implement effectively. However, the lower occurrence of these MYP-related practices did not appear to effect students' and parents' satisfaction with their school, most likely because these same practices tended to be rated less important by middle school parents who responded to the survey.

Other key findings about MYP from the study are as follows:

Students

- A majority of the students indicated that they experience most of the 14 MYP-related learning practices listed on the survey (See page 5 for a list of these practices.). The practice endorsed most strongly by the largest percentage of students was "rubrics are used to assess and grade my learning."

- Overall, students reported that they like their learning experiences in middle school. Two aspects of their learning experiences that the largest percentage of students indicated they liked were “I like having a choice in my learning” and “I understand what my teachers expect of me in my classes.”

Teachers

- At least two-thirds of the teachers indicated that they use four MYP-related practices either *weekly* or *daily*: involve students in activities that require critical thinking, involve students in collaborative learning, connect lessons with real-life issues, and collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach. These are also the practices that over three-fourths of the teachers feel prepared to implement effectively.
- Over half of the teachers said they *never* or *rarely* encourage students to engage in service learning and 20% said they feel *not at all prepared* to implement this learning activity effectively. Another 35% of the teachers reported they feel *somewhat prepared* to implement service learning effectively.
- About one-third of the teachers said they *never* or *rarely* engage in three of the MYP-related practices: collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas, emphasize the importance of global citizenship, and incorporate world issues into their teaching practice. A relatively large proportion of teachers indicated they feel either *not at all prepared* or *somewhat prepared* to implement these three practices effectively.
- The #1 challenge for teachers in implementing MYP was the impact of MYP on teachers’ schedules. Grading systems and the inconsistent implementation of MYP at their school were also chosen by a large percentage of teachers as their #1 or #2 most important challenge in implementing MYP.
- Data from the teacher focus groups indicated that teachers think MYP has made it more challenging to collaborate with colleagues who teach what they teach because they no longer have common prep time with other teachers who teach the same subject area. The focus group results also indicated that the challenges teachers experience implementing grading systems is related to the lack of a clear expectation that all teachers will use the MYP rubrics and the need for teachers to grade everything twice because the scores from the MYP rubrics are not included in grades that are reported to the district or to families.

Parents

- Of the 14 MYP-related learning practices listed on the survey, a majority of the parents indicated that it was *very important* that their school does 7 of them, including “provides a positive climate for student learning” and “involves students in activities that require critical thinking.” Slightly over 10% of the parents said two practices were either *not important* or *slightly important*: “emphasizes the importance of global citizenship” and “places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages.”

- At least three-fourths of the parents (75%) were satisfied with how their school was doing 9 of the 14 learning practices. Three of the practices on which the parents indicated they were dissatisfied with how their school was doing the learning practice, were also the practices that the parents had said were not important for their school to offer: emphasizing the importance of global citizenship, incorporating world issues into lessons, and encouraging students to engage in service learning.
- When interpreting these findings, it is important to keep in mind that the response rate to the parent survey was low at 13%. Because such a large proportion of the middle school parents did not complete a survey, we recommend caution when trying to generalize these results to all middle school parents. The perspectives of the parents who did not complete a survey may be very different than the parents who did complete a survey.

Results for the Primary Years Program

The evaluation results specific to PYP at Matoska indicated that nearly all of the students who responded to the survey said they believe their teachers care about them and their learning. Classroom teachers and other faculty also reported that PYP had a strong positive impact on Matoska being a positive climate for learning. Teachers felt very well prepared to effectively implement the IB practices, and they reported engaging in those practices frequently (daily/weekly). At the same time, for the majority of teachers, Matoska's participation in PYP was perceived as key to their engagement in IB practices.

Other key findings about PYP from the study are as follows:

Students

- Students reported that they really like the following aspects of their experience at Matoska:
 - having choice in their learning,
 - investigating things of interest to them,
 - doing things to help their community, and
 - learning to be a good citizen.

Teachers

- Two-thirds of PYP teachers reported engaging in the IB related activities discussed in the survey either *weekly* or *daily* with the exception of "encourage students to engage in service learning." (See page 5 for a list of these practices.)
- Eighty-six percent of teachers reported that they involve students in cooperative learning on a daily basis.
- Over three-fourths of teachers reported they felt *adequately* or *extremely* prepared to effectively implement the IB practices mentioned in the survey.
- The impact of PYP requirements on teachers' schedules was the challenge mentioned by the greatest percent of teachers as one of the top three challenges.
- Eighty-two percent of teachers indicated they *strongly agree* with the statement "I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in PYP."

- More than three-fourths (77%) of teachers who responded to the survey indicated that the training provided to them by the IB organization prepared them *adequately* or *very well* to implement PYP in their school.

Parents

- Over 90% of the parents who responded to the survey reported they were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the vast array of teaching practices provided at Matoska.
- Ninety percent of parent respondents indicated that it was *very important* to them that their child's school provides a positive climate for student learning.

List of the 14 MYP-related learning practices included on the MYP Student Survey:

- a. I am learning real-world things in my classes
- b. I am being taught about learner profile traits (balanced, communicator, caring, etc.)
- c. I am learning to be more organized
- d. I am learning about cultures
- e. I am being taught to be more responsible
- f. I do community service with classmates
- g. I work with other students on projects
- h. Rubrics are used to assess and grade my learning
- i. I am being taught to see connections between the things I am learning in different classes
- j. I am learning how to reflect and think about "how," "what" and "why" in my classes
- k. I am given feedback to help improve my learning
- l. I am encouraged to demonstrate my learning in a variety of ways
- m. I am encouraged to ask questions and investigate things that interest me
- n. I have choice in my learning

List of the 10 PYP-related activities included on the PYP Teacher Survey:

- a. Involving students in cooperative learning
- b. Involving students in activities that require critical thinking
- c. Connecting my lessons with other disciplines
- d. Connecting my lessons with real-life issues
- e. Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship
- f. Incorporating world issues into my teaching practice
- g. Collaborating with colleagues who teach what I teach
- h. Collaborating with colleagues in other subject areas
- i. Encouraging students to engage in service learning
- j. Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes

Introduction

In October 2016, the White Bear Lake Area Schools asked the University of Minnesota's Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) to submit a proposal to evaluate the International Baccalaureate programs offered in three schools: Matoska International IB World School (K-5), Central Middle School IB World School (6-8), and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School (6-8). The purpose of the evaluation was to provide the School Board with information about the three IB schools regarding program implementation, stakeholder satisfaction, and preliminary student outcome data. Internally, district staff members were also interested in receiving formative feedback they could use for program improvement.

In January 2017, the School Board authorized a contract with CAREI to conduct Stage 1 of the evaluation, which included a review of the literature on the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP), as well as analysis of existing district data on enrollment, retention, and student demographics. On March 27, 2017, CAREI presented a report on Stage 1 of the evaluation to the School Board (Desjardins, Ingram, & Madrid, 2017). At that time, the School Board also informed CAREI that it wanted CAREI to conduct Stage 2 of the evaluation.

Once CAREI staff began to make plans for conducting Stage 2 of the evaluation, we recognized that it would be premature to initiate the cost-benefit portion of Stage 2. After consulting with district staff, we split Stage 2 of the evaluation into two phases, A and B, with Phase B containing the cost-benefit portion of the evaluation study. The feasibility of conducting a cost-benefit analysis will be determined after the completion of Phase A.

This report presents the evaluation results for Stage 2, of the evaluation, as well as a brief summary of the evaluation findings from Stage 1. The findings from both stages of the evaluation are integrated in the results and recommendations sections of the report. The Stage 2 evaluation results have several limitations that are important to keep in mind when reviewing this report. First, the study was not designed to test a causal relationship between the schools' involvement in PYP and MYP and the teaching practices and student effects examined in this study. Second, because the rate of completion for the middle school parent survey was low (13%), the evaluation results may not adequately represent the perspectives of the middle school parents who did not complete the survey.

Focus of the Evaluation

This section provides a description of the IB programs that are the focus of the study and presents a list of the study's guiding evaluation questions, which CAREI developed in collaboration with district staff. It also includes a short summary of the Stage 1 evaluation results.

Program Description

CAREI's evaluation focuses on the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) at Matoska International IB World School and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (MYP) at Central Middle School IB World School and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School.

The PYP and the MYP are two of the four programs developed by the International Baccalaureate, a non-profit educational foundation, to "develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills needed to live, learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world¹." Schools must be authorized by the organization to provide its programs and the organization offers online and face-to-face professional development for educators.

As described by the IB organization², the PYP, which the IB organization has made available since 1997, "prepares students to become active, caring, lifelong learners who demonstrate respect for themselves and others and have the capacity to participate in the world around them. It focuses on the development of the whole child." The MYP, which the IB organization has made available since 1994, is "A challenging framework that encourages students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world, the MYP is inclusive by design; students of all interests and academic abilities can benefit from their participation."

Figure 1 shows a brief history of the development and authorization of IB in all three schools. Matoska was authorized in 2010 and the two middle schools were authorized more recently: Sunrise in December 2014, and Central in May 2015. Authorization indicates that the schools have sufficiently demonstrated "that certain practices and programme requirements are in place and that for others implementation is in progress" (2014 report from International Baccalaureate on school authorization). During the three years prior to authorization, each of the schools were IB Candidate schools and staff at each school began learning about IB and implementing changes in the system and curriculum.

District staff reported that since the beginning of the PYP and MYP authorization processes, additional resources have been allocated to support implementation. In addition, collaboration time, PYP and MYP training and work on district standards has been structured in a way to meet the IB requirements and also meet the requirements of the district's curriculum frameworks to ensure alignment with the district program and state standards.

¹¹ Retrieved 3/10/2017 from ibo.org.

²Retrieved on 3/10/2017 from ibo.org/en/programmes.

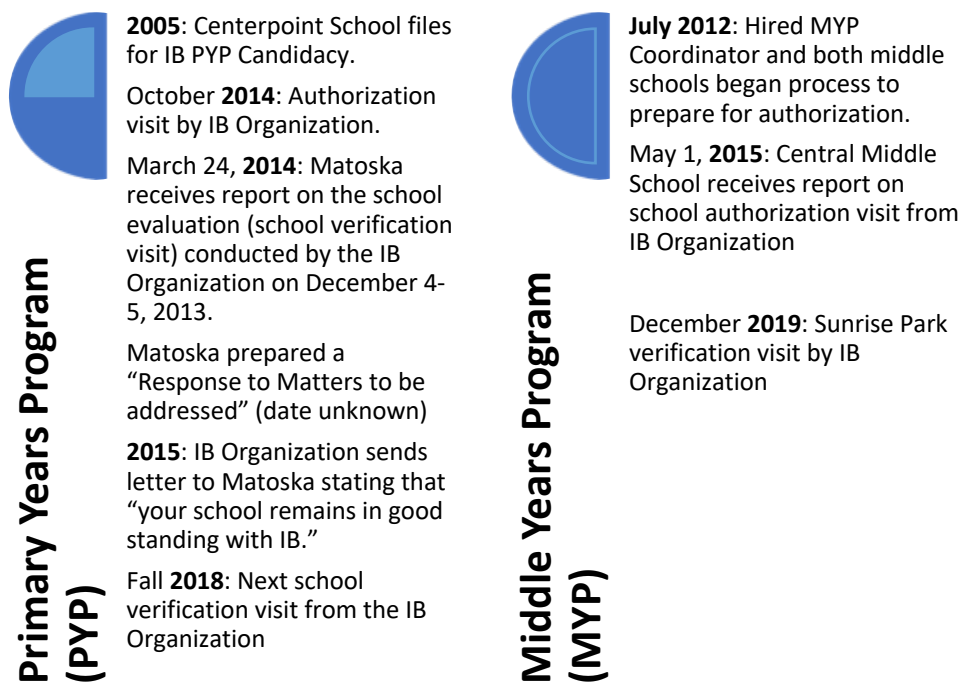


Figure 1. History of development and authorization of IB Programming in White Bear Lake Area Schools.

Summary of Stage 1 Evaluation Results

Stage 1 of the evaluation included a review of the published research and evaluation literature on PYP and MYP, as well as analysis of existing district data on enrollment, retention, and student demographics. Overall, the results presented some promising findings about how PYP and MYP may be a factor in rising enrollment and improved transition rates.

Although the review of published literature on the two programs did not offer definitive conclusions about the implementation and impact of these programs, the information gleaned from these studies is useful to district administrators and educators in their continuing efforts to improve the implementation of these programs and assess their outcomes for students. Specifically, CAREI's search of the published literature on PYP and MYP revealed that literature in this area is relatively new, and limited in both scope and depth. Three challenges of PYP and MYP emerged from our review of the existing literature. First, the lack of solid findings about student achievement calls for more and better studies documenting student learning. Second, the challenge of developing curriculum for both PYP and MYP that aligns with state and national testing, so students are not disadvantaged when they are tested and schools can show that they are preparing well-educated students. Third, transitions from each of the three programs is problematic due to the fact that IBO developed them at different times with different emphases. All three issues are curricular, assessment, and pedagogical challenges that schools and districts face as they implement PYP and MYP frameworks. These challenges also resonate with the findings of this Stage 2 evaluation.

In addition, the results of the literature review informed the design of the Stage 2 data collection instruments regarding the key components of PYP and MYP implementation and potential student outcomes.

Evaluation Questions

The guiding evaluation questions for Stage 2 of the evaluation study are:

1. What outcomes are used to evaluate PYP and MYP?
2. What are the components of implementing PYP and MYP?
3. To what extent are PYP and MYP implemented with fidelity?
4. What are the perceptions of teachers about PYP and MYP?
5. What are the perceptions of other stakeholder groups (e.g., students, families, administrators) about PYP and MYP?

The next section describes the method CAREI used to collect and analyze data for the study.

Method

This section includes an overview of the research design and information needed to complete the evaluation including procedures, data collection instruments, and data analysis procedures. Copies of data collection instruments are included in the appendices at the end of the report.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation team used an integrated mixed-methods design for this stage of the evaluation. We first administered the online surveys, which primarily generated quantitative data. Then, we developed the focus group questions, which would be used to gather qualitative data, based on our analysis of the quantitative data from the surveys. The primary purpose of the qualitative data collection in this study was to elaborate on particular areas of the quantitative survey results. For example, results from the MYP teacher survey indicated that a large percentage of the survey respondents were not satisfied with the training they had received. In the focus groups with MYP teachers, we asked them to explain the challenges they had experienced with the training and offer suggestions for improving it. In our interpretation of the results, we gave priority to the quantitative data because we were only able to offer one parent focus group and one teacher focus group at each of the three IB schools. Thus, the focus group results may not represent the perceptions and experiences of the much larger groups of parents and teachers at each school.

Stage 2 of the evaluation began in summer 2017 and data collection was completed in mid-January 2018. To ensure that the data collection instruments were aligned with district expectations for the IB programs, CAREI worked with a team of WBLAS staff to develop all of the data collection instruments. We also coordinated the timing of data collection and procedures for administering each instrument with district staff.

Data Collection Activities

Interviews. One-on-one interviews were conducted with the district superintendent, Wayne Kazmierczak, Ph.D; the assistant superintendent, Sara Paul; the teaching and learning coordinator, Jill Pearson; IB Middle Years Program Coordinator, Kristen Konop; and IB Primary Years Program Coordinator, Kirsten McPherson.

In addition, evaluators conducted one-on-one interviews with the three IB school principals: John Leininger (Matoska International IB World School); Tim Schochenmaier (Central Middle School IB World School); and Christina Pierre, Ed.D. (Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School).

The interview protocol was designed to collect information on these stakeholders' perceptions of the critical outcomes of IB programs; key implementation components of the IB programs; strengths and challenges of implementing IB programs; and suggestions for this stage of the evaluation. The interviews took place in May and June of 2017. Each interview was audio-recorded for the purpose of data analysis, with the permission of the interviewees.

Surveys. Online surveys were administered to teachers, parents, and students (grades 4 – 8) of the three IB schools to better understand their perceptions of the IB program (e.g., implementation, satisfaction, student impacts, successes, challenges, and recommendations). The PYP teacher survey was comprised of 12 closed-response items and four open-response items. The MYP teacher survey had 13 closed-response items and four open-response items. The PYP parent survey was comprised of four closed-response items and three open-response items. The MYP parent survey was comprised of eight closed-response items and three open-response items. The PYP and MYP student survey was comprised of four Likert-type items. The survey instruments are included in Appendix A, B, D, F, G and I.

Surveys were administered in October and November of 2017. For the teacher surveys, each school provided CAREI with a list of faculty members' names and email addresses and then evaluators emailed each person to extend an invitation to complete the survey by clicking on a link included in the email. At the request of the district, the survey was sent to classroom teachers as well as other faculty members who have some responsibility for student instruction, such as special education teachers and ELL teachers. To maintain the privacy of the parents, the district emailed the parents at each IB school directly to invite them to complete a survey. The email also explained that only CAREI staff would be able to access the parents' individual survey responses. In order to make it as easy as possible for parents to complete the survey, each school also made paper copies of the survey available in the main office, as well as surveys that had been translated into the Hmong language or Spanish language by district staff. To ensure that parents could only complete one survey, the district provided each parent with a unique survey code that the parent had to enter at the beginning of their survey in order for their responses to be included in the results. The student surveys were administered by staff at each IB school. CAREI provided each school with a link to the survey for their students.

Focus groups. The evaluation involved 90-minute focus groups with teachers and parents at each of the three IB schools. The purpose of the focus groups was to explore some of the results of the survey and offer participants an opportunity to elaborate on the findings. In total, six focus groups were conducted including three parent focus groups and three teacher focus groups. The teacher and parent focus group protocol questions are included in Appendix C, H and E, J, respectively.

Review of documents. Another source of data on the fidelity of PYP and MYP implementation were existing documents that the district provided to CAREI. Each of the following documents were reviewed by CAREI: a chronology of PYP and MYP in the district that was prepared by district staff; two publications from the IBO (“Guide to school authorization: Primary Years Programme” and “Guide to school authorization: Middle Years Programme”); reports from site visits by the IBO for the purposes of authorizing or verifying the implementation of PYP and MYP; and records of teacher’s participation in professional development related to the implementation of PYP and MYP (including training provided directly by the IBO and training and curriculum writing facilitated by the district).

Data Analysis

The data from each survey was downloaded into Excel files for analysis. For each survey’s closed-ended items, the percentage of respondents selecting each response option is reported. Note that some of the percentage totals do not add up to 100% due to rounding error. In addition, because some respondents did not answer all of the survey items, the number of respondents who did answer each survey item is reported.

The analysis of the open-ended survey questions focused on categories from teachers and parents’ responses concerning the advantages and disadvantages of the PYP/MYP to support student learning and growth, and the teachers’ recommendations to improve the program at their school. A content analysis technique was used with the intention of understanding participants’ perceptions without imposing preconceived categories or theoretical perspectives (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Data analysis started with reading all open-ended responses and then identifying concepts or keywords that would characterize them. These concepts or keywords were used as the labels for a set of preliminary codes, which were then matched to the survey responses. As we continued the process of assigning preliminary codes to the responses, some codes were merged to create new codes that were broader and more substantial. The most frequent of these more general codes were described in the results section, but details from sub codes were also included.

The analysis of the focus groups also incorporated a content analysis strategy. Because the focus group questions were designed to further examine the survey results, the analysis of the focus group data centered on specific areas of the survey results that were identified before we began the content analysis. CAREI staff read the focus groups transcriptions to identify common themes related to these specific survey results to understand better how participants made sense of the survey question (e.g., What specifically was challenging about MYP grading systems? What specifically could the school do differently to make the climate more favorable for student learning). Likewise, as described for the earlier content analysis, some of our preliminary codes for the focus group data were merged into broader categories and these themes were reported in conjunction with survey data.

Participants

The participants in the Stage 2, evaluation were students, teachers, and parents at the 3 IB schools, as well as school principals, the district’s two IB coordinators, and district administrators. Table 1 shows the number of study participants in each stakeholder group, as well as the total possible number of stakeholders. A total number of 1,999 stakeholders out of a possible 4,625 participated in the evaluation (43%). Participants for the teacher focus groups and parent focus groups were randomly selected by CAREI from a larger group of teachers and parents who expressed interest in participating in this part of the study. To the extent possible, we also tried to include teachers who teach at a range of grade levels and parents of students at a range of grade levels.

Table 1

Number of Evaluation Participants

District	Number of Participants	Total Possible
District staff Interviews	5	5
School Principals Interviews	3	3
IB Coordinators	2	2
MYP		
MYP Teacher Survey	105 63 (Central) 42 (Sunrise)	137 72 (Central) 65 (Sunrise)
MYP Parent Survey	235 121 (Central) 114 (Sunrise Park)	1840 1,060 (Central) 780 (Sunrise Park)
MYP Student Survey	1286 779 (Central) 507 (Sunrise Park)	1833 1,057 (Central) 776 (Sunrise Park)
MYP Teacher Focus Group	18 9 (Central) 9 (Sunrise Park)	26 11 (Central) 15 (Sunrise Park)
MYP Parent Focus Group	8 5 (Central) 3 (Sunrise Park)	10 6 (Central) 4 (Sunrise Park)
PYP Teacher Survey	32	57
PYP Parent Survey	180	572
PYP Student Survey (4th and 5th grade students)	151 86 (4 th grade) 65 (5 th grade)	176 (101 4 th grade) (75 5 th grade)
PYP Teacher Focus Group	7	8
PYP Parent Focus Group	9	10
Total³	1,999	4,625

³ The totals do not include number of participants or total possible for teachers and parent focus groups individuals are already included in the numbers for the teacher and parent surveys.

Results for the Middle Years Program

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) is a curriculum framework designed for students ages 11 to 16 years old. In the White Bear Lake School District, MYP was adopted for both district middle schools, Central Middle School IB World School and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School. Both middle schools enroll students in grades six through eight. For the MYP portion of our evaluation, CAREI evaluators collected data from students through an online survey, and from teachers and parents through online surveys and focus groups. The results are organized in the sections below by students, teachers, and parents.

Student Results

Student surveys included questions related to their learning and school experiences, as well as their satisfaction with these aspects of their education. A total of 1,286 out of 1,833 students completed the survey for a response rate of 70%. As illustrated in Table 2, over half of the surveys were completed by Central students (61%), which may, in part, be due to the larger size of the student body at Central. However, a comparison of the survey response rates at each school shows that nearly three-fourths (74%) of the Central students and 65% of the Sunrise students completed the survey, which indicates that the rate of survey completion was fairly similar across the two middle schools.

As shown in Table 2, the survey respondents were relatively evenly split between students in grades 6, 7, and 8. A large majority of the students (84%) came to middle school from one of the district's eight elementary schools (See Table 3). However, a notable percent of the students who completed the survey had not attended any of the district's elementary schools (16%). Only 13% of students who responded to the survey indicated they had attended Matoska International IB World School, the district's only IB elementary school.

Table 2

Grade and Middle School Attended by Students Who Completed the Survey

n=1286	%
Grade	
6 th grade	36%
7 th grade	36%
8 th grade	28%
School	
Central IB World School	61%
Sunrise Park IB World School	39%

Table 3

Elementary School Attended by Students Who Completed the Survey⁴

n=1286	%
Hugo-Oneka Elementary	23%
Otter Lake Elementary	15%
Matoska International IB World School	13%
Lincoln Elementary	12%
Lakeaires Elementary	9%
Vadnais Heights Elementary	9%
Willow Lane Elementary	9%
Birch Lake Elementary	6%
None of the above	16%

Fidelity of implementation. Students were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements related to the types of learning practices they are engaged in at school. For the purpose of this survey, students were asked to think about their experiences in their classes overall, rather than in one specific class, as they selected their responses to the survey questions.

More than half of respondents *strongly agreed* that rubrics are used to assess and grade their learning (66%), that they work with other students on projects (53%), and that they are taught to be more responsible (53%) (See Table 4). A large majority of student respondents indicated that they either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed* with most of the statements, with the exception being about whether they do community service with their classmates, where 52% of respondents either *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed* that this occurred.

Table 4

Students' Level of Agreement with Statements About School Experience

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly Agree
I am learning real-world things in my classes (n=1273)	4%	11%	53%	33%
I am being taught about learner profile traits (balanced, communicator, caring, etc.) (n=1269)	2%	12%	48%	38%
I am learning to be more organized (n=1271)	5%	14%	39%	41%
I am learning about cultures (n=1258)	8%	17%	43%	31%
I am being taught to be more responsible (n=1260)	2%	10%	35%	53%
I do community service with classmates (n=1263)	27%	25%	32%	17%
I work with other students on projects (n=1259)	3%	7%	38%	53%

⁴ Percentages add up to over 100% because some respondents had attended more than one elementary school.

Table 4 (Continued)

Students' Level of Agreement with Statements About School Experience

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly Agree
Rubrics are used to assess and grade my learning (n=1257)	2%	5%	27%	66%
I am being taught to see connections between the things I am learning in different classes (n=1263)	5%	17%	47%	32%
I am learning how to reflect and think about "how," "what" and "why" in my classes (n=1263)	5%	17%	42%	36%
I am given feedback to help improve my learning (n=1265)	3%	12%	40%	45%
I am encouraged to demonstrate my learning in a variety of ways (n=1255)	4%	14%	44%	38%
I am encouraged to ask questions and investigate things that interest me (n=1261)	3%	13%	39%	45%
I have choice in my learning (n=1260)	12%	18%	35%	35%

Satisfaction with MYP. Students were then asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements about their satisfaction with the same learning practices that were listed in the previous question. As shown in Table 5, over half of respondents chose *strongly agree* in response to these four statements:

- I like having choice in my learning (70%);
- I understand what my teachers expect of me in my classes (63%);
- I like getting feedback to help improve my learning (60%); and
- I enjoy working with other students on projects (54%).

At least 70% of the students expressed agreement (either *strongly agree* or *somewhat agree*) with 16 of the 18 types of learning practices listed on the survey. The exceptions were statements about the following learning practices, for which 39% of the students chose either *somewhat disagree* or *strongly disagree*:

- I like learning about learner profile traits, and
- I get excited about the work I do in my classes.

Table 5

Students' Level of Agreement with Statements About Learning⁵

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I like the subject choices we have at Sunrise/Central (n=1247)	4%	16%	45%	35%
I like learning real-world things in my classes (n=1228)	3%	12%	41%	44%
I like learning about learner profile traits (balance, communicator, caring, etc.) (n=1225)	15%	24%	36%	25%
I like having classes that meet every other day (n=1247)	7%	13%	35%	44%
I like learning to be more organized (n=1223)	6%	13%	33%	48%
I like learning about other cultures (n=1218)	6%	16%	38%	40%
I enjoy doing community service projects (n=1135)	10%	20%	39%	31%
I enjoy working with other students on projects (n=1254)	5%	11%	31%	54%
I like when rubrics are used to assess and grade my learning (n=1238)	5%	17%	36%	43%
I like being taught to see connections between the things I am learning in different classes (n=1217)	4%	18%	42%	37%
I like learning how to reflect about "how," "what" and "why" in my classes (n=1215)	7%	21%	42%	29%
I like getting feedback to help improve my learning (n=1246)	2%	7%	30%	60%
I like demonstrating my learning in a variety of ways (n=1241)	5%	15%	41%	39%
I like asking questions and investigating things that interest me (n=1248)	4%	12%	35%	49%
I like having choice in my learning (n=1204)	3%	6%	21%	70%
I get excited about the work I do in my classes (n=1229)	15%	24%	42%	20%
I feel like my teachers care about me (n=1243)	6%	15%	37%	42%
I understand what my teachers expect of me in my classes (n=1259)	2%	7%	28%	63%

⁵ The response option "I don't experience this at my school" was omitted from analysis for this table because students who selected that response option for an item would not have had any experience with the learning practice described in that item. The practice with the highest percentage of students selecting this option was the statement: "I enjoy doing community service projects" (9.8%).

Teacher Results

A total of 137 faculty members at the two middle schools were invited to complete the online survey (72 at Central and 65 at Sunrise). Surveys were completed by 105 faculty members for a response rate of 77%. Because almost all of the survey questions were designed to be answered by teachers who provide instruction directly to students (classroom teachers), respondents who identified themselves as “other faculty” were only asked the subset of survey questions that addressed aspects of the school as a whole: the impact of MYP on school climate and on the school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth, and recommendations to improve MYP at their school.

Teachers were also invited to attend a focus group. One focus group with teachers at each middle school was conducted. At Central Middle School, 11 teachers expressed interest in participating and nine attended. Fifteen teachers expressed interest in participating at Sunrise Middle School, and nine teachers attended.

The primary purpose of the focus group was to collect data to clarify or supplement survey data results. Therefore, the results from the focus group are not reported separately, but rather throughout the survey data. CAREI evaluators developed focus group questions based on specific areas of survey results. These areas were challenges of MYP regarding grading systems; aligning MYP and state learning standards; and teacher collaboration. Teachers were also asked about their specific training needs to implement MYP effectively.

As illustrated in Table 6, more than half (60%) of the survey respondents were from Central Middle School, reflecting at least in part the larger number of faculty at Central compared to Sunrise. A comparison of the survey response rate at each school shows that almost ninety percent (87%) of the Central classroom teachers and other faculty completed the survey in comparison to a response rate of 65% for Sunrise. Table 6 also shows that a large majority of respondents (85%) were classroom teachers, and nearly two-thirds of respondents taught more than one grade level of students (59%).

Table 6

School, Role, and Grade Level(s) Taught by Survey Respondents

n=137	%
School	
Central	60%
Sunrise Park	40%
Role	
Classroom teacher	85%
Other faculty	15%
Grade(s) taught	
6 th grade	18%
7 th grade	10%
8 th grade	13%
Multiple grades	59%

Fidelity of implementation. Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they engaged in different teaching practices during a typical month. The most frequent practices, with at least two-thirds of respondents marking *weekly* or *daily*, were “involve students in activities that require critical thinking,” “involve students in cooperative learning,” “connect lessons with real-life issues,” and “collaborate with colleagues in the same subject area.” A majority of respondents reported that at least *twice a month*, they connect lessons with other disciplines and use a common language to help students identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes. Over half of respondents said they *never* or *rarely* encourage students to engage in service learning, and approximately one-third of respondents said they *never* or *rarely* collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas, emphasize the importance of global citizenship, or incorporate world issues into their teaching practice (See Table 7).

In the focus groups, teachers provided further information related to the lack of frequency with which they engaged in service learning projects. Teachers commented that their students in 8th grade, who should be doing this project, were too young to be in charge of it, and thus, most of the time, families had to assume the extra effort. In addition, by not being graded for the service learning project, teachers felt students were not held accountable. According to respondents, these projects also required additional work on the part of teachers in planning and supporting students.

Table 7

Frequency of Engagement in Activities During a Typical Month

How often do you...	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Twice a month	Weekly	Daily
Involve students in cooperative learning? (n=87)	1%	1%	3%	10%	39%	45%
Involve students in activities that require critical thinking? (n=86)	1%	--	2%	1%	45%	50%
Connect lessons with other disciplines? (n=87)	1%	15%	21%	24%	31%	8%
Connect lessons with real-life issues? (n=87)	1%	3%	7%	14%	46%	29%
Emphasize the importance of global citizenship? (n=86)	5%	27%	23%	10%	26%	9%
Incorporate world issues into teaching practice? (n=87)	2%	25%	25%	20%	22%	6%
Collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach? (n=86)	3%	6%	6%	16%	38%	30%
Collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas? (n=87)	6%	28%	23%	23%	16%	5%
Encourage students to engage in service learning? (n=87)	11%	43%	20%	14%	10%	2%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes? (n=87)	9%	13%	21%	11%	25%	21%

After teachers were asked how frequently they engaged in these practices, they were asked to indicate the extent to which their school's involvement in MYP contributed to teachers engaging with the same set of practices. As shown in Table 8, for all ten practices that were listed on the survey, a majority of respondents indicated that their school's involvement in MYP contributed *not at all* or a *small degree* to teachers engaging in the practice. The practices for which MYP had the least perceived influence were teachers collaborating with colleagues in the same subject area and connecting lessons with real-life issues.

Conversely, at least 30% of respondents indicated that their school's involvement in MYP contributed a *moderate, high, or very high degree* of influence to teachers engaging in the following practices:

- Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (44%);
- Encouraging students to engage in service learning (38%);
- Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (34%); and
- Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (30%).

In the focus group, some teachers expanded on the issue of collaboration, expressing a belief that MYP had *negatively* impacted the amount of time they can spend working with other teachers in their subject area due to changes in teachers' schedules associated with MYP implementation. One teacher described how the changes in teachers' schedule impacted teacher collaboration by saying,

So previously when we were in middle school, we had—it was more likely that you and your counterpart (...) we could have prep together so that we would have common prep time and we could do some collaborating then. Because of the parameters of IB and what they say our schedule needs to be like foreign language every other day versus an everyday semester class. That has put a lot more parameters on our administration with making that master schedule. So, a lot of those requests typically can't be honored to have those common prep time for people, when before you could use that to collaborate.

Table 8

Extent to which MYP Contributes to Teachers' Engagement in Practices

	Not at all	Small degree	Moderate degree	High degree	Very high degree
Involving students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =85)	46%	28%	14%	5%	7%
Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =85)	45%	25%	15%	8%	7%
Connecting my lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =85)	40%	33%	14%	8%	5%
Connecting my lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =85)	45%	32%	11%	6%	7%
Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =85)	36%	29%	18%	9%	7%
Incorporating world issues into my teaching practice (<i>n</i> =85)	41%	32%	13%	8%	6%
Collaborating with colleagues who teach what I teach (<i>n</i> =84)	48%	32%	11%	6%	4%
Collaborating with colleagues in other subject areas (<i>n</i> =83)	49%	24%	11%	7%	8%
Encouraging students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =85)	32%	31%	15%	11%	12%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (<i>n</i> =85)	33%	24%	22%	11%	11%

Teacher preparedness to implement MYP effectively. Teachers were also asked to consider the same set of MYP-related practices as two previous questions on the survey and then indicate how prepared they felt to implement each practice effectively. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of preparation by choosing one of these response options: *not at all prepared*, *somewhat prepared*, *adequately prepared*, or *extremely prepared* (See Table 9). Over three-fourths of teachers reported feeling *adequately* or *extremely prepared* to use these practices effectively:

- Involve students in activities that require critical thinking (87%);
- Involve students in cooperative learning (87%);
- Collaborate with colleagues in the same subject area (87%); and
- Connect lessons with real-life issues (76%).

These were also the practices that the teachers had reported using most frequently (*weekly* or *daily*) in a previous question. In contrast, the practices for which the teachers indicated feeling *not at all prepared* were encourage students to engage in service learning (20%) and emphasize the importance of global citizenship (18%).

Table 9

Extent of Teachers' Preparedness to Effectively Implement Practices

	Not at all Prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Extremely Prepared
Involve students in cooperative learning (n=85)	2%	11%	39%	48%
Involve students in activities that require critical thinking (n=85)	2%	11%	51%	36%
Connect lessons with other disciplines (n=85)	8%	28%	44%	20%
Connect lessons with real-life issues (n=85)	2%	22%	45%	31%
Emphasize the importance of global citizenship (n=85)	18%	33%	38%	12%
Incorporate world issues into teaching practice (n=85)	15%	31%	42%	12%
Collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach (n=84)	4%	10%	37%	50%
Collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas (n=85)	12%	26%	40%	22%
Encourage students to engage in service learning (n=85)	20%	35%	33%	12%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (n=85)	8%	27%	44%	21%

Challenges implementing MYP. Next, teacher respondents were asked to consider a list of ten potential challenges of implementing MYP and identify what they saw as the top three greatest challenges that teachers at their school (Central and Sunrise) were experiencing in implementing MYP. As shown in Table 10, the challenge with the greatest percent of teachers who identified it as their #1 most important challenge was the impact of MYP requirements on teachers' schedules (29%). This challenge was also identified by an additional 29% percent of teachers saying it was their #2 most important challenge or their #3 most important challenge. The other most commonly reported challenges were grading systems, the consistency of MYP implementation at their school, developing curriculum, and aligning MYP with state learning standards.

Table 10

The Three Greatest Challenges for Teachers Implementing MYP⁶⁷

	#1 Challenge	#2 Challenge	#3 Challenge
Impact of MYP requirements on teachers' schedules (n =50)	29%	14%	15%
Grading systems (n=37)	20%	9%	14%
Consistency of MYP implementation at my school (n=37)	20%	15%	8%
Developing curriculum (n=32)	13%	11%	14%
Alignment of MYP with state learning standards (n=29)	13%	14%	7%
Working collaboratively with colleagues (n=14)	6%	5%	6%
Participating in MYP professional development and curriculum writing facilitated by the district (n=19)	5%	6%	12%
Participating in MYP professional development facilitated by the IB organization or by staff who have attended an IB training (n=12)	4%	5%	6%
Implementing units (n=19)	2%	12%	8%
Alignment of MYP with our district goals (n=14)	2%	7%	7%

Focus group data provided additional context to some of the top challenges identified in the survey. Focus group participants were asked what challenges they and their students have experienced (if any) in implementing an MYP grading system, and what suggestions they had for improving the implementation of the grading system in their school.

Teachers talked extensively about the MYP rubrics during the focus groups. They described not seeing the value of using of the MYP rubrics, as they felt there was not a clear expectation for using them. In fact, they said they were not asked to report on MYP rubrics to either the district or families. Two teachers, one from each middle school, said,

(...) the district message to us is that this is not important because this is not a grade and we don't want to explain it to the parents. That is the message we get so we think why should we care? So, we don't.

I think that if you don't have anyone looking at your grade book to see if you are doing it, then the idea that it is important, well I think we push back because if nobody is going to look at it then I'm going to try my best to do it. Because I am a professional, but nobody might look at it, so I think that it speaks to what the administration, how important IB is to the administration.

⁶ Row percentages do not add up to 100% because respondents were asked to only select three of the ten items

⁷ Thirteen of the 85 teachers who responded to this question selected more than one response option for one or more of the challenges. For example, a respondent may have selected both the response option of "grading systems" and the response option of "developing curriculum" for the "#1 challenge."

Teachers added that they have been able to slightly modify the rubric to make it more teacher and student friendly, which had resulted in more work around grading. One teacher further commented on the grading component of MYP,

We were told that we could make the rubric more kid friendly, which created additional work for us to communicate to the students. I mean that was helpful in some respect, but it creates more work and then the rubric grades don't count towards our grades so a lot of us were grading everything twice... You still had to grade the work twice to make it fit into the traditional district system.

Although it was not a focus group question for teachers, participants commented extensively about the inconsistency of MYP implementation, which was one of the top challenges identified in the survey. They reported that the level of MYP implementation was different across different grade levels within the school and various subject areas. Some teachers perceived the varying level of implementation was due to different attitudes teachers held toward MYP. Others believed it was due to differences in the course content (for example, it was easier to include a global perspective in geography than in math). In any case, the lack of consistent implementation was described by focus group participants to be one of the critical barriers to the program's success in their schools.

When focus group participants were asked about the alignment between MYP and state standards, there was agreement that there was a misalignment. Teachers described MYP standards, unlike state standards, as broad, abstract and more general, which complicated a potential articulation with state standards. Teachers from one middle school pointed out that this situation was especially critical in subject areas such as math, language, and science, where there was an emphasis (and pressure) towards state testing results. In their perception, teachers who taught those subjects were more pressed to work directly using state standards, which made it even harder for them to focus on MYP standards.

Teaching in an MYP school. Teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement on the survey with several statements related to teaching MYP in their school (See Table 11). The statement with which the largest percentage of teachers *strongly agreed* was "teaching in an MYP school involves greater workload for teachers" (44%), with an additional 42% choosing *agree*. The next strongest response was to the statement, "I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in MYP" in which 38% of teachers indicated they *strongly disagree* and an additional 22% of respondents indicated they *disagree*.

Further, at least half of respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the following statements:

- My school ensures that teachers have adequate support to complete their MYP responsibilities (19% *strongly disagree*, 39% *disagree*).
- My school provides adequate training for teachers to successfully implement MYP (19% *strongly disagree*, 31% *disagree*).

Table 11

Level of Agreement with Statements Related to MYP

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Teaching in an MYP school involves a greater workload for teachers (<i>n</i> =85)	2%	2%	9%	42%	44%
I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in MYP (<i>n</i> =85)	38%	22%	24%	13%	4%
My school ensures that teachers have adequate support to complete their MYP responsibilities (e.g. planning, curriculum development, implementing a unit, grading) (<i>n</i> =85)	19%	39%	28%	12%	2%
My school provides adequate training for teachers to successfully implement MYP (<i>n</i> =85)	19%	31%	29%	18%	4%
Collaboration is present at my school when it comes to planning, teaching, and learning in MYP (<i>n</i> =85)	18%	25%	39%	16%	2%

Value of the MYP training in which teachers have participated. The survey also addressed the effectiveness of the training that teachers had received. A vast majority of teachers (92%) indicated they had participated in training or curriculum writing that was facilitated by the district, while about two-thirds of respondents had participated in training provided by the IB organization (See Table 12). When asked about the extent to which the training provided by the IB organization had prepared them to implement MYP at their school, the majority of respondents who had participated in the training said *very little* or *somewhat* (72%).

Table 12

Extent to Which Training Provided by the IB Organization Prepared Teachers to Implement MYP

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
To what extent has the training provided by the IB organization prepared you to implement MYP in your school? (<i>n</i> =54)	6%	37%	35%	17%	6%

Teachers who had participated in MYP training or curriculum writing that was facilitated by the district were asked about the extent to which that training had prepared them to implement MYP at their school. For 16 of the 20 practices included in the question, a majority of respondents indicated their level of preparedness as *not at all* or *very little* (See Table 13). The practices for which at least two-thirds of respondents said the district training had prepared them *very little* or *not at all*, were:

- Solicit multiple and diverse points of view about a question or issue (36% reported *not at all*, 32% reported *very little*).

- Ask students to formulate relevant and provocative questions (32% reported *not at all*, 35% reported *very little*).
- Use models or visuals to represent complex ideas (31% reported *not at all*, 36% reported *very little*).
- Discuss a real-world problem (23% reported *not at all*, 43% reported *very little*).

However, there were three practices for which a majority of respondents indicated the training had prepared them *somewhat, adequately, or very well*.

- Ask students to share their work with others for reflection and refinement (61%);
- Present questions for discussions that have no clear right or wrong answer (58%); and
- Ask students to explain their answers (57%).

In the focus group, some teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the training they received. They commented that when they are pulled out of their classrooms for district training, the way in which such training is conducted does not foster teacher collaboration. One of them articulated this idea by saying,

Our department got pulled out, we would go and we were supposed to be working on our unit planners, I didn't touch one last year at all because the two people that were in charge of it were constantly talking, they did not encourage participation- we did not get anything done, it was a waste of an eight-hour day, I'd rather have been with my students.

Table 13

Extent to Which District-provided MYP Training and/or Curriculum Writing Prepared Teachers

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
Present questions for discussion that have no clear right or wrong answers. (n=75)	19%	24%	39%	15%	4%
Ask students to explain their answers. (n=75)	16%	27%	32%	16%	9%
Ask students to develop opposing or complementary arguments. (n=75)	24%	41%	19%	13%	3%
Ask students to share their work with others for reflection and refinement. (n=74)	15%	24%	36%	18%	7%
Use brainstorming, as a class or among groups of students, to generate new ideas. (n=75)	20%	31%	27%	16%	7%
Help students evaluate evidence and arguments. (n=75)	29%	28%	24%	13%	5%
Help students identify trends or make predictions. (n=75)	33%	28%	21%	12%	5%
Provide direct instruction. (n=75)	27%	32%	23%	16%	3%
Ask students to share their work with the class. (n=75)	25%	31%	23%	15%	7%
Ask students to formulate relevant and provocative questions. (n=75)	32%	35%	13%	15%	5%
Make connections between learning gained in different subject areas. (n=75)	21%	40%	20%	16%	3%
Use models or visuals to represent complex ideas. (n=75)	31%	36%	17%	13%	3%
Discuss significance of the lesson - personally, locally, nationally, or globally. (n=75)	29%	33%	24%	8%	5%
Solicit multiple and diverse points of view about a question or issue. (n=75)	36%	32%	15%	11%	7%
Encourage students to use existing knowledge to generate new ideas or solve an unfamiliar problem. (n=75)	31%	29%	21%	17%	1%
Help students break down complex concepts or problems into their component parts. (n=75)	32%	32%	21%	13%	1%

Table 13 (Continued)

Extent to Which District-provided MYP Training and/or Curriculum Writing Prepared Teachers

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
Direct students to gather and organize information to formulate a position or perspective. (n=75)	29%	32%	24%	12%	3%
Discuss a real-world problem. (n=75)	23%	43%	11%	15%	9%
Ask students to work together to think through problems, questions, or issues. (n=75)	27%	23%	25%	19%	7%
Encourage students to guess or ask "what if" questions. (n=75)	28%	31%	23%	13%	5%

Some of the middle school teachers who participated in the focus groups indicated they would like to have more training in general, while others specified that they would prefer having training from the IB organization rather than the district. Teachers said that having one day of PD for developing interdisciplinary work is not enough. Others commented that the training they received from the district was too prescriptive and that there was not a follow-up or integration of what they saw and did in training with their work in the classrooms. As one teacher explained,

It is a double-edged sword. We go to these trainings and they are so prescribed with what we have to do that we basically get documents, we fill it in [but then] my documents were lost between IB coordinators and they told me I didn't do a lot of the work. Then they ended up having to find it so obviously it is so important that they do not even look at it again. Then we never used the document we do in training, so we are doing work, just for work that day without any input about what would actually be useful for us.

Impact of MYP on students' learning and school environment. In the next section of the survey, classroom teachers and other faculty were asked to reflect on how being at MYP school had impacted student learning and development, as well as some overall characteristics of their school. In terms of student learning, they were asked to respond to two open-ended questions: What advantages, if any, does MYP present for student learning and growth? What disadvantages, if any, does MYP present for student learning and growth?

Advantages of MYP for student learning and growth. Of the 105 survey respondents, just over half of them (61 people, or 58%) provided an answer to the question about how MYP might give an advantage for student learning and growth. Of the 61 classroom teachers and other faculty who answered this question, 54% described how MYP provided a benefit for student learning and growth. However, nearly one-half (49%) of them either stated that there were no advantages to the MYP model or described how the MYP model was a disadvantage for student learning and growth. Many of their comments described challenges they had encountered with MYP and the themes in those comments are

closely aligned with the issues reported in the next section on disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth.

The most common advantage of MYP for student learning and growth cited by the respondents was related to the type of learning opportunities that MYP offered students. Several respondents mentioned the service learning component, indicating that it increases students' involvement in community service as well as their awareness of community issues. Other types of learning opportunities reported as advantages of MYP for student learning and growth included MYP's focus on: interdisciplinary learning, key learner attributes, and the incorporation of global perspectives.

The respondents described these advantages of MYP for student learning and growth in the following ways.

I think MYP provides an excellent platform for students to engage in community service and learning. The projects they do definitely have an impact on our community and it seems like there would be no other venue through which they could do this in [name of school].

I do appreciate the emphasis on collaboration between disciplines. Anytime students can make multiple connections surrounding their learning is a good thing.

I really like how the IB character traits are skills that can be used in every subject area and that students can use their entire lives.

The global mindset and [learner] profiles help provide students with common language that enhances student learning and will ease the progression into interdisciplinary units.

Another type of advantage for student learning and growth that the respondents indicated MYP presented was fostering curriculum improvement and a focus on the whole student. Some respondents believed that MYP had led to a more rigorous and focused curriculum. Two respondents said,

MYP provides a focus for teachers to include specific learning strategies into the curriculum.

I love how it addresses the whole student and also encourages rigor in the classroom.

Disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth. Of the 105 classroom teachers and other faculty who completed the survey, 62% (n=65) provided a response for the open-ended survey question about the disadvantages that MYP presents for student learning and growth. Forty people left the comment box blank.

The majority of participants who answered this question did not comment about disadvantages presented by MYP for student learning and growth, as was asked. Instead, the most common type of disadvantage the respondents described was that MYP had a negative effect on teaching practice (n=33). Many respondents felt that MYP takes time away from their instruction or other valuable activities they could be doing in the classroom. Several teachers and staff commented that MYP can be time consuming without having any benefit for student learning, and that time was often spent just to "check the boxes," instead of MYP being something that is embedded in the curriculum.

Teachers explained that while they appreciated the intention of MYP in creating a common language, they perceived the IB framework as too vague and ambiguous. Therefore, in practice, they did not believe it helped guide their instruction; instead, it was simply more paperwork.

Some teachers elaborated on the negative impact of MYP on teaching practices as follows,

In my opinion, IB is a lot of "Smoke and Mirrors." Most of our instruction/work time has been, "get a product" never mind if it is a good one. The program claims we are doing things in certain ways, but we are not doing anything differently.

We were already implementing these teaching traits without the added time to assess student work and meeting after meeting to rewrite our curriculum so that it matches the new rubric that IB comes out with. All we ever did was rewrite what we already had.

It places specific constraints around learning - forcing teachers to create a lesson or a project that incorporates specific guidelines (teachers have to re-design lesson to meet MYP goals/guidelines).

A disadvantage related to student learning and growth that was mentioned by a small number of respondents was the negative effect of the program on students (n=17). Within this category, the most common theme highlighted by classroom teachers and other faculty was the impact on student workload. In their opinion, MYP requires students to take too many classes which adds to their daily schedule as well as outside homework. Respondents elaborated on how MYP created more work for students.

It causes a very disjointed, difficult schedule for students. With the every-other-day format kids have too many courses and in my opinion, it is not best practice for kids.

The students' class schedules make it incredible difficult for the students to be successful. Sixth grade students have to manage 8 different classes over 2 days.

We are really hurting our kids, sixth graders having 10 classes is not good. I mean we're asking our sixth graders to do more than we ask a college student to do.

Other themes related to the negative impact of MYP on student learning were centered on difficulties with assessments. Classroom teachers and other faculty articulated the idea that the MYP grading system is different than a traditional grading system. MYP focuses on a level of mastery rather than points, which in practice, means teachers need to grade student work twice when administering an IB assessment. Respondents also noted that the MYP rubrics are too vague, abstract, and difficult to understand for parents and students. Some of them expressed these disadvantages in the following way.

The biggest hindrance I believe are the IB scores/grades. They are confusing to parents and require hours of explanations. Students don't see the connection or understand the IB rubrics.

Furthermore, some classroom teachers and other faculty commented that another disadvantage of MYP for student learning comes indirectly from the financial constraints imposed by having MYP. Teachers talked about valued programs and resources being cut or combined at their school, which affected staff professional development opportunities. Respondents described those situations as follows,

Money for other staff development opportunities have been denied because funding has been solely used for IB; giving our students and staff limited resources for achievement.

Valued and rigorous programs have been cut or combined to meet the language/verbiage and organizational schemes required to "Fit" the IB model.

Although not directly expressed as disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth, one-third of classroom teachers and other faculty who responded to the disadvantages question on the survey noted challenges related to MYP implementation (n=20). They indicated that MYP is not consistently implemented across all grades and units at their school, which hurts its overall efficacy. In their opinion, this has created opposition and resistance among faculty toward MYP. Survey respondents noted that this collective attitude negatively impacts the school culture, which ultimately affects students. Some of them described the negative view of classroom teachers and other faculty regarding MYP by saying,

When staff is resistant to the [IB] framework that attitude can be absorbed by students. Many teachers do not get why we are doing it and are not behind it. That impacts students. In addition, students don't understand IB and think it is a pile of projects in addition to their "regular" work. It just causes a lot of pressure and negativity that is not good for learning.

It is disheartening and toxic the environment that teachers have created with reference to "IB." Those who support it are ostracized. IB has become a "swear word."

The disadvantage I have experienced has come from some adults in the building who have, in my opinion, made it their mission to disrupt the work of IB in our school. Teachers have made negative comments to students, in classes, about their dislike of IB. Some of the teachers also make comments to other teachers who want to grow and embrace IB about "drinking the IB Koolaid."

I do not see the staff on board with IB. The attitude from the staff impacts the students and the negativity about it is strong.

Several focus group participants criticized the quality of MYP implementation, recognizing that the problem was not necessarily about the IB framework, but mainly related to the way in which the district had led the process at the middle schools. They said there had not been enough resources to support the implementation, such as time for teachers to collaborate or to plan interdisciplinary lessons. Moreover, they mentioned that when MYP started many other initiatives were introduced at the same time, which contributed to a lack of attention given to IB implementation.

Three respondents stated that there are no disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth.

Impact of MYP on overall school characteristics. Finally, survey respondents were asked about the impact of MYP on two aspects of the school climate. With regard to the school being a positive climate for learning, the largest group of respondents said that MYP had *no impact* (40%). However, 34% of the teachers indicated that being a MYP school had either a *somewhat negative impact* or a *strong negative impact* on the school being a positive climate for learning. In contrast, just over one-third of the respondents said that being a MYP school had a *somewhat* or a *strong positive impact* (36%) on the school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds. Over half of the teachers (54%) indicated that MYP had *no impact* on the school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds.

Table 14

Views of Classroom Teachers and Other Faculty about the Impact of MYP on School Characteristics

	Strong negative impact	Somewhat negative impact	No impact	Somewhat positive impact	Strong positive impact
The school being a positive climate for learning (<i>n</i> =98)	16%	18%	40%	19%	6%
The school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (<i>n</i> =98)	7%	3%	54%	28%	8%

Recommendations to improve MYP in the middle schools. Classroom teachers and other faculty were asked what recommendations, if any, they would make to improve MYP at their school. Of the 105 people who completed the survey, 65 answered this open-ended survey question. The largest proportion of these respondents (63%) provided suggestions for improvements of MYP at their school. However, more than one-third of respondents (37%) stated the program should be eliminated. Some of these respondents cited either its high cost or the fact that the IB model is not continued in the district's high school as reasons why it should be eliminated.

The most common themes among the other recommendations were curricular changes, teacher training, and time for collaboration and curriculum development. Within the category of curricular changes, there were many specific recommendations, including cutting down on changes that are made to the program, making IB lessons more relevant to students, making the 8th grade service learning project more meaningful to students, and eliminating some of the world languages that are taught. Some examples of the recommendations classroom teachers and other faculty provided related to curricular changes were as follows,

I also feel some of the hoops with MYP are cumbersome and unnecessary. In the five years I have been doing the program, they have changed lesson planners three time as well as changing key concepts and other major components. I feel like every year what was accomplished is null and void due to changes and it is impossible to get ahead because of the constant changes.

Change the process/outcome of the 8th grade Community Service project. Students are more focused on filling in the slides to the presentation that actually engaging in meaningful service and reflection of that activity.

Regarding the recommendations related to providing more training and more time for collaboration and curriculum development, some respondents explained it in this way.

Training has fallen off significantly for the staff. We would need significant time and training to develop the program to a more effective level.

Send more people to training for the framework (particularly those opposed), present it in a different manner or lay the hammer down and let people know this is the framework.

If we want to improve it, we need to have more time with organized work time and clear direction of what we are supposed to do. Our department does not even have complete unit planners for any subjects. When we do get them close to being done, we are told it needs to be changed to a different format.

Focus group participants echoed the need for more collaboration. Teachers indicated that although teacher collaboration is one of the key components of MYP implementation, they perceived not having time to do so, particularly with colleagues from other subject areas. Some commented that if the district is serious about implementing IB, teachers should have enough time to collaborate, which has not happened so far.

Other recommendations from the survey were related to addressing the negative attitudes of classroom teachers and other faculty, and uneven implementation of MYP at their schools. Respondents highlighted the need to change the culture around IB and stressed that MYP needs to be implemented throughout the school in order to be effective. Some teachers expressed,

Make sure that everyone is doing it. There are so many teachers that don't want to make the effort to try it. They want their own way and never gave the program a try. They say in my classroom, I close my door and do what I want.

Consistency across disciplines, some teachers are teaching MYP and scoring and others are not.

As part of the survey, CAREI also offered respondents an opportunity to share any additional comments about MYP at their school. However, the survey noted that unlike the responses to the other open-ended survey questions—which CAREI would review, sort into themes, and then summarize in the evaluation report—the full text of these additional comments would be included in the report to provide classroom teachers and other faculty with an opportunity to share their ideas about any aspects of MYP with the readers of the evaluation report. These additional comments appear in Appendix K.

Parent Results

This section of the MYP evaluation results summarizes the data provided by parents of middle school students through an online survey and a focus group conducted at each school.

All parents of students at Central Middle School IB World School (Central) and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School (Sunrise Park) received an email from the district that invited them to complete an online survey. The survey was sent to 1,840 parents and 235 parents completed the survey, for a response rate of 13%. The parents who responded to the survey were almost evenly split between parents of students at Central (51%) and parents of students at Sunrise Park (49%). However, because the number of parents

with students at Central (N=1,060) is notably larger than the number of Sunrise Park parents (N=780), a calculation of the response rate by school shows that the response rate was slightly higher for Sunrise Park parents (15%) than Central parents (11%). As shown in Table 15, across the two middle schools the grade levels of the students whose parents completed the survey were almost evenly distributed across grades 6-8.

Parents were also invited to attend a focus group. One focus group with parents at each middle school was conducted. A total of 8 parents participated in the middle school focus groups. At Central Middle School, six parents expressed interest in participating and five attended. Four expressed interest in participating at Sunrise Middle School, and three parents attended. Some parents had children who had attended Matoska International IB World School for elementary school while other parents had children who had gone to several other elementary schools in the district. All of the parents said their middle school student(s) was attending their neighborhood middle school and among the 8 parents there was representation from each middle grade.

The primary purpose of the focus group was to collect data to clarify or supplement survey data results. Therefore, the results from the focus group are not reported separately, but rather throughout the survey data. CAREI evaluators developed focus group questions based on specific areas of survey results to likely benefit from this additional data collection. These areas were parent satisfaction with how the school: provides a positive climate for student learning; encourages students to engage in service learning; incorporates world issues into lessons; and emphasizes the importance of global citizenship. Parents were also asked which aspects of their child or children's experiences they value the most, why, and how much MYP contributes to the aspects mentioned.

Table 15

Parent Survey Responses by Grade of Child or Children⁸

n=235	%
6 th grade	36%
7 th grade	39%
8 th grade	34%

The parent survey also asked parents to indicate which elementary school(s) their current middle school student(s) had attended. Nearly one-fourth (24%) of the middle school parents who completed the survey said their child/children had attended elementary school at Matoska International IB World School (See Table 16). The elementary school attended by the child/children of the other 75% of the survey respondents was relatively evenly distributed among the district's eight other elementary schools or an elementary school outside the district. The vast majority of parents indicated that Central/Sunrise Park were their neighborhood school.

⁸ Percentages add up to over 100% due to some parents having more than one child enrolled in middle school.

Table 16

Parent Survey Responses by Elementary School Attended

n=235	%
Matoska International IB World School	24%
Otter Lake Elementary	16%
Oneka Elementary	13%
Vadnais Heights Elementary	13%
Lincoln Elementary	10%
An elementary school outside the district	8%
Lakeaires Elementary	7%
Willow Lane Elementary	5%
Birch Lake Elementary	3%
Hugo Elementary	4%

Parent satisfaction with MYP. Over ninety percent (93%) of the parents who completed the survey said Central or Sunrise was their neighborhood/home school. Parents were asked how much the fact that the middle schools were MYP schools had influenced their enrollment decision. The survey results indicate that the presence of the MYP model in the middle schools had minimal impact on the parents' enrollment decision. As shown in Table 17, only 12% of respondents indicated that the IB program impacted their enrollment decision *a lot*, while 60% chose the response *not at all*.

Table 17

Influence of IB Status on Parents' Enrollment Decision

	Not at all	Very little	Some	A lot
How much did the fact that the school (Central Middle School IB World School or Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School) is an IB school influence your enrollment decision? (n=234)	60%	14%	14%	12%

The survey provided parents with a list of instructional practices and asked them to indicate how important it was to them that their middle school does each practice (See Table 18). The practice with the greatest percentage of parents reporting as *very important* was, "provides a positive climate for student learning" (81%). The curriculum and instructional practices listed below were rated as *very important* for their school to do by 60% - 69% of the parents:

- Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and students (69%);
- Provide a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (66%);
- Involves students in activities that require critical thinking (64%);
- Offers my student(s) adequate academic challenge (62%);
- Connects lessons with real-life issues (61%); and
- Provides a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (60%).

In contrast, the aspects of instruction that parents considered less important relative to the other aspects included on the survey—as indicated by a response of either *not important* or *slightly important*—were:

- Emphasizes the importance of global citizenship (12%);
- Places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages (11%);
- Incorporates world issues into lessons (9%); and
- Encourages students to engage in service learning (7%).

The attitudes of some of the focus group participants mirrored the above results related to global citizenship and world issues. Parents in the focus groups questioned whether world issues needed to be emphasized in the middle grades, and wondered if they would be addressed more effectively in high school. Similarly, several parents questioned the need for their middle school to emphasize global citizenship.

Table 18

Parents' Views on the Importance of Specific Instructional Practices

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
Involves students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =228)	1%	4%	9%	43%	43%
Involves students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =227)	--	1%	4%	31%	64%
Connects lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =228)	1%	3%	14%	41%	42%
Connects lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =228)	1%	2%	4%	32%	61%
Emphasizes the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =228)	6%	6%	18%	33%	37%
Incorporates world issues into lessons (<i>n</i> =228)	1%	8%	15%	39%	37%
Encourages students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =227)	3%	4%	17%	34%	41%
Places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages (<i>n</i> =228)	4%	7%	23%	37%	29%
Offers my student(s) adequate academic challenge (<i>n</i> =227)	--	1%	5%	32%	62%
Helps students develop key learner attributes such as being communicators, inquirers and reflective (<i>n</i> =228)	2%	2%	6%	36%	54%

Table 18 (Continued)

Parents' Views on the Importance of Specific Instructional Practices

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and students (<i>n</i> =228)	--	2%	2%	26%	69%
Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (<i>n</i> =228)	--	3%	2%	29%	66%
Provides a positive climate for student learning (<i>n</i> =227)	--	1%	2%	17%	81%
Provides a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (<i>n</i> =228)	2%	3%	9%	26%	60%

Fidelity of implementation. The next section on the survey asked parents to consider these same school instructional practices again, and then indicate their level of satisfaction with how Central/Sunrise Park was doing regarding the implementation of each practice. Around half of the respondents were satisfied with how their school was doing on each of the practices listed on the survey (See Table 19). Over 80% of parents were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with how their school was doing on each of the following practices:

- Offering my student(s) an adequate academic challenge (89%);
- Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (84%);
- Involving students in cooperative learning (83%);
- Providing a positive climate for student learning (82%); and
- Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (81%).

In addition, 80% of the parents were either *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with how their school was providing a climate of open communication between teachers and students.

Several focus group participants expanded on the high level of satisfaction with the climate for student learning and communication between teachers and students. For example, almost all of these parents offered examples of how the teachers and/or counselors at their middle school had made extra efforts to reach out to their students when a student was new to middle school or facing challenges academically or with peers. Several parents commented on how surprised they were when they discovered how quickly their child's teachers had come to remember their child's name, as well as the names of all the other students in their child's class. Parents also described how willing the teachers and counselors were to meet with them and their child to reduce the child's anxiety or problem solve on other issues. As one parent explained,

My [son/daughter] came from a really small elementary and knew all the teachers and the students in the school. And so, he/she was really anxious coming to [name of middle school]. So, we met with a counselor before we came. And when schools started we met with the teachers before school started so they'd see her. I did not expect them to get to

know her quickly because they have so many students. And when I came in a week later to get a book he/she had forgotten, one of his/her teachers said, “Here it is” and called [student] by name.

Another focus group participant reflected the experiences of several other parents when she said, “I feel that when it comes to positive environment [for student learning], it boils down to the teachers. They make the experience for the kids. We’ve had nothing but positive.”

In contrast, although only a small proportion of the survey respondents chose the response options of *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* for any of the practices, four practices had a relatively higher percentage of parents (7% - 9%) who said they were either *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* with how their school was doing the practice:

- Encouraging students to engage in service learning;
- Incorporating world issues into lessons;
- Helping students develop key learner attributes, (such as being communicators, inquirers, and reflective); and
- Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship.

A comparison of these results with parents’ responses to the earlier survey question about how important it was to parents that their school does each of these curriculum and instructional practices revealed that for three of the four practices listed above, for which a relatively high percentage of parents indicated they were *very dissatisfied* or *dissatisfied* with how their school was doing the practice, there was also a relatively high percentage of parents who indicated it was either *slightly important* or *not important* to them that their school does the practice. These areas were: emphasizing the importance of global citizenship, incorporating world issues into lessons, and encourage students to engage in service learning.

In the focus groups, parents’ satisfaction was generally low regarding how their school encouraged students to engage in service learning, primarily because the service learning the parents were aware of seemed to only take place after school and for a limited number of hours. Several parents said that their family already did service activities in the local community on their own and therefore they did not think the school necessarily needed to provide it. Several parents questioned whether service learning was important, particularly for students like their own who were generally very busy and anxious and did not need to add one more required activity.

With the exception of history or foreign language classes, the parents in the focus groups were not aware of their school doing much to incorporate world issues into lessons. And one parent noted that, “In foreign language it would happen anyway. It is not immersing them in culture.”

Table 19

Parents' Level of Satisfaction with School's Instructional Practices⁹

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Involving students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =183)	--	1%	15%	57%	26%
Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =199)	--	2%	14%	55%	29%
Connecting lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =169)	--	5%	22%	50%	23%
Connecting lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =182)	1%	4%	19%	53%	24%
Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =168)	1%	6%	26%	45%	21%
Incorporating world issues into lessons (<i>n</i> =163)	1%	7%	25%	44%	23%
Encouraging students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =181)	1%	8%	25%	44%	23%
Placing importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages (<i>n</i> =200)	1%	2%	20%	56%	21%
Offering my student(s) adequate academic challenge (<i>n</i> =208)	--	2%	9%	57%	32%
Helping students develop key learner attributes such as being communicators, inquirers and reflective (<i>n</i> =193)	1%	7%	19%	49%	25%
Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and students (<i>n</i> =207)	1%	5%	13%	49%	31%
Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (<i>n</i> =215)	2%	3%	14%	50%	31%
Providing a positive climate for student learning (<i>n</i> =210)	2%	4%	11%	56%	26%
Providing a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (<i>n</i> =183)	2%	3%	19%	53%	23%

⁹ The option "I do not have enough information to respond" was omitted from analysis. The number of respondents who reported not having enough information ranged from 7 to 59, depending on the item.

Impact of MYP on students' learning and development. The next section of the survey asked parents to reflect on how being a MYP school impacts student learning and development. Specifically, parents were asked to respond to two open-ended questions: What advantages, if any, does the IB program provide to support student learning and growth? What disadvantages, if any, does MYP present for student learning and growth? For each question, the survey indicated that if a parent did not feel familiar enough with the IB program to answer the question, then they could write "N/A" in the response box.

Advantages of MYP for student learning and growth. When parents of students at Sunrise and Central middle schools were asked what advantages, if any, the IB program provides to support student learning and growth, there were a variety of responses. Of the 182 parents who answered this question, the largest proportion of 56% gave a response of "N/A" to indicate they thought they were not familiar enough with the program to answer the question. An additional 6% wrote that they were not very familiar with the program at their child's school. A lack of familiarity with MYP was also evident in the focus groups. While a majority of the parents who participated in the focus groups were very satisfied with their middle school, they drew few connections between the strengths they described at their middle school and MYP.

Of the small proportion of survey respondents who reported an advantage to the program, the most common response (n=18) was related to the global or world perspective they perceive that MYP incorporates into the curriculum. Examples of these parents' responses are as follows:

I feel that it allows my student to see a multitude of perspectives. It also affords her a global awareness that I feel will give her an advantage in her years to come.

The IB program provides learning in a global perspective that applies to skills that are used in the classroom and the environment beyond at a local, regional, national and international level. The IB program enables the students to make practical connections between their areas of study and real world. It prepares them to be active participants in the community.

True connections with the world. I also feel the IB program has helped my kids understand and respect diversity contributing to a more kind and empathic character.

Several parents mentioned the characteristics of the learner profile as an advantage of MYP. While some referenced the profile by name, others referred to components of the MYP learner profile; for example,

I love the learner profiles and think that they help children to become productive and respectful people and learners. It is so important to teach children what balance is and how to be reflective. I could go down the list because I think that in today's society ALL the profiles are so needed.

It gives students the opportunity to "think outside the box" and think outside their immediate world. Provides them the ability to think critically. Gives them the courage to be risk takers.

I think that students are allowed to drive their own learning and it helps the students be more culturally aware.

The focus on the whole child was also mentioned by several parents as a perceived advantage of MYP. One parent said, “The IB program is a more holistic approach to learning, providing students with real-world examples to complex issues. It also provides space for self-reflection and reinforcing important values.”

Lastly, 9% of the parents commented that they saw no advantages to MYP at their child’s middle school.

Disadvantages of MYP for student learning and growth. Parents were also asked what disadvantages, if any, the IB program presents for student learning and growth. Similar to the question about advantages, the majority (67%) of parents who provided an answer indicated that they were not familiar enough with the IB program at their child’s school to respond. An additional 27 parents (14%) said they did not see any disadvantages to the program as it relates to student learning or growth.

The most common responses from the small proportion of parents who commented about a disadvantage of the program for student learning and growth were related to the following themes: poor implementation of MYP or lack of buy-in from classroom teachers and other faculty (n=8), the challenge of the program for students with disabilities (n=6), and the distraction from teaching and learning core curriculum (n=5). A few parents mentioned that the IB program was too much work for teachers (n=4) or that having world languages only every other day was a disadvantage (n=2). Examples of the comments that described disadvantages of MYP are as follows:

I don't feel there are any disadvantages - other than the requirement of teacher dedication and time. We need teacher buy-in and if we don't have that, I don't know that the program can be successfully implemented.

The IB projects are good for students that do not struggle with school. But for those who struggle academically, they can be an extra stressor and anxiety inducer.

We are too fast to change schools learning about the world, we should concentrate on children being able to add, subtract, multiply and divide, read well, history and geography.

It appears to be extra work for the teachers and students that does not produce the desired result. This program could easily be accomplished through teacher evaluations and school initiatives.

Parts of the focus group discussions expanded on dissatisfaction with the implementation of MYP among some parents. Participants who expressed notable dissatisfaction with their middle school, their dissatisfaction centered on how little the school seemed to be doing with MYP. For example, a parent explained, “the teachers are doing what they would be doing anyhow and some of it fits IB and some doesn’t.” Further, a parent noted that “many teachers weren’t able to inform parents how the lessons they are doing fit into IB during conferences.” The parents who were dissatisfied with how little their school was doing with MYP also said they didn’t understand why the district was “spending money evaluating it rather than just implementing it.” One parent said, “if you read the district goals, they all match with IB, so I don’t understand why they are questioning it. It is what they say they are supposed to be doing.”

Middle Years Program Summary and Discussion

Overall, the evaluation results for MYP indicate that middle school students and parents who participated in the study are satisfied with the experiences the students have at their middle school. The schools generally offer the types of learning experiences that are important to parents and the students indicate they like these learning experiences. Further, at least three-fourths of the parents are satisfied with how their school provides a positive climate for student learning, as well as a climate of open communication between teachers and students and between teachers and parents.

Other key findings about MYP from the study are as follows:

- A majority of the students indicated that they experience most of the 14 MYP-related learning practices listed on the survey. The practice endorsed most strongly by the largest percentage of students was “rubrics are used to assess and grade my learning.”
- Overall, students reported that they like their learning experiences in middle school. Two aspects of their learning experiences that the largest percentage of students indicated they liked were “I like having a choice in my learning” and “I understand what my teachers expect of me in my classes.”
- At least two-thirds of the teachers indicated that they use four MYP-related practices either *weekly* or *daily*: involve students in activities that require critical thinking, involve students in collaborative learning, connect lessons with real-life issues, and collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach. These are also the practices that over three-fourths of the teachers feel prepared to implement effectively.
- Over half of the teachers said they *never* or *rarely* encourage students to engage in service learning and 20% said they feel *not at all prepared* to implement this learning activity effectively. Another 35% of the teachers reported they feel *somewhat prepared* to implement service learning effectively.
- About one-third of the teachers said they *never* or *rarely* engage in three of the MYP-related practices: collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas, emphasize the importance of global citizenship, and incorporate world issues into their teaching practice. A relatively large proportion of teachers indicated they feel either *not at all prepared* or *somewhat prepared* to implement these three practices effectively.
- The #1 challenge for teachers in implementing MYP was the impact of MYP on teachers’ schedules. Grading systems and the inconsistent implementation of MYP at their school were also chosen by a large percentage of teachers as their #1 or #2 most important challenge in implementing MYP.
- Data from the teacher focus groups indicated that teachers think MYP has made it more challenging to collaborate with colleagues who teach what they teach because they no longer have common prep time with other teachers who teach the same subject area. The focus group results also indicated that the challenges teachers experience implementing grading systems is related to the lack of a clear expectation that all teachers will use the MYP rubrics and the need for teachers to grade everything twice because the scores from the MYP rubrics are not included in grades that are reported to the district or to families.

- Of the 14 MYP-related learning practices listed on the survey, a majority of the parents indicated that it was *very important* that their school does 7 of them, including “provides a positive climate for student learning” and “involves students in activities that require critical thinking.” Slightly over 10% of the parents said two practices were either *not important* or *slightly important*: “emphasizes the importance of global citizenship” and “places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages.”
- At least three-fourths of the parents (75%) were satisfied with how their school was doing 9 of the 14 learning practices. Three of the practices on which the parents indicated they were dissatisfied with how their school was doing the learning practice, were also the practices that the parents had said were not important for their school to offer: emphasizing the importance of global citizenship, incorporating world issues into lessons, and encouraging students to engage in service learning.

When interpreting these findings, it is important to keep in mind that the response rate to the parent survey was low at 13%. Because such a large proportion of the middle school parents did not complete a survey, we recommend caution when trying to generalize these results to all middle school parents. The perspectives of the parents who did not complete a survey may be very different than the parents who did complete a survey.

The data indicate that many of the MYP-related practices are being implemented in the two middle schools, which provides evidence for fidelity of implementation for MYP. The IBO’s authorization of both middle schools as IB World Schools in 2015 is also evidence for the fidelity of implementation of MYP. A comparison of the evaluation results from students, teachers, and parents indicates that overall, these three stakeholder groups have very similar perceptions about the extent to which MYP-related practices are being implemented in the middle schools. This consistency enhances the credibility of each groups’ survey responses as well as the accuracy of the data for fidelity of implementation.

Overall, the findings show that students and parents are satisfied with their middle school. Although some of the MYP-related practices are not being used as fully as the others, this did not appear to affect parents’ and students’ satisfaction with the learning experiences and overall environment at their school. The satisfaction among students and parents despite the lack of implementation for some MYP-related practices may be explained in part by the fact that parents said these same practices were not important for their school to be doing, and less often liked by students.

It’s possible that one factor in parents’ relatively low ratings for the importance of the practices with low levels of implementation and students’ relatively low appreciation for these practices is because the practices are not yet being implemented effectively and as intended in MYP. Teachers may need more training and time to increase their familiarity with these practices before they can deliver them effectively. At that time, it’s possible that students and/or parents may place more importance on these practices.

The evaluation data indicate there were several aspects of the decision that the middle schools would prepare for MYP authorization that may have increased the challenges for MYP implementation. For example, several years ago before the middle schools began to prepare for authorization as IB World Schools, Sunrise teachers were asked to participate in a poll¹⁰ about whether they wanted to implement MYP or STEM. However, when the poll results showed that a majority of the teachers wanted to implement STEM, a decision was made to pursue authorization as an IB school.

¹⁰ The poll was not part of this evaluation study.

Teachers from both middle school focus groups indicated that because they were involved in other significant change initiatives at the time they were asked to implement MYP, it was difficult to focus sufficiently on learning about MYP and making those changes in their lesson plans and teaching practices. The teachers also reported that there was a lack of clarity about how MYP would be different than what they were already doing and why these differences were important to achieve.

The results provide detailed information about these and other challenges middle school teachers have experienced with implementing MYP. While some of the challenges may be sufficiently addressed through further training, other challenges, such as the disconnect teachers reported between the district's expectations for a grading system and IB grading, the lack of time for teachers to collaborate and develop and implement interdisciplinary unit plans, and the inconsistent implementation of MYP throughout a school will likely require a commitment by the district to identify options for addressing these concerns and then carry out the necessary steps to support these aspects of effective MYP implementation.

Many of the MYP-related practices that are being implemented by at least a majority of the teachers are not unique to MYP and are key components of other frameworks or models for effective teaching. Therefore, we cannot make causal claims about the adoption of MYP in the two middle schools and teachers' implementation of these practices. Another important finding was that a majority of the teachers do not attribute their engagement with most of the MTYP-related practices to their school's involvement in MYP. Three of the four practices that the teachers indicated were influenced by their school's involvement in MYP are practices that are likely more specific to MYP, such as encouraging students to participate in service learning and using a common language to help student identify, develop and recognize key learner attributes.

In the end, the most important thing from the perspective of fidelity of implementation is that teachers are implementing the MYP-related practices effectively in their classrooms, not whether MYP itself was the primary influence or impetus for the practices. However, these results do suggest that there may be a lack of shared understanding within the district about what the district expectations are for implementing MYP versus district expectations for good teaching practice in general.

In terms of stakeholders' perception, although some of the teachers who completed the survey described how MYP provided advantages for student learning and growth, overall the teachers' perspective was that MYP presented disadvantages for student learning and growth. The primary explanation for the disadvantage to students was that MYP had a negative effect on teaching practice, which in turn had a negative effect on students. Many teachers said that MYP required them to spend too much time completing paperwork or procedures that had no benefit for their students and, in fact, reduced the amount of time they had available to provide effective instruction. By its part, over fifty-percent of parents said they were not familiar enough with MYP to answer questions about advantages and disadvantages for student learning and growth.

Results for the Primary Years Program

The IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) is a curriculum framework designed for students age 3 to 12 years old. In the White Bear Lake School District, PYP has been adopted at one elementary school, Matoska International IB World School. Matoska has students in grades Kindergarten through grade 5. For the PYP portion of our evaluation, CAREI evaluators collected data from students (grades 4 and 5) through an online survey, and from teachers and parents through online surveys and focus groups. The results are organized by students, teachers, and parents.

Student Results

Matoska students in grades 4 and 5 were asked to complete a survey about what they learn at school and how much they enjoy learning about those skills and concepts. A total of 152 of 177 students completed the survey for a response rate of 86%. The number of students in grade 4 at Matoska is larger than the number of students enrolled in grade 5, therefore there were slightly more responses from 4th graders than 5th graders (See Table 20).

Table 20

Grade Level of Students Who Completed the Survey

n=152	%
4 th grade	57%
5 th grade	43%

Students were asked to indicate how often they learn about various skills and concepts, using the response options *never*, *sometimes*, and *every day*. As illustrated in Table 21, a majority of respondents indicated that *every day*, they learn to be a good citizen (61%), ask questions and investigate things that interest them (59%), and work with other kids in their class (55%). Over 90% of students who responded to the survey indicated they learn about all the items included on the survey either *sometimes* or *every day*.

More students responded *sometimes*, as opposed to *every day*, when asked how often they learn about the following:

- Learning about different countries and people in the world (69% and 28%, respectively);
- Being organized (57% and 37%, respectively);
- Doing things to help their community/taking action (56% and 31%, respectively); and
- Focusing on learner profile traits (54% and 43%, respectively).

Less than 10% of student respondents indicated they *never* learn about the 8 skills and concepts included on the survey.

Table 21

Frequency with Which Students Experience Specific Instructional Practices

	Never	Sometimes	Every day
Working with other kids in my class (<i>n</i> =151)	3%	42%	55%
Focusing on learner profile traits (balanced, communicator, caring, etc.) (<i>n</i> =152)	3%	54%	43%
Being a good citizen (<i>n</i> =152)	--	39%	61%
Doing things to help my community/ taking action (<i>n</i> =151)	3%	56%	41%
Learning about different countries and people in the world (<i>n</i> =152)	3%	69%	28%
Being organized (<i>n</i> =152)	7%	57%	37%
Asking questions and investigating things that interest me (<i>n</i> =152)	5%	36%	59%
Having choice in my learning (<i>n</i> =152)	9%	47%	45%

Students were then asked to report their level of enjoyment in learning the same skills and concepts discussed in the previous question, using the options *I really don't like this*, *this is just OK*, or *I really like this* (See Table 22). Eighty-one percent of respondents (81%) said they *really like* learning about having choices in their learning, and over two-thirds of respondents indicated they *really like* learning about asking questions and investigating things that interest them (70%), doing things to help their community/taking action (69%), and being a good citizen (68%). At least half of respondents reported they *really like* learning about working with other kids in their class (61%) and about different countries and people in the world (50%). The only item for which more than 10% of respondents responded *I really don't like this* was learning about being organized (12%).

The survey concluded by asking students about three broad qualities of their school (See Table 23). Students were asked to choose between a response of *no*, *sometimes*, or *yes* for each of the three statements. Over 90% of respondents replied *yes* to questions about whether their teachers care about them and their learning. Respondents were evenly split between *sometimes* and *yes* regarding whether they know the central ideas they are studying in school.

Table 22

Students' Satisfaction with Specific Instructional Practices¹¹

	I really don't like this	This is just OK	I really like this
Working with other kids in my class (<i>n</i> =150)	7%	31%	61%
Focusing on learner profile traits (balanced, communicator, caring, etc.) (<i>n</i> =149)	3%	52%	44%
Being a good citizen (<i>n</i> =149)	3%	30%	68%
Doing things to help my community/ taking action (<i>n</i> =149)	4%	27%	69%
Different countries and people in the world (<i>n</i> =149)	8%	42%	50%
Being organized (<i>n</i> =144)	12%	41%	47%
Asking questions and investigating things that interest me (<i>n</i> =145)	3%	27%	70%
Having choice in my learning (<i>n</i> =145)	1%	18%	81%

Table 23

Students' Overall Perspectives about their School

	No	Sometimes	Yes
Do you know the central ideas you are studying in your school? (<i>n</i> =151)	3%	48%	49%
Do your teachers care about you? (<i>n</i> =151)	1%	9%	91%
Do your teachers care about your learning? (<i>n</i> =152)	2%	6%	92%

Teacher Results

A total of 57 faculty members at Matoska were provided with the opportunity to complete the survey. The survey was completed by 31 people for a response rate of 54%. Most of the survey questions were designed to be answered by faculty members who provide instruction directly to students in the classroom (classroom teachers). Respondents who classified themselves as “other faculty” were asked to only complete the survey questions related to the impact of PYP on school climate, the advantages and disadvantages of PYP for student learning and growth, and recommendations to improve PYP at their school.

¹¹ The response option “My school doesn’t teach this” was omitted from analysis. The number of respondents who chose this option ranged from 1 to 6, depending on the item.

Teachers were also invited to attend a focus group. Eight teachers expressed interest in participating and six teachers attended the session. The primary purpose of the focus group was to collect data to clarify or supplement survey data results. Therefore, the results from the focus group are not reported separately, but rather throughout the survey data.

Survey respondents were first asked if their role at Matoska was a classroom teacher or other faculty. Ninety percent of the respondents reported they were classroom teachers, while 10% classified themselves as other faculty (See Table 24).

Table 24

Role and Grade Taught by Survey Respondents

n=31	%
Role	
Classroom teacher	90%
Other faculty	10%
Grade taught	
Kindergarten	11%
1 st grade	14%
2 nd grade	14%
3 rd grade	11%
4 th grade	7%
5 th grade	11%
Multiple grades	32%

Fidelity of implementation. Classroom teachers at Matoska were asked how frequently they engage in various PYP-related activities during a typical month. As illustrated in Table 25, with the exception of encourage students to engage in service learning, where 39% of teachers reported engaging in that activity *weekly* or *daily*, two-thirds or more of the teachers reported engaging in all of the other PYP-related activities *weekly* or *daily*. The activity that the greatest percentage of teachers reported they do *daily* was involve students in cooperative learning (86%), and another 11% of the teachers indicated they do this *weekly*. Seventy-five percent of respondents (75%) reported that they use a common language to help students to identify, develop and recognize key learner attributes on a daily basis.

Table 25

Frequency with Which Teachers Engage in Activities During a Typical Month

How often do you...	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Twice a month	Weekly	Daily
Involve students in cooperative learning? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	4%	--	--	11%	86%
Involve students in activities that require critical thinking? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	--	--	--	36%	64%
Connect lessons with other disciplines? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	--	4%	21%	68%
Connect lessons with real-life issues? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	--	--	--	29%	71%
Emphasize the importance of global citizenship? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	7%	--	57%	29%
Incorporate world issues into teaching practice? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	7%	18%	61%	7%
Collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	--	4%	4%	39%	54%
Collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	4%	7%	14%	46%	29%
Encourage students to engage in service learning? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	14%	18%	29%	25%	14%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes? (<i>n</i> =28)	--	--	--	4%	21%	75%

Next, teachers were asked to consider the same set of PYP-related activities and then indicate the extent to which Matoska's involvement in PYP contributes to teachers engaging in each of those practices (See Table 26). It's important to note that the question whose responses are shown in Table 26 did not specify any frequency for teachers' engagement in the activities, unlike the question whose responses are shown in Table 25, which asked teachers how often they engage in the activities during a typical month. The highest proportion of teachers (86%) said that Matoska's involvement in PYP contributed a *very high degree* to teachers engaging in the practice of "use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes." Over three-fourths of the teachers (78%) said Matoska's involvement in PYP contributed a *very high degree* to teachers collaborating with colleagues in other subject areas. A slightly lower percentage of classroom teachers reported that Matoska's involvement in PYP contributed a *very high degree* to teachers connecting their lessons with other disciplines (71%) and emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (71%).

Table 26

Extent to Which PYP Contributes to Teachers' Engagement in Practices

	Not at all	Small degree	Moderate degree	High degree	Very high degree
Involving students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	--	46%	46%
Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =28)	--	4%	11%	29%	57%
Connecting my lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	14%	7%	71%
Connecting my lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =28)	--	--	18%	29%	54%
Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =28)	--	4%	7%	18%	71%
Incorporating world issues into my teaching practice (<i>n</i> =28)	4%	--	11%	39%	46%
Collaborating with colleagues who teach what I teach (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	14%	32%	46%
Collaborating with colleagues in other subject areas (<i>n</i> =27)	--	--	--	22%	78%
Encouraging students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =28)	--	7%	21%	14%	57%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (<i>n</i> =28)	--	4%	--	11%	86%

During the teacher focus group, one teacher talked about how IB impacts what happens at Matoska. The teacher said,

I think with IB other teachers do this stuff too. You know good teachers are going to listen to their kids and follow their lead and try to make learning meaningful, but I think IB allows us to be a whole school dedicated to that and so those teachable moments, we just notice them more and then make time for them maybe a little bit more sometimes and then I think our students really understand that they are allowed to do that, that they are allowed to take action, like they are ... that's really celebrated at our school.

Teacher preparedness to implement PYP effectively. The next section of the survey asked teachers to consider the same set of PYP-related activities as the two previous questions and then indicate how prepared they felt to implement each activity effectively (See Table 27). Teachers indicated their level of preparedness by choosing one of these response options: *not at all prepared*, *somewhat prepared*, *adequately prepared*, or *extremely prepared*. Approximately 80% of respondents indicated they felt *extremely prepared* to collaborate effectively with colleagues who teach what they teach (82%) and effectively use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (79%). The only two activities for which fewer than half of the teachers indicated feeling *extremely prepared* to implement effectively were incorporate world issues into teaching practice (36%) and encourage students to engage in service learning (37%). However, even in these two areas, the majority of teachers felt at least *adequately prepared* to implement these activities effectively.

Table 27

Extent Teachers Feel Prepared to Effectively Implement Practices

	Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Adequately prepared	Extremely prepared
Involve students in cooperative learning (n=28)	--	4%	43%	54%
Involve students in activities that require critical thinking (n=28)	--	14%	36%	50%
Connect lessons with other disciplines (n=28)	--	11%	18%	71%
Connect lessons with real-life issues (n=28)	--	4%	46%	50%
Emphasize the importance of global citizenship (n=28)	--	11%	39%	50%
Incorporate world issues into teaching practice (n=28)	4%	14%	46%	36%
Collaborate with colleagues who teach what I teach (n=28)	--	4%	14%	82%
Collaborate with colleagues in other subject areas (n=28)	--	7%	32%	61%
Encourage students to engage in service learning (n=27)	4%	19%	41%	37%
Use a common language to help students to identify, develop, and recognize key learner attributes (n=28)	--	7%	14%	79%

Teachers were then asked to consider a list of ten potential challenges of implementing PYP and identify what they see as the top three greatest challenges for Matoska teachers. The results indicate there were three challenges that were consistently identified by the teachers as among their top three. As illustrated in Table 28, the challenge that was most frequently reported as the greatest challenge was the impact of PYP requirements on teachers' schedules, followed by the challenge of grading systems and the alignment of PYP with district goals.

Table 28

The Three Greatest Challenges for Teachers Implementing PYP¹²¹³

	#1 Challenge	#2 Challenge	#3 Challenge
Impact of PYP requirements on teachers' schedules (n=16)	28%	8%	24%
Grading systems (n=16)	20%	20%	8%
Alignment of PYP with our district goals (n=12)	16%	16%	12%
Participating in PYP professional development and curriculum writing facilitated by the district (n=7)	12%	8%	4%
Alignment of PYP with state learning standards (n=5)	8%	8%	--
Developing curriculum (n=10)	4%	8%	24%
Implementing units (n=3)	4%	--	4%
Working collaboratively with colleagues (n=7)	4%	12%	8%
Participating in PYP professional development facilitated by the IB organization or by staff who have attended an IB training (n=7)	4%	4%	16%
Consistency of PYP implementation at my school (n=4)	--	8%	4%

Value of PYP training in which teachers have participated. Teachers were asked to report their level of agreement with a number of statements related to their experiences with PYP. As shown in Table 29, the statement that elicited the strongest level of agreement was, “I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in PYP” (82% of respondents chose *strongly agree*). Nearly two-thirds (64%) of respondents indicated they *strongly agree* that collaboration is present at their school when it comes to planning, teaching, and learning in PYP. In addition, a majority of teachers chose *agree* for the following statements, although the percent of teachers who chose *strongly agree* for these statements was lower:

- Teaching in a PYP school involves a greater workload for teachers (25% *strongly agree*, 57% *agree*);
- My school ensures that teachers have adequate support to complete their PYP responsibilities (e.g. planning, curriculum development, implementing a unit, grading) (21% *strongly agree*, 46% *agree*); and
- My school provides adequate training for teachers to successfully implement PYP (21% *strongly agree*, 64% *agree*).

¹² Row percentages do not add up to 100% because respondents were asked to only select three of the ten items

¹³ Three of the 26 teachers who responded to this question selected more than one response option for one or more of the challenges. For example, a respondent may have selected both the response option of “grading systems” and the response option of “developing curriculum” for the “#1 challenge.”

Table 29

Teachers' Level of Agreement with Statements Related to PYP

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Teaching in a PYP school involves a greater workload for teachers. (n=28)	--	--	18%	57%	25%
I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in PYP. (n=28)	--	--	4%	14%	82%
My school ensures that teachers have adequate support to complete their PYP responsibilities (e.g. planning, curriculum development, implementing a unit, grading). (n=28)	--	18%	14%	46%	21%
My school provides adequate training for teachers to successfully implement PYP. (n=28)	--	11%	4%	64%	21%
Collaboration is present at my school when it comes to planning, teaching, and learning in PYP. (n=28)	--	--	--	36%	64%

The next section of the teacher survey addressed the effectiveness of the training that teachers had received. A very high proportion of the teachers (93%) reported having participated in training provided by the IB organization. In addition, 68% responded that they had participated in PYP training or curriculum writing that was facilitated by the district. Teachers were also asked how well each type of training had prepared them to implement PYP in their school. Of the teachers who had participated in training provided by the IB Organization, half said the training had prepared them *very well* to implement PYP and another 27% said the training had prepared them *adequately* (See Table 30).

Table 30

Extent to Which Training Provided by the IB Organization Prepared Teachers to Implement PYP

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
To what extent has the training provided by the IB organization prepared you to implement PYP in your school? (n=26)	--	8%	15%	27%	50%

Teachers who had participated in PYP training or curriculum writing that was facilitated by the district were asked to indicate how that professional development had prepared them to implement specific

aspects of PYP (See Table 31). Seventy-nine percent of respondents reported they felt *adequately* or *very well* prepared by district trainings to implement the following aspects of PYP:

- Ask students to explain their answers
- Use brainstorming, as a class or among groups of students, to generate new ideas
- Ask students to share their work with the class
- Discuss a real-world problem
- Ask students to work together to think through problems, questions, or issues

Although teachers indicated they felt somewhat less prepared to implement the other aspects of PYP that were listed on the survey, over half of the teachers reported being at least *adequately* prepared to implement all PYP activities included in the question.

Table 31

Extent to Which District-provided PYP Training and/or Curriculum Writing Prepared Teachers

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
Present questions for discussion that have no clear right or wrong answers. (n=18)	--	6%	28%	50%	17%
Ask students to explain their answers. (n=19)	5%	--	16%	47%	32%
Ask students to develop opposing or complementary arguments. (n=19)	11%	16%	21%	42%	11%
Ask students to share their work with others for reflection and refinement. (n=19)	5%	5%	21%	37%	32%
Use brainstorming, as a class or among groups of students, to generate new ideas. (n=19)	5%	5%	11%	26%	53%
Help students evaluate evidence and arguments. (n=19)	5%	21%	21%	47%	5%
Help students identify trends or make predictions. (n=19)	11%	16%	26%	32%	16%
Provide direct instruction. (n=19)	--	5%	32%	26%	37%
Ask students to share their work with the class. (n=19)	5%	--	16%	37%	42%
Ask students to formulate relevant and provocative questions. (n=19)	5%	5%	32%	32%	26%
Make connections between learning gained in different subject areas. (n=19)	--	16%	26%	21%	37%

Table 31 (Continued)

Extent to Which District-provided PYP Training and/or Curriculum Writing Prepared Teachers

	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	Adequately	Very well
Use models or visuals to represent complex ideas. (n=19)	--	16%	21%	32%	32%
Discuss significance of the lesson - personally, locally, nationally, or globally. (n=19)	5%	11%	21%	37%	26%
Solicit multiple and diverse points of view about a question or issue. (n=19)	5%	11%	32%	32%	21%
Encourage students to use existing knowledge to generate new ideas or solve an unfamiliar problem. (n=19)	5%	11%	26%	32%	26%
Help students break down complex concepts or problems into their component parts. (n=19)	5%	26%	16%	37%	16%
Direct students to gather and organize information to formulate a position or perspective. (n=18)	--	22%	17%	33%	28%
Discuss a real-world problem. (n=19)	--	11%	11%	47%	32%
Ask students to work together to think through problems, questions, or issues. (n=19)	--	5%	16%	21%	58%
Encourage students to guess or ask "what if" questions. (n=19)	5%	5%	21%	32%	37%

Impact of PYP on students' learning and development. The next section of the survey asked teachers and other staff to reflect on how being a PYP school had impacted student learning and development, as well as some overall characteristics of the school. In terms of student learning, teachers were asked to respond to two open-ended questions: What advantages, if any, does PYP present for student learning and growth? What disadvantages, if any, does PYP present for student learning and growth?

Advantages of PYP for student learning and growth. When classroom teachers and other faculty are asked what advantages PYP provides related to student learning and growth, 27 of the 31 respondents provided examples of what they considered as advantages in this area. Respondents most often mentioned how PYP improved student engagement and how it helps students become more involved in their community as global citizens.

Classroom teachers and other faculty described the advantages of PYP for student learning and growth as follows:

PYP provides a framework for teaching curriculum in an innovative style and provides opportunities for active student learning. Students are motivated and eager to learn and it leads to action.

The action cycle allows them to constantly reflect on their learning so that they can grow as individuals and as a class.

It helps support students by making them more well-rounded individuals. They are learning to be caring, active participants in the community around them.

PYP allows me to have discussions with my students about character. We have regular reflections using the attributes and attitudes words, and it helps emphasize to my students the importance of being global citizens. Some of our units lend themselves to conversations about global issues in the world, and my students can make relevant connections to the real world.

PYP supports student learning and growth by allowing students the opportunity to inquire and learn about what matters most to them. Student curiosity and questions drive our instruction. Students also have an advantage because they are able to see connections between areas, as we participate in transdisciplinary learning. Students leave our PYP school being a globally minded citizen that is able to demonstrate all of the IB attributes and attitudes.

In addition to commenting on how PYP helps create global citizens, respondents reported that the global perspective of PYP, overall, provided a great advantage for students. One teacher explained it by saying,

PYP develops an international view when learning about the world around them. The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

There were several respondents who mentioned that the advantage of PYP was the attention to and focus on the whole child.

There is a "whole child" approach with a global focus. Children are encouraged to be thinkers. They are learning how to treat others and how to become thoughtful citizens.

PYP focuses on the whole child and all of their needs. Academic, social, emotional, physical etc.

PYP acknowledges the development and process of learning for the "whole child" in the learning process; the emotional, social and intellectual development of children.

This focus on the whole child was also mentioned several times by teachers in the focus group. One teacher stated,

I think if you watch the students here from kindergarten through grade five you really can see that development of the whole child caring. Of course they are getting to all academic pieces, but the way they take care for one another and who they are as young people is absolutely amazing you know. They learn some of those things earlier on, how to be caring and how to be a risk taker.

Some teachers reported in the survey that real-life learning is a great advantage of PYP. One teacher explained, "It allows opportunities for diverse learners. The units also allow students opportunities to explore real-life topics which is lacking in non-IB schools." Another teacher described it saying, "PYP builds upon students' depths of knowledge year after year. Learning is connected, it is grounded with real world learning."

Another PYP advantage related to student learning and growth that was mentioned by a number of respondents was that PYP provides a common language for students and staff around teaching and learning. As one respondent explained,

Students are constantly talking and learning about what it means to be an "IB learner." They know how to show the attitudes and attributes of the IB learner profile and have a common language they can use to discuss what each of them means.

Teachers in the focus group also mentioned that PYP provided students with a common language to use with each other, with teachers, and even at home. One teacher explained,

Well I think what is amazing is that kids are able to label it too, they will come in from recess and say, Stephanie was ... she was so caring and she was principled because she didn't give into the argument and she helped a friend who needed a friend. They are able to use those words in a very authentic way.

Disadvantages of PYP for student learning and growth. Of the twenty-three respondents who provided an answer to the question asking about what disadvantages, if any, PYP presents for student learning and growth, 19 respondents reported that there were no disadvantages.

A small number of respondents answered this question by describing disadvantages of PYP for teachers. One teacher said that the scope and sequence of PYP was difficult because it was different than a traditional district scope and sequence, while another teacher said that it was challenging to integrate PYP into the district curriculum. As the teacher explained,

Students are not taught traditional curriculum which follows a scope and sequence. In PYP, skills or concepts are taught in units where they fit best. Not in the proper order where skills build on one another.

This disadvantage was also brought up in the teacher focus group when one teacher explained, “I think sometimes the order in which the district has certain things laid out doesn’t always align with how we have things laid out.” Another focus group participant described the challenge in this way,

I think what's hard sometimes is when we have district wide professional development and they are talking about something that maybe everyone else is doing at that time, but we are not teaching that until later or we have already done it.

Impact of PYP on overall school characteristics. When classroom teachers and other faculty were asked how being a PYP school had impacted two broad characteristics of the school, all of the respondents indicated that the impact had been positive (See Table 32). All 31 respondents indicated that being a PYP school had a *strong positive impact* on the school being a positive climate for learning. A high proportion of the respondents (87%) also said being a PYP school had a *strong positive impact* on the school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds, although 13% rated this impact as *somewhat positive*.

Table 32

Views of Classroom Teachers and Other Faculty about the Impact of PYP on School Characteristics

	Strong negative impact	Somewhat negative impact	No impact	Somewhat positive impact	Strong positive impact
The school being a positive climate for learning (n=31)	--	--	--	--	100%
The school being a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (n=31)	--	--	--	13%	87%

Recommendations to improve PYP at Matoska. Additionally, the survey asked PYP classroom teachers and other faculty what recommendations, if any, they would make to improve PYP at Matoska. Of the 31 people who completed the survey, 24 of them provided a recommendation for how to improve PYP at Matoska. The most common recommendations revolved around the desire for more time. Classroom teachers and other faculty reported needing more time for collaboration with other teachers and more time for planning and developing PYP units. Examples of comments in this area are as follows,

I would like to see more time for us to work in collaboration—to get rid of some of the meaningless meetings that could be dealt with through an email as well as district trainings that do not really impact positively the learning that is happening at our school. I would love to see that more individualized per site.

I think if we had more time to collaborate and focus on PYP (instead of often being required to do district-wide PD), it could help us have an even better PYP.

More time for teachers to spend on developing units of inquiry and more district allocated time to do so.

Training was another common area of recommendations for improving PYP. The respondents recommended providing additional training opportunities and more consistent ongoing and annual training. A few teachers mentioned that it needed to be a priority to train new staff.

As part of the survey, respondents were also given an opportunity to share any additional comments about PYP at their school. However, the survey noted that unlike the responses to the other open-ended survey questions—which would be carefully reviewed, sorted into themes, and then summarized in the evaluation report—the full text of these additional comments would be included in the report to provide classroom teachers and other faculty with an opportunity to share their ideas about any aspects of PYP with the readers of the evaluation report. These additional comments appear in Appendix K.

Parent Results

Parents of students at Matoska International IB World School received an email from the district that invited them to complete an online survey. The survey was sent to 572 parents and was completed by 180, for a response rate of 31%. Parents were also invited to attend a focus group. Of the twenty-three parents who expressed interest in participating, ten were randomly selected and attended the session. The primary purpose of the focus group was to collect data to clarify or supplement survey data results. Therefore, the results from the focus group are not reported separately, but rather throughout the survey data.

The parents who responded to the survey had students who attended Matoska across all grade levels, and some parent respondents had students in more than one grade level at Matoska. As shown in Table 33, the grade levels of the students whose parents completed the survey were fairly evenly distributed across grades K-5.

Table 33

Parent Survey Responses by Grade of Child or Children¹⁴

n=180	%
Kindergarten	29%
1 st grade	25%
2 nd grade	27%
3 rd grade	26%
4 th grade	23%
5 th grade	18%

¹⁴ Percentages add up to over 100% due to many parents having more than one child enrolled at Matoska.

Parent satisfaction with PYP. Since Matoska International IB World School is the only elementary school in the White Bear Lake Area Schools District not assigned to families who reside in a specific neighborhood, parents were asked to indicate how much the school’s IB status influenced their decision to voluntarily enroll their child(ren) at Matoska. As shown in Table 34, the majority (62%) of parents that completed the survey indicated that their knowledge that Matoska is an IB school influenced their enrollment decision *a lot*. Approximately one-third of the parents (29%) noted that it had *some* influence on their decision, while less than 10% of parents reported that the school’s IB program influenced their decision *very little* or *not at all*.

Table 34

Influence of IB Status on Parents’ Enrollment Decision at Matoska

	Not at all	Very little	Some	A lot
How much did the fact that Matoska International IB World School is an IB school influence your enrollment decision? (n=175)	6%	3%	29%	62%

The survey provided parents with a list of instructional practices and asked them to indicate how important it was to them that Matoska International IB World School engages these practices. The practice with the greatest number of parents reporting as *very important* was, provides a positive climate for student learning (90%).

As illustrated in Table 35, over 80% of parents indicated that it was *very important* to them that school:

- Involves students in activities that require critical thinking (85%);
- Connects lessons with real-life issues (84%);
- Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and students (83%); and
- Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (81%).

The practice that parent respondents rated lower on importance was the fact that the school places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages. However, even this practice was rated as *important* or *very important* by over three-fourths of the respondents (78%).

Table 35

Parents' Views on the Importance of Specific Instructional Practices

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Important	Very Important
Involves students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =173)	--	--	6%	28%	65%
Involves students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =174)	--	--	--	15%	85%
Connects lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =174)	--	1%	3%	28%	68%
Connects lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =174)	--	--	2%	14%	84%
Emphasizes the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =173)	2%	1%	7%	21%	69%
Incorporates world issues into lessons (<i>n</i> =172)	1%	2%	7%	26%	64%
Encourages students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =174)	--	--	10%	24%	66%
Places importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages (<i>n</i> =173)	1%	2%	19%	28%	50%
Offers my student(s) adequate academic challenge (<i>n</i> =172)	--	--	2%	22%	76%
Helps students develop key learner attributes such as being communicators, inquirers and reflective (<i>n</i> =172)	--	--	2%	21%	77%
Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and students (<i>n</i> =172)	--	--	3%	15%	83%
Provides a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (<i>n</i> =172)	--	--	1%	17%	81%
Provides a positive climate for student learning (<i>n</i> =172)	--	--	--	10%	90%
Provides a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (<i>n</i> =173)	1%	1%	2%	17%	79%

Fidelity of implementation. The next section on the survey asked parents to consider these same school instructional practices again, and then indicate their level of satisfaction with how Matoska International IB World School was doing regarding the implementation of each practice. Across all practices listed on the survey, between 85% - 98% of parent respondents reported they were *satisfied* or

very satisfied with how Matoska was implementing that practice (See Table 36). Nearly three-fourths of the respondents reported feeling *very satisfied* with the following aspects of Matoska:

- Providing a positive climate for student learning (73%);
- Helping students develop key learner attributes such as being communicators, inquirers and reflective (72%); and
- Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and students (72%).

The percentage of parents who indicated being *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* with any of the practices were very low (2% in the majority of the cases), (Table 36). Items with a relatively higher percentage of respondents selecting a response option of *dissatisfied* or *very dissatisfied* were: connecting lessons with real-life issues (3% of the respondents) and offering student(s) an adequate academic challenge (3% of the respondents).

It is worth highlighting that in the previous section of the survey the parents had rated all of the practices listed in Table 36 as being something that they thought was *important* or *very important* for their school to address.

Table 36

Parents' Level of Satisfaction with School's Instructional Practices¹⁵

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Involving students in cooperative learning (<i>n</i> =159)	--	1%	1%	36%	62%
Involving students in activities that require critical thinking (<i>n</i> =165)	1%	1%	2%	32%	65%
Connecting lessons with other disciplines (<i>n</i> =157)	1%	1%	4%	36%	58%
Connecting lessons with real-life issues (<i>n</i> =158)	--	3%	4%	34%	59%
Emphasizing the importance of global citizenship (<i>n</i> =156)	--	1%	6%	31%	63%
Incorporating world issues into lessons (<i>n</i> =151)	--	1%	5%	42%	52%
Encouraging students to engage in service learning (<i>n</i> =156)	--	1%	9%	38%	53%
Placing importance on language learning, including English, other languages spoken at home, and foreign languages (<i>n</i> =167)	1%	1%	13%	40%	46%
Offering my student(s) adequate academic challenge (<i>n</i> =166)	1%	2%	2%	42%	54%
Helping students develop key learner attributes such as being communicators, inquirers and reflective (<i>n</i> =168)	1%	1%	4%	23%	72%
Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and students (<i>n</i> =164)	--	1%	1%	26%	72%
Providing a climate of open communication between teachers and parents (<i>n</i> =168)	--	1%	2%	29%	68%
Providing a positive climate for student learning (<i>n</i> =168)	1%	1%	1%	24%	73%
Providing a welcoming space for students from diverse backgrounds (<i>n</i> =161)	1%	1%	6%	31%	62%

¹⁵ The option "I do not have enough information to respond" was omitted from analysis. The number of respondents who reported not having enough information ranged from 3 to 20, depending on the item.

Impact of PYP on students' learning and development. The next section of the survey asked parents to reflect on how being a PYP school impacts student learning and development. Specifically, parents were asked to respond to two open-ended questions: What advantages, if any, does the IB program provide to support student learning and growth? What disadvantages, if any, does PYP present for student learning and growth? For each question, the survey indicated that if a parent did not feel familiar enough with the IB program to answer the question, then they could write "N/A" in the response box. Of the 180 parents who completed the survey, 49 (27%) wrote "N/A," indicating a lack of familiarity with PYP.

Advantages of PYP for student learning and growth. Parents' perceptions about the advantages of PYP for student learning and growth were grouped into four broad categories: positive learning opportunities, character development, beneficial child outcomes, and personal growth and development. Further detail about the parents' responses in each of these areas appears below.

Positive learning opportunities was the category with the highest number of parent responses. In particular, respondents mentioned appreciating the incorporation of global perspectives into the curriculum, the connections across disciplines, and the linking of content to real-world examples. Respondents also valued the PYP model's ability to teach to different levels and learning styles. Parents explained these learning advantages in various ways; for example:

The IB program provides studies in the classroom using real world applications so that students are able to connect to the local, state, regional, national and international communities. It helps them [students] to be more well-rounded active participants in their communities and abroad.

The lessons are already showing my kindergartener that there are real life applications to her learning.

I feel that being able to connect what they are learning to other disciplines and their real world (and their place in that world) is an advantage for IB learners.

I feel my son has been encouraged to view the broader world in the IB program. I am happy to see him bringing home his discussions about multiculturalism and the global community.

The most important thing is being a multi-disciplined problem solver. The IB curriculum breaks down the silos between disciplines that traditional education models construct. For example, I mentioned to my now-3rd grader that I can tell she likes science. Her response was, "I don't have science class," because the lessons are structured around the world as it is and they do their learning through their world.

We were especially drawn to the IB program for the global/real-world connection pieces. We felt it was important for our child to learn about the broader world and issues rather than just memorizing facts in siloed disciplines.

The IB program creates a classroom that doesn't differentiate the high achieving and the low achieving, all students are challenged at their own level, each learning from each other and listening to others ideas.

Another category that captured many of the responses is character development. Respondents felt that students were developing into responsible and active citizens on both a local and global scale. Respondents also talked about how the PYP model had encouraged their children to appreciate and be open to diversity, become more caring, and develop empathy for others. The following examples illustrate how the parents described the benefits of PYP for their child(ren) in these areas:

My kids come home all the time talking about being caring and principled. They are also learning how to read and write, but it's their focus on being good citizens of the world that impresses us most.

The IB program provides education beyond basic skills, with focus on character building and critical thinking skills that are vital components of citizenship and personal development.

I feel that the emphasis on the IB attributes really have helped to develop our children not only academically, but also have helped to develop their character, morals, ethics, and sense of responsibility to their world to do what they can to make it a better place.

My kid understands the world around her. She is encouraged to get along with people who don't come from the same background as her. She is empathetic toward others and what is going on in their lives. She takes risks and isn't afraid of being wrong. Diversity is welcomed and celebrated at Matoska.

Without the IB program, I don't think [my child] would be as open to other ways of thinking, other cultures, and be as caring as she is.

For my own children, I'm finding my girls are far more in tune to seeing things happening on a global and local level and asking "What can we do to help, mom?", then figuring out the resources they need and taking action to contribute in meaningful ways to become people of action. They're becoming agents of change and applying what they're learning in school to what they're seeing happening in our society, our environment, to people they're surrounded by.

Many respondents touched on other positive outcomes they saw in their children that they attributed to the IB program. The most common outcomes mentioned by parents were skills related to critical thinking, inquisitiveness, communication, and collaboration. In addition, respondents talked about appreciating the development of the IB learner traits in their child or children. Examples of parent comments in these areas are as follows:

I have noticed a remarkable difference in my children versus friend's children who have different learning structures. I see my children asking questions, seeking to understand and looking for connections versus reading and regurgitating.

Encouraging risk-taking and being a lifelong inquirer is vital to future success. I feel all schools teach some form of the IB attributes but putting names and definitions to them encourages conscious decisions to implement them in real world situations.

Inquiry based learning teaches students communication, critical thinking and collaboration skills which are very important tools students need in our changing society and future job market.

Students at Matoska hone these skills through their IB and inquiry-based units and projects. They are great communicators and risk takers.

The critical thinking skills are crucial to this program. Being able to describe the WHY as well as the HOW in elementary years is fantastic. The kids are so curious and letting them explore that curiosity in ways besides rote memorization is great. Learning how to communicate well in different situations and being a risk taker has been great for my child's self-esteem.

Encouraging students to be curious about their surroundings and to feel comfortable asking questions. Critical thinking skills are so important.

Another common category of PYP advantages was students' personal growth and development. Many of the responses that fell within this category were related to the IB focus on the whole child and the emphasis on social and emotional learning. Respondents also appreciated that their children had become risk takers who challenged themselves, developed an intrinsic motivation for learning, and had become more well-rounded and confident. The quotes below offer examples of how parents articulated the benefits of PYP in these areas:

The IB is a whole-child approach that cares, nurtures, and teaches to all aspects of my children - social, emotional, personal, and academic.

The IB program promotes inquiry to improve problem solving and focus on the whole child to further support growth. The confidence that I have seen improve in my child, I feel is due to this focus on the whole child.

[Students at Matoska] have confidence to speak to a group about their ideas and have learned that when we go out of our comfort zone we learn and grow even more.

[My daughter] used the attributes of risk taker, open minded, communicator, and reflective to expand her world, and now doesn't shy away from new tasks. I have watched her confidence soar because of how IB curriculum and teachers support students in learning and growing.

My child is not just learning, he is taking ownership of what he is learning. He is getting an education that is challenging him to push himself to learn more.

Disadvantages of PYP for student learning and growth. Parent respondents were asked to comment on any disadvantages they perceived with the PYP model. Sixty-six respondents (37%) said that there were no disadvantages. An additional 62 parents (34%) responded "N/A," indicating that they were not familiar enough with PYP to comment on any disadvantages. Among the small number of comments that included a disadvantage, some were related to potential negative effects on children, such as the program not being a good fit for every child, students not being prepared for standardized tests, and students having difficulties when transitioning to a non-IB school. It is important to note that only 13

respondents provided comments in this category. In addition, six respondents made comments related to implementation issues, including a concern that the model may not be implemented uniformly throughout the school or that it may increase the workload for teachers and administrators. A large majority of respondents did not list any disadvantages.

Primary Years Program Summary and Discussion

Overall, the evaluation results for PYP indicate that students, teachers and parents are satisfied with PYP at Matoska International IB World School. Over 90% of students who responded to the survey said they believe their teachers care about them and their learning. More than two-thirds of teachers reported that they believe Matoska's participation in PYP contributed in a *high* or *very high* degree to them engaging in IB related practices. Classroom teachers and other faculty also reported that PYP had a *strong positive impact* on Matoska being a positive climate for learning. Finally, over 90% of parents who responded to the survey reported they were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with the vast array of teaching practices at Matoska.

Other key findings about PYP from the study are as follows:

- Students reported they really like having choice in their learning, investigating things of interest to them, doing things to help their community, and learning to be a good citizen.
- Two-thirds of PYP teachers reported engaging in the IB related activities discussed in the survey either *weekly* or *daily* with the exception of "encourage students to engage in service learning."
- Eighty-six percent of teachers reported that they involve students in cooperative learning on a daily basis.
- Over three-fourths of teachers reported they felt *adequately* or *extremely* prepared to effectively implement the IB practices mentioned in the survey.
- The impact of PYP requirements on teachers' schedules was the challenge mentioned by the greatest percent of teachers as one of the top three challenges.
- Eighty-two percent of teachers indicated they *strongly agree* with the statement "I feel that I am a better teacher as a result of my involvement in PYP."
- More than three-fourths (77%) of teachers who responded to the survey indicated that the training provided to them by the IB organization prepared them *adequately* or *very well* to implement PYP in their school.
- Ninety percent of parent respondents indicated that it was *very important* to them that their child's school provides a positive climate for student learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of the Stage 2 evaluation of the district's IB program was to collect data from students, teachers, parents and administrators at the three IB schools--Matoska International IB World School, Central Middle School IB World School, and Sunrise Park Middle School IB World School--regarding their perceptions about the implementation of the IB program, their satisfaction with the IB program, and the effect on students. Overall, the evaluation results provide evidence that middle school students and their parents, as well as students and parents at Matoska, are satisfied with the learning experiences and the school environment present in the district's IB schools.

With regards to MYP specifically, the evaluation data from students, teachers, and parents indicate that many of the MYP-related practices measured in this study are being implemented in the two middle schools. In addition, the middle school teachers generally feel prepared to offer these types of learning activities effectively. However, most middle school teachers felt that MYP contributed very little to their engagement in these practices.

Other aspects of MYP, particularly those that are more unique to IB programs, are being implemented to a lesser extent; for example: service learning, MYP grading systems, collaboration among teachers who teach different subjects, incorporating world issues into teaching practice, and emphasizing the importance of global citizenship. These practices were also the practices the teachers felt least prepared to implement effectively. However, the lower occurrence of these MYP-related practices did not appear to effect students' and parents' satisfaction with their school, most likely because these same practices tended to be rated less important by middle school parents who responded to the survey.

The evaluation results specific to PYP at Matoska indicated that nearly all of the students who responded to the survey said they believe their teachers care about them and their learning. Classroom teachers and other faculty also reported that PYP had a strong positive impact on Matoska being a positive climate for learning. Teachers felt very well prepared to effectively implement the IB practices, and they reported engaging in those practices frequently (daily/weekly). At the same time, for the majority of teachers, Matoska's participation in PYP was perceived as key to their engagement in IB practices.

The combined evaluation results from Stage 1 and Stage 2 indicate that it would not be feasible to conduct the cost-benefit analysis included in CAREI's October, 2017, evaluation proposal to the district for several reasons. First, a cost-benefit analysis requires agreement among district stakeholders on the intended outcomes of implementing PYP at Matoska and MYP the two middle schools. Second, a cost-benefit analysis requires that the intended outcomes can be measured with a reasonable degree of reliability and validity. The Stage 1 evaluation results indicated that both of these conditions could not be met. Further, the Stage 2 evaluation results revealed challenges with identifying the costs and benefits associated with implementation of PYP and MYP given the overlap between the instructional practices associated with these programs and the instructional practices associated with other district or state initiatives, as well as what many teachers consider to be "good teaching."

Based on the evaluation results, we offer the following formative feedback on the district's IB program.

First, based on the overall results of the evaluation, we recommend that the district enhance communication with parents, teachers and students regarding the IB programs. Important topics for this communication include: the rationale for implementing PYP and MYP and the expected outcomes for students; the areas of PYP and MYP that overlap and complement other district initiatives and general

understanding of “good teaching practices”; areas of PYP and MYP that are distinct from what are generally understood to be “good teaching practices” and the benefit the district envisions for implementing these practices.

For MYP specifically, we recommend the following:

1. Convene a work group of district and school staff to articulate responses to the following questions: Which teaching practices are specific to implementation of MYP and which have significant overlap with other district frameworks and expectations? Which policies, procedures, and structures are specific to implementation of MYP and which have significant overlap with other district frameworks and expectations (for example, the A/B schedule, the grading system)?
2. Conduct an internal review of the feasibility of fully implementing MYP given current constraints on the amount of time teachers have available for professional development (as specified in their contract) and the amount of time teachers have available during the school day to undertake activities necessary for effective implementation of MYP. For example, teachers indicated that collaboration with colleagues who teach other subjects in order to plan and carry out interdisciplinary units is a key component of MYP, yet they indicate they do not have sufficient time to do this. Teachers also expressed concern about the amount of time they are required to be out of their classrooms for MYP training. A misalignment between the time needed to implement MYP effectively and the time that is actually available to teachers for activities such as professional development, curriculum planning, and collaboration with colleagues, may indicate that quality implementation of MYP is not feasible at this time.
3. Provide training to teachers in the IB-related areas they have identified, such as; solicit multiple and diverse points of view about a question or issue; ask students to formulate relevant and provocative questions; use models or visuals to represent complex ideas; and discuss a real-world problem.

Adjust the training process (for training provided by the IB organization as well as by the district) to address the challenges teachers identified in the study. For example, given that the IBO’s professional development approach for MYP requires that at least one teacher per subject-group attend training provided by IBO, and that the teachers who attend then serve as trainers to their colleagues, it is critical that the teachers who attend training provided by IBO attend training in their discipline area. Expecting a teacher to serve as a trainer for colleagues who teach a different discipline may be perceived as unfair to the teacher who attends the IBO training and doesn’t contribute to successful implementation of MYP. Teachers also indicated that the time allocated for some training was unrealistic. For example, having one professional development day for developing interdisciplinary work. In addition, it might be beneficial to introduce changes to the training offered by the district. In the evaluation, teachers explained that the training they received from the district was excessively prescriptive, that it was not integrated with their work in the classroom, and there was no follow-up to see how the training had impacted their teaching practice.

4. Strengthen accountability from school and district administrators for consistent implementation of MYP and communicate to teachers and parents about who is responsible for which aspects of MYP implementation.

5. Explore options and then identify a solution to better align IB grading with the districts' current expectations for grading.

Regarding PYP, we recommend the following:

1. Ensure teachers have sufficient time for collaboration with other teachers to develop and implement PYP unit plans.
2. Provide consistent training about PYP, particularly to new staff.
3. Explore options to better align PYP implementation with district standards and scope and sequence.
4. Make sure that the district professional development is aligned with the needs and the curriculum that is being taught at a particular time by teachers in PYP.

In addition to the above recommendations, we offer a final point for consideration regarding the district's IB program. First, based on the history of the development and authorization of PYP at Matoska and MYP at the two middle schools, and research on effective school change, we recommend caution when making comparisons between PYP and MYP regarding the fidelity of IB implementation and its effect on students and the school environment for several reasons:

- MYP is relatively new at the middle schools. The current school year (2017-2018) is only the third year since the middle schools were authorized as IB World Schools. Parents, classroom teachers, other faculty and district staff who are familiar with PYP at Matoska may inadvertently overlook this important distinction and expect deeper levels of IB implementation in the middle schools.
- Given the IB Organization's different requirements for teacher training in MYP and PYP, and the larger size of most middle schools compared to elementary schools, it seems reasonable to expect that more time would be needed to implement MYP to the same degree of fidelity as PYP.
- The context at Matoska when preparing for IB authorization and then continuing to implement PYP after the school was authorized in 2010 includes factors that were not present at either of the middle schools. Therefore, comparisons with MYP implementation may not be beneficial. These factors include:
 - Stakeholders who were critical to the implementation of PYP had a voice in deciding if they wanted to be involved in the program and options were provided for those who were not invested in it. Teachers working at CenterPoint School and ParkView School, the elementary schools that were merged to form Matoska in 2009, were given the option to remain at Matoska and work towards authorization as an IB World School or transfer to any other elementary school in the district that would not be working towards IB authorization.

- In the district, parental school choice exists for the primary but not for the middle schools. All of the students enrolled at Matoska are enrolled there because their parents have expressed a choice to have their student attend Matoska. Although we can't know for certain the extent to which the presence of PYP influenced the parents' enrollment decisions, 62% of Matoska parents who responded to the survey indicated it had a significant influence on their decision. Parents of middle school students, in contrast, do not have a choice about enrolling their student in an IB school or not.
- Stability in the leadership within the school. Leaders who were part of the initial stages of the implementation of PYP have remained in their roles at Matoska. In contrast, leadership turnover at the middle schools and at the district level likely slowed the implementation of MYP.

In listing these factors, it is not our intent to take away from the many years of challenging and very dedicated work undertaken by Matoska staff to reach the current level of PYP implementation. Instead, our intention is to point out factors that would likely enhance any school's capacity to implement PYP, as well as other major change initiatives.

References

- Desjardins, C.D., Ingram, D., & Madrid, R. (2017). *Preliminary Report on an Evaluation of the White Bear Lake Area Schools' International Baccalaureate Program*. Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota.
- Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research, 15*(9), 1277-1288.
- International Baccalaureate Organization. (2016). *Guide to school authorization: Middle Years Programme*. International Baccalaureate Organization.
- International Baccalaureate Organization. (2016). *Guide to school authorization: Primary Years Programme*. International Baccalaureate Organization.



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February, 2018

	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Matoska Elementary					
<i>Expenses</i>					
IB program fees	\$11,290.00	\$7,910.00	\$8,110.00	\$8,560.00	\$8,110.00
Salaries and stipends	\$40,439.00	\$48,565.04	\$57,524.94	\$53,104.91	\$59,849.00
Benefits	\$12,087.49	\$17,909.73	\$20,061.33	\$20,926.03	\$21,133.00
Other Supplies	\$660.46		\$250.00		\$500.00
Totals:	\$64,476.95	\$74,384.77	\$85,946.27	\$82,590.94	\$89,592.00
<i>Revenue</i>					
MDE PD Reimbursement	\$10,300.00	\$4,332.00	\$6,540.00	\$7,430.00	
Totals:	\$10,300.00	\$4,332.00	\$6,540.00	\$7,430.00	\$0.00
Net:	-\$54,176.95	-\$70,052.77	-\$79,406.27	-\$75,160.94	-\$89,592.00
Central Middle School					
<i>Expenses</i>					
IB program fees	\$9,500.00	\$9,687.58	\$9,280.00	\$10,265.94	\$9,280.00
Salaries and stipends	\$39,609.83	\$45,812.50	\$50,633.41	\$49,772.48	\$52,679.00
Benefits	\$9,923.69	\$10,988.49	\$13,076.92	\$16,489.27	\$14,618.00
Telephone		\$162.50			
Other Supplies		\$2,555.00		\$415.62	\$1,000.00
Totals:	\$59,033.52	\$69,206.07	\$72,990.33	\$76,943.31	\$77,577.00
<i>Revenue</i>					
MDE PD Reimbursement	\$4,045.00	\$2,211.00	\$630.00	\$250.00	
Totals:	\$4,045.00	\$2,211.00	\$630.00	\$250.00	
Net:	\$54,988.52	\$66,995.07	\$72,360.33	\$76,693.31	\$77,577.00
Sunrise Park Middle School					
<i>Expenses</i>					
IB program fees	\$10,199.00	\$9,625.00	\$9,280.00	\$10,050.00	\$9,280.00
Salaries	\$38,882.13	\$43,940.00	\$49,440.99	\$48,874.98	\$51,439.00
Benefits	\$9,818.71	\$10,651.34	\$12,825.15	\$16,249.44	\$14,340.00
Telephone		\$162.50			
Other Supplies		\$2,555.00	\$352.00	\$412.72	\$1,000.00

Totals:	\$58,899.84	\$66,933.84	\$71,898.14	\$75,587.14	\$76,059.00
<i>Revenue</i>					
MDE PD Reimbursement	\$2,200.00	\$2,211.00	\$2,295.00	\$860.00	
Totals:	\$2,200.00	\$2,211.00	\$2,295.00	\$860.00	\$0.00
Net:	-\$56,699.84	-\$64,722.84	-\$69,603.14	-\$74,727.14	-\$76,059.00
Total Expenses	\$182,410.31	\$210,524.68	\$230,834.74	\$235,121.39	\$243,228.00
Total Revenue	\$16,545.00	\$8,754.00	\$9,465.00	\$8,540.00	\$0.00
Net Financial Impact	-\$165,865.31	-\$201,770.68	-\$221,369.74	-\$226,581.39	-\$243,228.00

AGENDA ITEM: **White Bear Lake Sports Center**

MEETING DATE: **February 26, 2018**

SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: **Discussion Item**

CONTACT PERSON(S): **Tim Wald, Assistant Superintendent for
Finance and Operations; Tom Wieczorek,
Director of Finance; and Brian Peloquin,
Activities Director**

BACKGROUND:

Currently we lease ice time for both our high school boys' and girls' hockey programs at Ramsey County's Vadnais Sports Center. We are exploring an opportunity to move our girls' program to the soon to be renovated White Bear Sports Center for the 2018-19 school year. Our boys' program will continue to practice and play home games at Vadnais Sports Center.

Moving our Girls Hockey

Currently we lease ice time for both our high school boys and girls hockey programs at Ramsey County's Vadnais Sports Center for games and practices. Additionally, we lease ice time at Ramsey County Arena for practice. Our boys and girls programs share time between these two facilities for practice and play their home games at Vadnais Sports Center. We are currently exploring an opportunity to move our girls program to the soon to be renovated White Bear Sports Center for the 2018-19 school year.



The History

- At one point both the boys and girls programs alternated between White Bear Sports Center and White Bear County Arena for practice.
- The Boys program played games at Aldrich and Girls program at White Bear Sports Center.
- When Vadnais Sports Center became available, both programs became tenants and had use of both sheets of ice.



The History

- Ramsey County purchased the Vadnais Sports Center and brought in the Mounds View boys program who were given full use of Rink 2 for games and practices.
- This move affected both of our programs ice availability which resulted in playing games on Rink 1 and alternating between Vadnais and White Bear County Arena for practice. This is our current reality.



Our Exploration

- White Bear Sports Center is currently beginning renovations which include:
 - Updating current sheet of ice
 - Updating locker room area
 - Updating lighting and insulation
 - Updating coolant system
 - Updating the building to bring it up to current standards and codes.
- White Bear Sports Center would become the home ice arena of White Bear Lake Area High School girls hockey program.



Benefits to the Move

- Exclusive home arena for the girls program.
- Current practice of sharing ice time and rotating practice time between programs would be eliminated.
- Ideal ice time for practice and games.
- Exclusive locker room and storage area for the girls. We still don't have that for the boys.
- Smaller arena provides a better game experience for the athletes and fans.
- Strengthens a partnership we have with the city of White Bear.



Financial Considerations

- Current Costs of leasing Vadnais Sports Center
 - Ice time - \$210 per hour
 - Weight room - \$25 per hour
 - Ramsey County keeps all gate
 - Ramsey County keeps all concession
- We are early in the process working with White Bear Sports Center and have yet been provided financial details but will be certain to attain those should we decide to continue our exploration of the move.



Title IX Considerations

- Title IX considerations for facilities must adhere to 4 possible disparities:
 - Quality - With the renovations, White Bear Sports Center will exceed the standard at Vadnais Sports Center built in 2010
 - Availability - Both programs will have equal availability to ice and locker rooms that fit the needs of the program
 - Exclusivity - The girls program will have the same exclusivity as the boys program regarding ice time and more exclusivity to storage and locker rooms.
 - Maintenance and preparation - We will ensure that the facilities at White Bear Sports Center are prepared and maintained to the standard set for arenas across the state.

Conclusion

- We believe that exploring a move for our girls hockey program will benefit both of our hockey programs.
- A move to a newly renovated White Bear Sports Center gives our girls program their own home arena.
- A move creates a strengthened partnership with the school district and the White Bear Community.
- A move will comply with Title IX considerations for the 4 standards regarding Facilities.
- We are hopeful that a move to White Bear Sports Center will be a financially responsible move for our district and stakeholders.

QUESTIONS



AGENDA ITEM: **Negotiations Study Session**

MEETING DATE: **February 26, 2018**

SUGGESTED DISPOSITION: **Discussion Item**

CONTACT PERSON(S): **Tim Wald, Assistant Superintendent for
Finance and Operations; and Mitch Cooper,
Director of Human Resources**

BACKGROUND:

Director of Human Resources Mitch Cooper and Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations Tim Wald will provide an update on the status of negotiations.

*This portion of the meeting may be closed to consider strategy for labor negotiations, including negotiation strategies or developments or discussion and review of labor negotiation proposals, conducted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 179.A.01 to 179.A.25.