

St. Louis Language Immersion School

Site Visit Review

Spring 2011

Evaluation Report
May 26, 2011

Your Passport To Learning



St. Louis
Language Immersion Schools

What is the purpose of the Site Visit Review?

The Site Visit Review (SVR) is designed to increase transparency, objectivity and consistency. The purpose is to provide additional information to the school's authorizer on issues pertinent to school oversight, monitoring, and renewal consideration as well as the Governing Board and school leadership. The report produced by the SVR team is one of many pieces of evidence that may be used to achieve a clear understanding of school performance. The SVR protocol and review process provides a third-party perspective on current school quality for all students in accordance with three domains and key questions.

- Student Achievement: Is the educational program a success?
- School Operations/Management: Is the school a financially and operationally viable organization?
- Fidelity to Charter: Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

The individual written report serves as a source document for the University of Missouri, St. Louis' Biennial Review, which is completed at the end of the school's second year.

What is a Site Visit Review?

The SVR process places a team of reviewers in the school to collect and analyze data about school programs and practices, in relation to the protocol's key questions, criteria and indicators. Through three primary sources of evidence – document review, interviews and classroom visits the SVR team develops professional findings about how well key aspects of a school are serving its students.

The SVR protocol utilizes multiple sources of evidence (documents, interviews, classroom visits) to understand how well the school is working. It extends beyond standardized measures of student achievement to collect evidence on how charter school programs, practices, and operations are impacting student learning. Evidence collection begins with the review of documents, which provides the SVR team with initial information about the school's programs and the students it serves. While on site, evidence collection continues through additional document reviews, classroom visits and interviews with school governance, leadership, faculty, students and parents. The SVR team uses evidence collected through these events to develop findings about the key questions in the SVR protocol. At the end of the visit, the SVR team provides a brief oral report to school leadership about its findings. This verbal feedback is followed by a written report, detailing the evidence that led the SVR team to reach its findings.

The SVR process places a high value on engaging the school in understanding its own performance. The process may be described as an open, frank professional dialog between the school and SVR team. The professionalism of the school and team is essential in the process. Both the school and the SVR team have clear roles and responsibilities that are designed to promote good rapport and clear communication.

Primary Steps:

Pre-visit planning and analysis:

Prior to the SVR visit an orientation for the school's governing board and school administration will be conducted to answer any questions about the SVR process. A member of the SVR team will work with school leadership to organize a schedule for the site visit. SVR team members review documentation provided in advance of the visit, according to the protocol standards, and record their initial questions.

Evidence gathering on site:

On site, the SVR team continues document reviews and conducts classroom visits and interviews with the Board, school administration, faculty, parents and students.

Development of findings:

The SVR team's primary objective is to develop findings in relation to the protocol's key questions. To come to consensus on its findings, the SVR team works together to collate and discuss available evidence collected throughout the SVR process.

Feedback to the school:

While on site, the SVR team leader communicates with the leadership to keep the school informed of the SVR team's progress and to seek the school's input on that progress. At the end of the SVR, the team provides a brief, high level oral report of findings to school leaders.

Written report:

After the site visit, school leadership, governing board chair, the SVR team and authorizer will receive a draft report that formalizes the findings discussed on site. The school will have an opportunity to review the report for factual corrections. The final report will be submitted to the authorizer.

How to Read this Report

This report is divided into five sections, including:

School Profile: Provides a brief overview of the school program, including important demographic data.

Executive Summary: Summarizes the team's key findings across each of the three domains.

Domain 1: Student Achievement: Is the educational program a success?

Domain 2: School Operations/Management: Is the school a financially and operationally viable organization?

Domain 3: Fidelity to Charter: Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

I. SCHOOL PROFILE

The mission of St. Louis Language Immersion Schools (SLLIS) is to position all children for success in local and global economies through holistic, intellectually inspiring language immersion programs. SLLIS is made up of two schools, The French School and The Spanish School, both located on one campus with each housing K-2 grades. Both schools are adding one grade per year until they are K-8. The schools were founded a by a group of citizens from a variety of skill sets with a desire to provide a high quality language immersion option for families in St. Louis.

SLLIS is the first school network in Missouri to implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program model and is one of the only schools in Missouri offering a full language immersion program.

St. Louis Language Immersion School Students

Student Enrollment

As of May, 2011 the schools serve 349 students in 17 classes in kindergarten through 2nd grade; the full enrollment projection from the charter for year 2 of operations was 392 students in 20 classes in grades K-2. When the school reaches full capacity, St. Louis Language Immersion School is authorized to provide instruction to Kindergarten through 12th grade students. The French School has 160 students enrolled and The Spanish School has 189 students enrolled. The school is overenrolled by 9 students. For the 2011-12 school year there are 13 students on the waiting list for The Spanish School and 0 for The French School as depicted below.

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Number of Waitlisted Students	8	3	1	1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	13

The French School began the year with 174 students. 25 students have withdrawn (14%) and 10 students enrolled after September 1, 2010 (6%). Reasons for withdrawal include family moved out of district/state and student discipline concerns. The Spanish School began the year with 185 students. 17 students have withdrawn (8%) and 22 students enrolled after September 1, 2010 (12%). Reasons for withdrawal include _family moved out of district/state, student accepted to a magnet program, and student discipline concerns.

Executive Summary

During their first year, St. Louis Language Immersion School (SLLIS) experienced some financial and operational hurdles. Evidence from the team's time at the school indicates that the school's operations and management are in place, developing, and appropriate address has been given to remedying the impact of these financial challenges. Evidence gathered by the SVR team indicates that the educational program is emerging and fairly successful. Some indicators of this success include strong student engagement in class, a rigorous International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program curriculum, strong student usage of non-native languages, and solid off site professional development.

There are some areas for growth in the educational program. Some of these areas include adding more professional development to effectively implement the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program curriculum, development of a common lesson plan template and exit standards at each grade level. The biggest issue affecting the educational program appears to be student behavior.

Overall, the school appears to understand the impact of inappropriate student behavior; however, there are many classrooms in which student behavior is impacting student academic achievement.

Strengths noted in relation to governance and leadership includes a diverse, experienced, stable and engaged Board of Directors and a leadership team that is highly invested and passionate about the success of the school. Some areas of improvement include establishing a stronger board focus on student academic achievement, strengthening board communication with parents, and investing in support staff to allow the leadership team to focus on their job descriptions and reduce the teacher non-academic workloads.

Since the school's charter is still relatively new, the SVR team found that the school generally showed strong fidelity to the charter approved by the state two years ago. Some strength in this area includes strong stakeholder commitment to the perceived mission and vision of the school, high parent participation and satisfaction, and strong community support for the school. Some areas for improvement include continued articulation and clarification of the school's mission to all stakeholders, educating parents about the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program curriculum, maintaining a lower student to teacher ratio in Kindergarten classes, and providing more support to staff to avoid "burnout".

Greater explanation of the above areas is provided through the School Quality Domains portion of this report.

School Quality Domains

The school quality domains and criterion guide the SVR team during the process. Each criterion is supported by specific indicators of quality. Each criterion is followed by a summary of findings, commendations, and recommendations for the school's next steps in growth and development.

Domain 1: Student Achievement – Is the educational program a success?

1. Curriculum

- a. Written curriculum contains the essential knowledge and skills
- b. Curriculum is implemented with fidelity
- c. Materials to support and enhance implementation of the curriculum are available
- d. Clear and regular procedures to review and update the curriculum are in place

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS is not a school in which teachers are handed a printed curriculum. Many of the teachers and school leadership indicated this fact. A majority of teachers align lessons to the Missouri State Standards and Grade Level Expectations (GLE's), International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (IB PYP) standards and purchased curriculum. Teachers do not currently make use of yearlong curriculum maps or exit standards. In interviews, teachers indicated that there is some confusion within grade levels regarding the level or rigor and content being taught.

The IB PYP curriculum is academically rigorous and of interest to many families. Some teachers are further along than others in grasping the alignment of the IB PYP requirements with the school's other requirements. Additionally, it was observed that both the school leaders and teachers may benefit from additional training in IB PYP and its specific expectations such as transdisciplinary learning, international-mindedness, and the IB Learner Profile. Many teachers suggest that they could use more training in IB PYP and in aligning the curriculum to Missouri State Standards. Many of the school's scheduled professional development days were canceled because of snow days, which might account for this lack of knowledge.

Commendation(s) –

- Missouri State Standards and GLE's are used as primary curriculum guidelines. These are aligned to IB PYP standards across the school;
- IB PYP program is academically rigorous and can be differentiated for all students.

Recommendation(s) –

- The school's curriculum would benefit from consolidation and formalization through the development of curriculum maps for teachers;
- Consider developing exit standards ("What every 3rd grader at SLLIS needs to know") in core academic areas for each grade level in both schools;
- Staff needs further professional development, opportunity for evaluation, and opportunity for collaboration to effectively implement the IB PYP curriculum.

2. Instruction and Student Engagement

- a. Instruction is based on clear and appropriate learning objectives
- b. Instruction promotes effective practices for student learning
- c. Instruction utilizes effective strategies
- d. Instruction considers student learning needs
- e. Instruction encourages active student engagement in the learning process

Summary of Findings –

Instruction and student engagement vary from classroom to classroom at SLLIS. A variety of instructional strategies are used across grade levels, however, a majority of observed classes used direct instruction for a majority of the class period. Most kindergarten classes used centers which seem to be an effective mechanism for small group instruction. Overall, these centers seemed to run smoothly and be highly organized although isolated incidences of center management were noted. Some classes did demonstrate a high degree of academic rigor.

In a majority of classes, students were actively engaged in the learning process. Students were excited to participate in classroom activities and normally spoke the school's language (either French or Spanish) a large majority of the time. Learning objectives for the IB PYP unit were clearly displayed in a majority of the classrooms. Teachers used different lesson plan formats across grade levels and in both schools. Not all of the formats used by teaching staff illustrated the necessary components of good lesson plans.

Commendation(s) –

- **Most classroom show evidence of high student engagement and a variety of hands on activities;**
- **Some classrooms show evidence of a high degree of academic rigor even with a foreign language. I.e. discussion of vertebrates in K.**

Recommendation(s) –

- **Attempts should be made to further differentiate in all classrooms. Evidence pointed to very diverse classrooms with a broad spectrum of learners from advanced to significantly below grade level;**
- **Develop a common lesson plan format;**
- **Insert teacher assistants and interns as part of classroom center management process.**

3. Ongoing Assessments

- a. Assessment information is available to make decisions about improving student performance
- b. Ongoing assessments are designed to monitor student learning
- c. Assessment information is used to modify instruction in support of student learning
- d. Informal classroom assessments are used to provide instructional opportunities
- e. Students receive regular feedback to promote learning

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS uses various forms of assessment to monitor student progress. The primary normative and formative assessment is the NWEA MAP. Staff indicates that this is a good assessment tool however the data is not always reliable since students take the test in English and not in Spanish or French. The school does not administer the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) Test as the school is currently only Kindergarten through Second Grade. The 2011-2012 school year will be the first year the school takes this test.

Staff plans collaboratively to prepare common IB PYP formative assessments. These assessments are administered every 6-8 weeks or at the end of the IB PYP unit. Individual staff members also make use of Everyday Math assessments and teacher created assessments. Overall, The French School has a much harder time using Everyday Math material and assessments since everything must be translated by staff members. The Spanish School does not have this problem since most purchased curriculum is available in Spanish. The French School's struggle in this area should be considered when expanding to new languages in future years.

The school's Title 1 program is run by two teachers (one for each school) and several teacher assistants. All indicated that there does not seem to be enough time to work with students who qualify for Title 1 services.

Commendation(s) –

- **NWEA MAP is a good norm referenced evaluation tool;**
- **Staff has prepared common IB PYP formative assessments;**
- **The school has developed a uniform (both Spanish and French Schools) process to identify students who qualify for Title I services.**

Recommendation(s) –

- **Include individual student academic performance on student growth plans;**
- **Provide professional development for all teaching staff and Title I assistants regarding the Title I student identification process. Ensure that those employed through Title I funding have a secure understanding of the student selection process;**
- **Develop an IB PYP assessment policy. This should be completed by the next stage in the process.**

4. Classroom Management

- a. Established, understood and enforced set of behavioral expectations
- b. Effective management of classroom time and procedures

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS does not seem to have a uniform, established set of school wide behavioral expectations. This is true in both the Spanish and French Schools. Both teachers and parents indicated that student behavior is occasionally a problem in both schools. In Year 1, the lack of walls between classrooms contributed to this problem and the addition of higher walls has helped, however, sound still carries easily from class to class. The leadership is aware of this problem and intends to solve the problem in future years however the impact on learning is immediate. In both schools, the degree of disruptive student behavior varies

from class to class. Teachers who use consistent routines and a system of positive and negative rewards have the most positive student behavior. It was observed that approximately one in three classrooms used these best practices as a majority of classrooms still had some degree of student disruption.

Students seem to do a good job in transitions from class to class and there seems to be a uniform school policy for hallway behavior. Quiet transitions are essential because of the previously mentioned sound problems.

Teacher Assistants varied in their ability to assist with classroom management. Some had no problem keeping students on task and working with small groups. Others provided limited assistance with classroom management.

Recommendation(s) –

- **A school-wide structure and expectation around the management of classrooms should be established to bring consistency. This should include:**
 - **The posting of common school rules in each classroom and common area;**
 - **The posting of the school wide positive reinforcement program in each classroom and common area;**
- **The significant evidence of a high degree of staff frustration and intolerance with student misbehavior indicates a need for the following:**
 - **Professional development focused on behavior modification and classroom management;**
 - **Faithful institution, by all staff members, of a school wide positive behavior program.**

5. Common Planning Time and Professional Development

- a. Common planning time for faculty and staff is consistent and structured
- b. Purposeful collaborations enhance teaching and student learning
- c. Professional development considers school data and improvement planning processes
- d. Professional development is designed to improve teaching, learning and school performance
- e. Professional development is evaluated to support student learning, school programs and to create sustained change

Summary of Findings –

The staff at SLLIS are given minimal common planning time during the school day. Most of the collaborative work done by teachers is conducted outside of school hours. Planning time during the school day is reported as being taken up with normal teacher housekeeping duties. As part of the school's mission, teachers are required to eat lunch with students. Many teachers enjoy this experience but find that they are not always given enough break time during the remainder of the day to balance for the loss of a duty free lunch period. There is strong indication of collaborative planning within grade levels, but there is less evidence of collaboration across grade levels.

The school calendar indicates that there are seven to ten days of professional development before the school year begins. During the school year most of the professional development days were cancelled due to the fact that the school had to make up inclement weather days. Many staff members indicated that off-site professional development was very helpful and all staff would like more opportunities to

see other IB and Immersion schools throughout the Midwest. On-site professional development was not as well received. Most staff indicated interest in more urban education training and training in managing student behavior. There is no indication that professional development considered student assessment data to improve planning and student learning.

Commendation(s) –

- **Two weeks of professional development before the school year was reported as being very beneficial;**
- **Off site professional development to Minnesota, Kansas City, Springfield, and other places is very well received and seems to be beneficial.**

Recommendation(s) –

- **Methods should be determined to faithfully institute common planning time allowing consistent opportunities for grade level planning as well as cross school planning time;**
- **Utilizing a portion of whole staff professional development for individual teachers to share best practices would benefit all staff;**
- **Teachers would benefit from frequent informal observation and the opportunity to receive practical feedback from the school principal;**
- **Staff would benefit from spending time visiting IB Diploma High Schools to see what the “end product” looks like for SLLIS students.**

6. Services for ELL Students and Student with Special Needs

- a. Student intake and placement procedures are appropriate
- b. Learning objectives and lesson planning considers student learning needs
- c. Classroom environment and resource allocations consider student needs
- d. Faculty and staff are adequately trained and deployed to support student learning
- e. Professional development planning opportunities are available to support program implementation

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS has fewer identified special education students than the state average. Currently, around 5% of the school’s students have a diagnosed individualized education plan (IEP). The school outsources special education services to the Belle Center, a private contractor. The Belle Center provides staff members who work with individual students and helps the school evaluate and diagnose students for future services. Stakeholders indicate that the Belle Center does a great job working with students with academically related IEPs but they do not seem to provide as much support for students with possible behavioral disabilities. Additionally, some staff indicated a concern that the Belle Center might be understaffed to deal with the myriad of students in need of services.

The school does not currently have a uniform student referral process for special education services. The current lack of a process has teachers attempting to identify students in needs of services. Many of these teachers do not feel qualified to provide such evaluations. School leadership is currently developing a SPED student referral guide.

Commendation(s) –

- The contracted special education service provider (Belle Center) seems to do a quality job meeting the requirement of students with an identified learning disability;
- School leadership is developing a special education student referral guide for teachers.

Recommendation(s) –

- There does not seem to be evidence of strong support of students with behavior disorders or emotional disabilities;
- In large part the identification of possible IEP eligible students is conducted solely by teachers who may or may not be qualified to provide evaluations. Support should be provided around this area either through the staffing or contracting of an educational psychologist with the appropriate training;
- Provide staff wide professional development to assist teacher with dealing with behavior issues or students with various IEP's.

Domain 2: School Operations and Management – Is the school financially and operationally viable?

1. Governance

- a. Members of the governing body possess knowledge of the school and its students
- b. Financial decisions demonstrate viability and support school success
- c. Policies and procedures promote effective school operations and student success
- d. Established systems dictate governance and leadership operations and communications

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS' Board of Directors includes highly talented individuals with a wide variety of skill sets. The Board has a well-defined committee structure that seems to be effective in helping the board with proper governance. Throughout the schools existence, the Board provided strong development leadership and fundraising of a significant amount of money.

The Board receives financial reports at every board meeting and seems to have good knowledge of the school's financial outlook. The scorecard of student information is also very helpful in giving the board a working knowledge of the school's progress. The scorecard does not currently include any student academic data.

The Board's policies and procedures demonstrate effective school operations and seem to assist with student success. Additionally, the Board has a good knowledge regarding governance and management and does a good job making sure they are only involved in governance.

Commendation(s) –

- The Board appears extremely stable with committed long term membership;
- The Board has invested significant time in financial oversight and fundraising;
- The Board has an excellent variety of skill sets and expertise strengthening their comprehensive ability to provide effective governance;
- An effective Board dashboard is presented at Board meetings.

Recommendation(s) –

- A Board focus on academic performance should be established and the monthly review of academic performance data should be included as a regular part of the Board meeting agenda;
- A Board ‘dashboard’ should be further developed to include a student academic section;
- Board communication with parents should be strengthened.

2. School Management

- a. School provides a safe environment conducive to student learning and experiences
- b. Budget distributions and resource allocations support teaching and learning
- c. Faculty and staff are adequately trained and deployed to support student learning
- d. School structure and schedule maximize student learning opportunities

Summary of Findings –

The school is a safe environment conducive to student learning. Some stakeholders did indicate that the school’s playground can be a place where they feel students are unsafe. Efforts have been made by school leadership to solve this problem. The lack of outdoor space will continue to be a problem for both schools going forward.

The school does not currently employ a nurse, social worker, or counselor. The lack of these staff positions seems to be putting more and more non-instructional responsibilities on individual teachers. Teachers indicate feeling they have too many responsibilities and lack affective planning time. There seems to be a disparity of communication and understanding between school leadership and teaching staff regarding the school’s financial resource allocations. These factors contribute to what seems to be low staff morale.

Commendation(s) –

- Efforts to ensure a safe, secure campus are evident.

Recommendation(s) –

- Support staff should be brought in to provide health and counseling/social work services to address student social and emotional needs;
- Continue to address ways to ensure a safe playground area.
- Revisit resource allocations. The leadership expresses a feeling of having ample resources but staff expresses they don’t have resources they need.

3. Organizational Leadership

- a. Leadership establishes clear goals and procedures that uniformly guide school practices
- b. Leadership acts as a positive change agent to improve and optimize school success
- c. Leadership empowers faculty and staff with decision-making responsibilities

Summary of Findings –

School Leadership currently consists of the President and two Heads of School, one for The French School and one for The Spanish School. Business operations are currently outsourced to an individual who provides business services to several other charter schools in Missouri.

Staff at both schools appears to work extremely hard and believe in the mission. There are clear indications that staff could experience ‘burn out’ in the near future. Many staff members report an increased workload from Year 1 to Year 2 with no salary increase. Additionally, some staff members report not getting an agreed upon bonus at the end of Year 1. All staff indicated they understood that the school’s financial situation in Year 1 was why these decisions were made. The school’s teacher assistants indicated they enjoy working at the school however report often working without a sufficient break and no significant salary increase.

Commendation(s) –

- **There is a high degree of evidence that the school leadership is deeply invested in the mission, vision, and success of SLLIS.**

Recommendation(s) –

- **Leadership should address consistently implementing common organizational policies and practices (Love & Logic);**
- **School wide goals should be articulated and embedded in the operation of the school.**

4. Instructional Leadership

- a. Leadership is highly visible; accessible to support teaching and learning
- b. Leadership serves as instructional resource and model for faculty and staff
- c. Leadership provides frequent feedback on instruction and classroom practices

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS has a visionary President who has a sure grasp on the mission and vision of the school. The French School has an experienced school leader who has been in leadership roles at other charter schools in St. Louis and who has been at the school since its inception. The current Spanish School leader was initially hired as the Assistant Head of School in the founding year of the schools. She served as Interim Head of School during an international recruitment effort and was named Head of School in February 2010. The Spanish School has undergone several leadership changes.

Many stakeholders report that leaders of both the Spanish and French schools are often distracted by discipline issues and are not frequently accessible to support teaching and learning. The Spanish School

leader often observes classes with 5-10 minute “pop ins” throughout the day, however, teachers report that they are rarely given feedback on these observation sessions. The French School teachers report that they often get written feedback from their school leader after such “pop in” sessions.

Both school leaders conduct formal evaluations of their teachers one time per year. Teachers are evaluated by their peers at least three or more times during the school. Teachers seem to be divided on the effectiveness of these peer evaluations and report that they rarely provide strong feedback that supports teacher and learning.

Commendation(s) –

- **A teacher evaluation instrument and process are developed and in place.**

Recommendation(s) –

- **School principals need supports to allow the majority of the school day focused on deep instructional support and feedback to staff. Specific feedback should be given for IB PYP activities and behavior management;**
- **Leaders in both schools need more IB PYP professional development to develop understanding.**

Domain 3: Fidelity to Charter – Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?

1. Mission, Vision and Values

- a. Stakeholders share an understanding of school mission, vision and core values
- b. Stakeholders share a commitment to school mission, vision and values

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS' various stakeholders shared a strong commitment to the school and to its vision and values. Most of the school's stakeholders could articulate the main concepts of the school's mission. Most articulated the mission as helping student achieve success in the global and local economies and helping students experience academic success.

The charter mentions that the school will have a 10:1 student to teacher ratio, however, some classes had more than the desired ratio. Most of these classes were in Kindergarten as these classes often had 23-25 students per teacher. This was the case in both of the schools. Several stakeholders, including parents, expressed concern with the high ratio in Kindergarten classes.

The school has a strong vision and core values. Most stakeholders are committed to the vision and core values of the school. The core values of International Awareness, Personalization, and Creating Citizens of the World were evident in most classrooms.

Commendation(s) –

- **Although unable to clearly articulate the school's mission, staff and stakeholders demonstrated a strong understanding and investment in the school's core values and commitment to these values;**

- Evidence of efforts to adhere to the school climate described within the charter application is visible.

Recommendation(s) –

- Ensure teacher to student ratio indicated in charter application is met in practice;
- Additional efforts need to be made to educate parents on the IB PYP Program.

2. School Climate and Culture

- a. School faculty and staff model positive relationships that encourage collaboration and respect for learning
- b. School celebrates student learning, accomplishments and efforts
- c. The school fosters partnerships to promote the school’s mission and support student learning
- d. The school ensures clear, effective and ongoing communications with stakeholders

Summary of Findings –

SLLIS has a very strong and positive relationship with the school’s parents. Families interviewed indicate a very favorable view of the school; even those families that might have smaller issues throughout the year. The school has a School Advisory Council (SAC) made up of parents, teachers, and community leaders. Families report that SLLIS does an excellent job with communication and is a safe, welcoming, and positive learning environment for their child. The school’s positive reputation among parents in the St. Louis region has increased participation in the school from families living in St. Louis County.

Students are often recognized at various learning celebrations throughout the year. The school celebrates student learning and accomplishments through assemblies and individual recognition in both The Spanish and French Schools.

In interviews with various stakeholders, it was mentioned that some feel both schools do have some issues dealing with student behavior problems. These stakeholders indicated that it does not seem either school is prepared for the especially “hard” kids that the schools have attracted.

Commendation(s) –

- Parent engagement in the school is extremely high as is satisfaction with the school;
- The school’s fostering of partnership programs in the community to promote student learning appears effective;
- Methods of recognizing student accomplishments exist;
- There is clear evidence of school faculty and staff modeling positive relationships with students and parents.

Recommendation(s) –

- The school would benefit from establishing a school wide positive reinforcement program and determining ways in which fidelity to implementation can be secured;
- Expectations of staff are extremely high. In theory this is admirable but in practice there is evidence of a high degree of sinking staff morale and ‘teacher burnout’. In addition to the 40

minute planning period, consideration should be given to providing all staff an additional duty free break time, common planning time, and assistance with nonacademic classroom issues;

- For an IB PYP school, it's important to foster an internationally-minded community of learners consisting of all stakeholders including students, teachers, parents, and the governing board. Regular and ongoing strategies should be employed to ensure parents have a clear understanding of IB PYP and its curriculum.