



Annie Haven, Cheri Armstrong, Paula Ferullo
Chatham Teacher Westgate Recipients 2010
Chatham Public Schools
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We were thrilled to receive a Westgate grant, in conjunction with school funding, to attend workshops for the International Baccalaureate Programme in Keystone, Colorado. Annie attended the middle school math workshop, Paula attended the middle school humanities workshop, and Cheri attended the elementary administrative workshop.

We arrived two days early in Colorado so that we could experience the Rocky Mountains and make the most of the workshop location. We maximized every day by mapping out our destinations, getting up very early and coming home very late at night. We were able to visit Glennwood Hot Springs, drive through Aspen, cross the Continental Divide, see the illuminated Seven Falls at night, watch native American dancers including the hoop dancing champion, pan for gold, hike in Rocky Mountain National Park, dine in Denver, and visit cultural museums. We crossed at least five mountain passes in the course of two days to accomplish all that we did!

The rest of the week was an intensive introduction to the workings of the International Baccalaureate Programme in each of our subject areas. We have each included a paragraph about our experiences at the workshops:

Annie: I was fortunate to have an incredibly experienced IB teacher/administrator/curriculum creator as my instructor. He provided a 300+ page manual of instructions, information, templates, and examples of student work. His workshop sessions were very organized, and he brought our class through IB history and current practices. I was very excited to see that the IB unit template is almost exactly like the Chatham Public Schools unit template. Both templates are formulated on the Wiggins and McTighe philosophy of backward design. The only difference is that there is one more column on the IB planner for IB standards. Since the grade 6 math curriculum is already in TechPaths and the templates are done, it would not be difficult to add a column to what we already have and connect our curriculum to IB standards.

The one difference that I did notice was that every unit includes an assessment that is an investigation, or project, that requires students to demonstrate skills by applying them. The resources provided by my instructor gave many excellent ideas for this, such as proving circumference. Students must answer what the relationship of “through a can” is to “around a can”. Educators need to provide cans of different sizes, string, scissors, and measuring tools. Students can prove their understanding by getting as close as they can to the idea that if you multiply “through the can” by 3, or 3.1, or 3.15, or 3.14, they can find the measurement of “around the can”. How close the student gets to π indicates their level of achievement on the investigation according to a rubric.

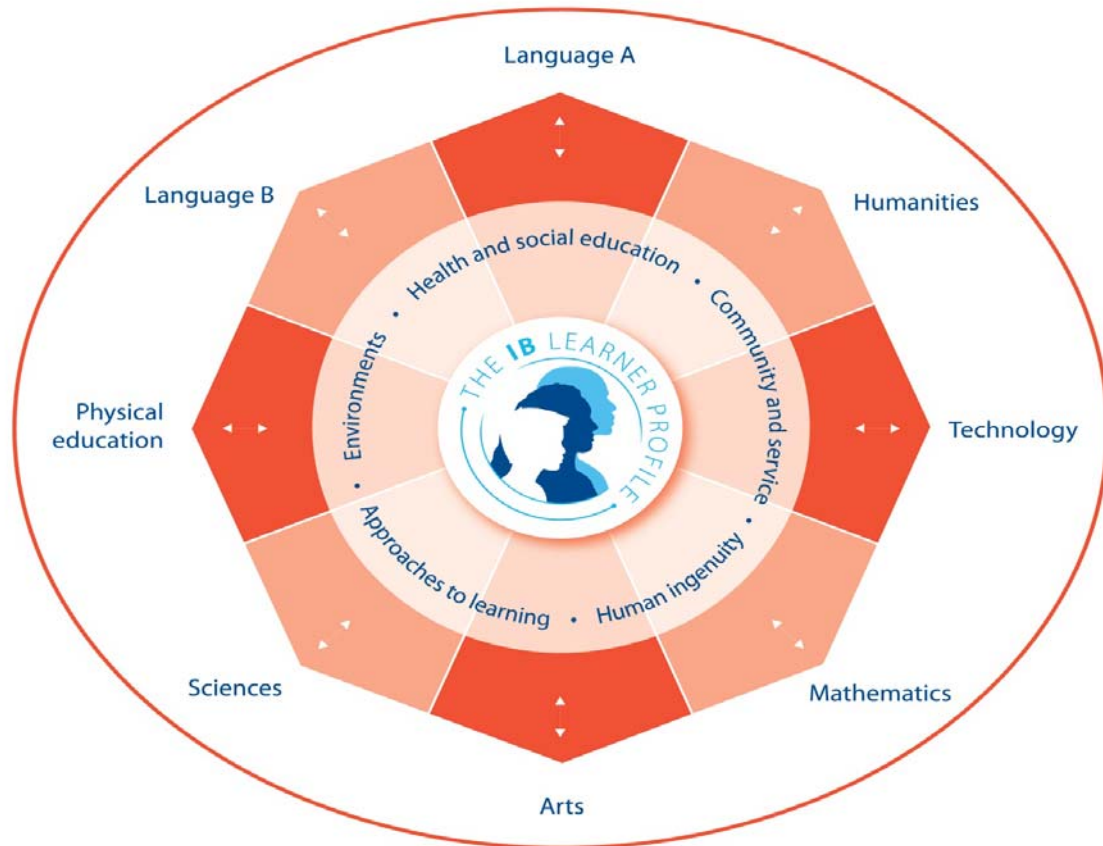
I was pleased to hear that there is a workshop session for teachers of students with special needs in the same way that workshops are offered for math and humanities. I know that it is a concern that IB is not for students with special needs, which I was relieved to find, is just not true. In fact, my instructor highly recommended the IB workshops designed for special educators. Additionally, there was an experienced sixth grade IB teacher from Denver who was a teacher of students of special needs in my math workshops. His contributions to the class were very valuable, and his experiences show how the investigations, which are projects that must be included in IB units, are especially good for students on IEPs. I tried to be in groups with him as much as possible since I often team teach with the special educators here in Chatham.

Overall, I was impressed with the IB programme. I know that Massachusetts schools are very progressive, and Chatham Public Schools is at the forefront of new ideas in education. I loved meeting all of the new and experienced IB teachers at the workshops and hearing their perspectives about becoming an IB school and the notoriety that accompanies such a designation. I look forward to merging this new IB global perspective into my curriculum and hope to see this philosophy become a vision for our school district.

Paula: I attended the Category I MYP Humanities (history/social studies) training. The overall purpose of the workshops in this category was to provide an introduction of IB to educators new to the programme. We received a Humanities Workshop Pack, Humanities Guide, and MYP: From Principles into Practice Guide. The workshop sessions included: International Education, the IB Learner Profile, MYP Curriculum

Framework, Areas of Interaction, MYP Unit Planning and Assessment, Interdisciplinary Learning, and an overview of Personal Projects.

Along with my colleagues, I was impressed with the IB programme, and excited to see that the IB unit template is similar to Chatham Public Schools unit template. As each session unfolded, I could see how Chatham is already compatible with the elements of the MYP Octagon (see diagram of MYP Octagon below). I enjoyed meeting and networking with teachers passionate about the IB Programme. Weaving the MYP principles into my curriculum is one of my professional goals for this 2010-2011 school year, and I hope to see our school district embark on this initiative that develops an international perspective.



Cheri: I attended the Primary Years Programme (PYP) for Administrators. The focus of this was for education leaders in regard to overseeing the program and becoming IBO coordinators. I also had the opportunity to be present for the entire IBO Level I PYP teacher program. As the days unfolded, it was immediately apparent that the Chatham Public Schools are leaders in the field of education. Our program so closely aligned that in order for us to achieve recognition as an IB school, the only mandate would be to expand our global focus and arts programs. Many of us already do this in our classrooms; it would just need to be included as part of our formal, written curriculum.

In Colorado, as it is for Sturgis Charter School on Cape Cod, there are long waiting lists for students to attend IB schools. In fact, Colorado is interested in expanding each of its districts to include IB teachers as the popularity of this program grows. In talking with teachers across the country, schools that had already implemented IB programs discovered that the demand exceeded their expectations in terms of the number of students that would like to attend. The enthusiasm of IB teachers is contagious as is parent and community support for the IBO program. In the administrative program, there were 10 administrators from all regions of the United States, showing that this is a program that is becoming increasingly national in its international scope.

In conclusion, we feel that Chatham Public Schools, in their pursuit of becoming an IB school, is placing themselves at the forefront of international education in our rapidly expanding global community.