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IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER

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Teacher Collaboration for Accreditation: A Case Study of Evaluating the DP

Ildiko Murray, American International School Kuwait

Goals of the Workshop

- To examine collaborative evaluation within the context of school improvement planning

- To identify some of the pros and cons of using self-evaluation for mandated accreditation or evaluation

- To provide an overview of the Diploma Program evaluation process using the specific example of one school completing the guided self-study

- To provide practical tips and advice on how to approach the DP evaluation process

Outline for Workshop

1. Evaluation 101: Presenter and Research Background

2. The 3 Ps of Keeping it Practical:
   - Process
   - Progress
   - Pushback

3. Life after Evaluation

4. Questions and Comments

5. Sources and Contact Information

Evaluation 101: Presenter Background

- Diploma Program Coordinator at the American International School Kuwait
- Led the stakeholder collaboration for the DP Evaluation
- AIS Kuwait submitted the DP Evaluation on April 1, 2014

المدرســة الأمريكــية الدولــية
American International School

- Doctoral Candidate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto
- Doctoral dissertation research on teacher collaboration for mandated accreditation

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Evaluation 101: Research Background Overview

- Internal and External Evaluation

- Levels of Evaluation

- Pros and Cons of Self-Assessment in Mandated Evaluations

- Collaborative Evaluation in the Diploma Program

- Rationale for evaluating the Diploma Program

Evaluation 101: Research Background

Internal Evaluation

"Ownership of evaluation"

- Internal evaluation is the "monitoring of any aspect of a school's work by its key stakeholders: its staff, its pupils, its parents. … Internal evaluation is usually seen as synonymous with self-evaluation. It involves teachers and school leaders coming to judgments based on their first-hand knowledge of what is happening in classrooms, workshops and laboratories throughout the school."

External Evaluation

"Reality Check"

- "External evaluation is used to mean the review and reporting on a school's work by people who are not part of the school's organization. External evaluators may belong to different agencies and come with different mandates. Local authority personnel, inspectors and advisers, have long played a role in reviewing school performance, with varying combinations of audit and support, feedback and advice."

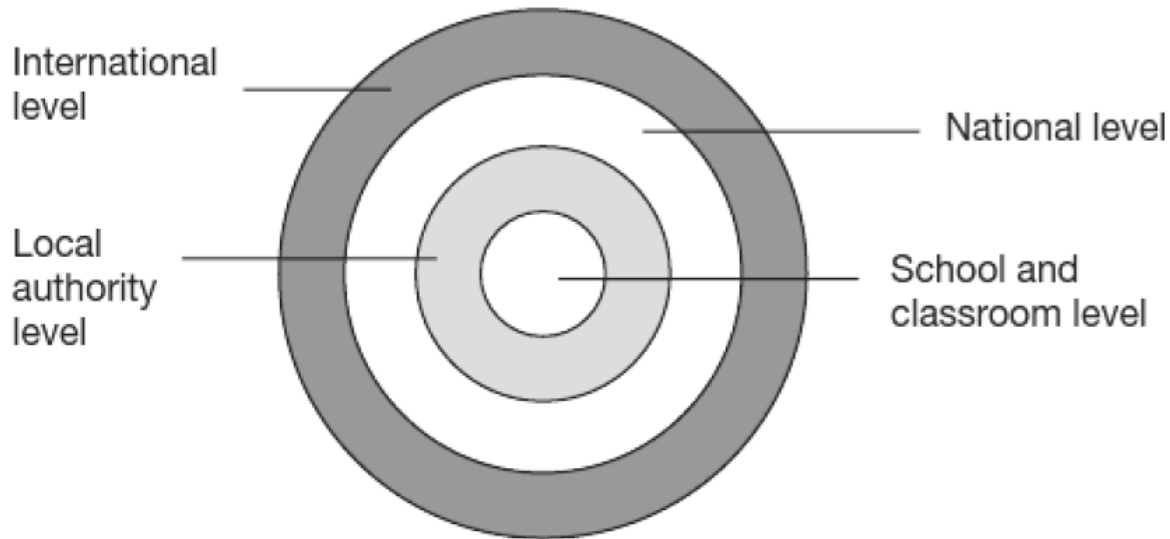MacBeath & McGlynn, 2002, p.14-15

Four Levels of Evaluation

Figure 2.1 Four levels of evaluation

MacBeath and McGlynn (2002) argue that "an effective system of school evaluation needs to contain elements of both internal and external evaluation" (p. 16). They use the above figure to "illustrate the all-embracing nature of evaluation in education" (p. 17)

The Pros and Cons of Self-Assessment in Evaluation

Pros

- Ownership of evaluation: the Socratic notion of knowing thyself
- "Those who are closest to everyday practice are also those best placed to evaluate and improve it …Its primary aim is to establish a climate, or culture, in which there is a shared belief that everyone can make a difference and that school improvement is the right and responsibility of every single member of the educational community" (MacBeath & McGlynn, 2002, p. 19).

Cons

- Self-deluding
- Risk of "dramaturgical compliance" - window dressing that strongly jeopardizes the legitimacy of the evaluation/accreditation process (Kemenade and Hardjono, 2010, p. 257)
- Perception of evaluation as "words on paper" or just pretending

Evaluation 101: Research Background Teacher Collaboration

O'Sullivan (2012) states that

Collaborative Evaluation systematically invites and engages stakeholders in program evaluation planning and implementation. Unlike "distanced" evaluation approaches, which reject stakeholder participation as evaluation team members, Collaborative Evaluation assumes that active, on-going engagement between evaluators and program staff, result in stronger evaluation designs, enhanced data collection and analysis, and results that stakeholders understand and use (p. 518).

Diploma Program Evaluation

- The program evaluation requirements for the Diploma Program established by the International Baccalaureate Organization can be conceptualized under collaborative evaluation since it is required that all stakeholders, including administrators, teaching staff, students, and parents, work together to complete the self-study questionnaire every five years.

- Internal Evaluation: the guided self-study completed by the stakeholders at the school

- External Evaluation: the guided self-study and all other required documents are submitted to the IB for external review

Rationale for Evaluating the Diploma Program

Evaluation as Requirement and Service – page 1 of the Guide to the Self-Study

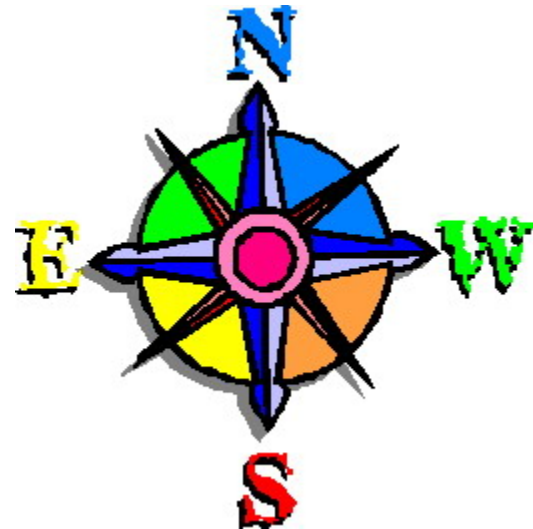Requirement: Mandated = accreditation is dependent on compliance

Service: How is the evaluation useful for the schools?

Four Corners Activity

- Completing evaluation **NOW**

- Preparing to complete evaluation **NEXT YEAR**

- Have just completed evaluation – **FINISHED**

- **GENERAL INTEREST**

The 3 Ps of Keeping it Practical

- Process

- Progress

- Pushback

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Process – Initial Preparation

- IB Workshop – Evaluating Your DP for Diploma Program Coordinators

  - Solid understanding of IB requirements
  - Plan for the completion of the evaluation
  - Development of school-based descriptors
  - Network of other DPCs in the same situation
  - Salesforce Chatter organized by the IB

Process - Timeline

- Backwards design process: When is the evaluation due?

- What are important dates/events at our school that need to be considered?

- Should we ask for a later submission date from the IB?

Process – Selecting the Evaluation Team

- All administrators, teachers, students, parents (stakeholders) should be involved in the evaluation.

- Evaluation Team: One representative from each group + TOK teachers + CAS teachers

- Divide up responsibilities based on interest and abilities.

- Set meeting times strategically.

- Set realistic due dates for completion of sections and be flexible with types of input from different stakeholders.

Feed your evaluation teams!

Be prepared for unexpected gifts of time!

Aim for "good enough evaluation"

- "The term was coined by a very famous psychometrician and evaluator, Lee Cronbach, a Stanford professor who invented the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. The 'good enough' evaluation idea simply implies that evaluation is good enough if it can help us make decision about the program in some way. It's not good enough if it either fails to do so or actually leads us to making wrong decisions. What is good enough is a judgment call."

Feedback from Dr. Tony Lam, OISE/UT, on my comments regarding the never-ending evaluation process.

The Progress – Changes in our DP

- Data-guided decision making for program planning

- Development of DP Action Plan as part of the larger SIP

- Development of K-12 Assessment and Language Policy and Procedures Framework

- Scheduling of HL and SL classes

- Extended Essay Supervisor Training Program (new materials and timelines for students) – Ongoing evaluation

The Progress – Teacher Feedback

- "The DP Evaluation was a collaborative process, involving all DP staff. The evaluation was extremely reflective and has brought about many positive changes to the DP Programme at AIS."

- "[I] believe the integration and focus on teacher responses is essential to the overall team effort of teaching and learning DP at AIS. It allows for transparent forms of open dialogue and an understanding of the vision of DP at AIS. I am a firm believer of the DP program and my philosophies of teaching are similar to the philosophies of the DP, therefore I was engaged and involved in the self study process and keen to respond to the issues addressed. Having classroom teachers involved, and transparent meetings, is essential to reach an authentic action plan."

- "It allowed us to look critically at our practices and examine the difference between our program on paper and in practice. There are gaps that we have to address."

Anonymous feedback provided on teacher survey regarding the evaluation process.
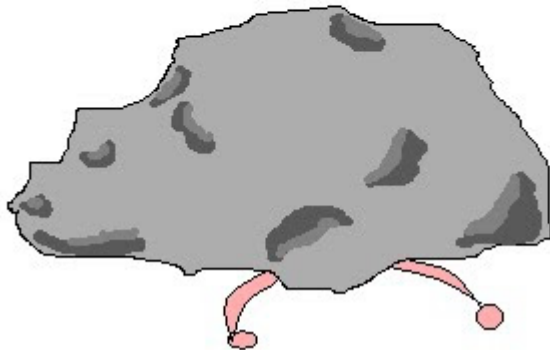
The Pushback

- "Frustrating, annoying, time wasting. I was lied to about the real object behind the process... I was told it was for the "AIS students". In reality, it was for the "Doctoral student" pursuing her personal goals at the expense of AIS, its students, and reputation. The lack of transparency, blatant lies, and creation of a personal fiefdom is appallingly pompous. Please find another line of work to avoid pervasive, long-lasting academic damage to the school, students and teachers. Also, have the decency, morals, and character to include all the responses to your surveys, versus taking only those that stroke your ego and support your agenda."

Anonymous feedback provided on teacher survey regarding the evaluation process.

Crushed by Evaluation?

KEEP CALM AND IMAGINE SISYPHUS HAPPY

The Pushback - Reflection

- Change is hard.

- Sensitivity is needed when we are engaged in evaluation.

- Internal evaluators need to be prepared for less than enthusiastic responses from stakeholders.

Life after Evaluation

- Submission on IB Docs.

- Response on the evaluation from the IB:

    - Commendations
    - Recommendations
    - Matters to be addressed
    - School visit (10% of evaluated schools)

- What happens at the school once the evaluation is accepted by the IB?

So now what?

- "I honestly and truly feel that most paperwork is simply a time-waster. The sheer volume of this means that most of it will only be occasionally referenced, so I wonder about its usefulness-to-time-spent ratio."

Anonymous feedback provided on teacher survey regarding the evaluation process.

- How do we stop the evaluation from becoming just "dramaturgical compliance"?

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From "words on paper to thoughtful action"

"We are not asking you to put on a show for one week. Rather, we are asking you to take the first step on a seven-year journey. The MSA validation visit next week will be a success only if it is the first culminating activity in a transformative process. To couch it in the terminology of IB assessment, this is the first summative we will write over the next seven-years. If next week is seen only as "pretending" just to impress outsiders, we will fail. If it leads to systematic, institutional change and growth, we will succeed. The targets we have set for measuring improvements in student performance in mathematics and literacy are impressive. The copious data on which they are based is weighty. They will, however, remain words on paper if they do not provoke thoughtful action on our part. It is imperative, therefore, that each of us knows our strategic objectives, goals and actions and makes them guiding documents in our daily planning."

(Russell McLean, Superintendent's Notes, November 6, 2013).

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Questions and Comments

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Contact Information

- Handout and Copy of Presentation are available

- Contact Information for Presenter:

Ildiko Murray, OCT, BA, BEd, MA
Diploma Program Coordinator
American International School Kuwait
an IB World School
Tel: +965-1-The AIS (1-843-247) ext. 209
E-Mail: ildiko.murray@ais-kuwait.org
Website: http://www.ais-kuwait.org

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