

International Baccalaureate Educator Network: Success case study

Snapshot developed by IB Research, based on a report prepared by:
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Background

What is the International Baccalaureate Educator Network?

The International Baccalaureate Educator Network (IBEN) trains educators to support the development and implementation of IB programmes by serving in a variety of critical roles. IB educators (IBEs) perform an array of tasks, such as: facilitating workshops; examining end-of-course assessments; or visiting interested, candidate or authorized schools.

This study examines the benefits of IBEN participation that accrue to educators and their schools. The study involved a global survey and case studies of schools across the Americas, Europe and Asia, representing diverse contexts and school types. Findings from the study can be used by IB World Schools to maximize the benefits of IBEN participation.

Findings

Benefits to IB educators

IBEs accrue several benefits from IBEN participation, and many of these benefits ripple out to students and colleagues.

- **Assessment.** There was consensus that IBEs become more confident about effectively preparing students for IB examinations and assessments.
- **Professional and pedagogical skills.** IBEs believe strongly that their IBEN participation hones their craft as professionals and further develops their pedagogical skills. Study participants called IBEN training “the best PD I’ve ever done”, a source of “rapid professional growth” and a reason to “feel like I’m a professional”.

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- **Up-to-date resources.** Acquiring updated resources—new course guides especially—was a further positive benefit identified by interviewees. IBEs often learn about changes at “inception”, enabling them to have time to consider how teaching practices need to pivot to accommodate IB changes as they take effect.
- **Mastery of core IB concepts.** Due to their IBEN participation, IBEs gained the ability to communicate the IB mission and developed a deeper understanding of international-mindedness, the learner profile and the IB programme standards and practices.
- **IB community engagement.** IBEs view their connection to the IB as a major benefit of their IBEN participation. They also deepen their own learnings by networking with other educators.

Benefits to schools

The study indicated a number of possible benefits of IBEN participation for schools.

- **Systemic approaches and collaboration.** IBEs in schools that benefit from IBEN involvement use multiple methods to share their learnings with colleagues, including informal sharing, new teacher mentoring and professional learning communities (PLCs).

- **Perception of school quality.** Schools may benefit from the prestige of having faculty who are IBEN members by more easily recruiting students and families and attracting high-quality faculty members.
- **Exam performance.** Many interviewees were hesitant to ascribe school-level increases in exam scores to IBEN participation. However, some members of the schools that successfully incorporate IBEN learnings believe that their students' exam scores would not be as high were the school not to have IBEN members as faculty.
- **IB community engagement.** Through an increased number of IBEs and meaningful interactions with other IB schools, interviewees at each site described how IBEs had deepened their school's engagement with the broader IB community.
- Employ **standardization exercises** led by IBEN members to ensure all IB teachers are able to apply new learnings. Some examples include: "cross marking", in which teachers in a subject mark the same examination and compare results; having open-door policies for classroom observation; and fostering collaboration with other IB World Schools.

Summary

This study was designed to examine the benefits of IBEN participation as well as factors that may support or hinder successful dissemination of IBEN learnings within a school. The benefits that IBEs reported included: better understanding and preparation for IB assessments; improved subject knowledge and pedagogical skills; access to the latest resources; mastery of IB concepts; and connection to the IB and other IBEs. Schools also noted a number of benefits of staff IBEN participation, such as: developing systematic approaches to collaboration; increased school prestige; possible improvements to student exam performance; and greater engagement with the IB community.

Schools that were able to implement IBEN learnings ensured there was adequate planning time, a range of meeting types to bring different groups together and regular professional development. Successful schools effectively and quickly disseminated information from IBEN. School leadership also appeared to be an important factor influencing the ability to achieve benefits from IBEN participation generally. Lastly, schools with cross-disciplinary collaborative cultures were able to share and process the myriad types of information and new skills that IBEs cultivate.

Promising practices for schools

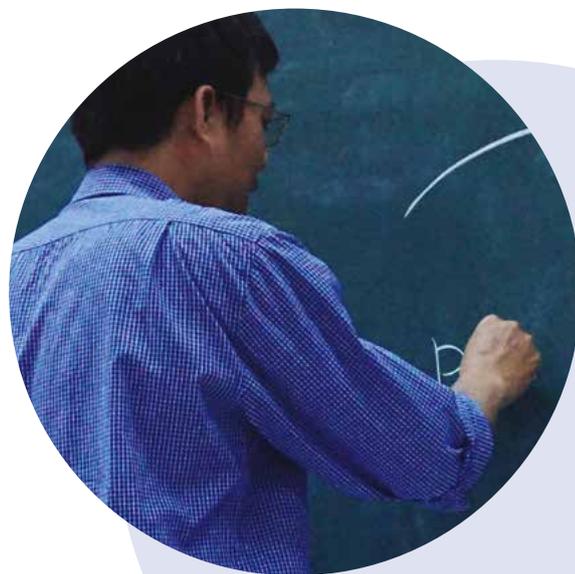
The school-level promising practices that emerged from the study are summarized below.

20–30%

The positive benefits of IBEN participation are heightened when 20–30% of staff are IBEN members.

Distribute IBEN participants across subjects, groups, departments and grades.

- Saturate schools with a **critical mass** of IBEs. The positive benefits of IBEN participation are heightened when 20–30% of staff are IBEN members.
- **Distribute** IBEN participants across subjects, groups, departments and grades.
- **Intentionally hire and track** based on IBEN expertise.
- Establish and support **PLCs** and **collaboration**. School leaders can build professional learning days into calendars and protect dedicated collaborative time as sacrosanct.
- Create and communicate procedures and **guidelines for sharing IBEN learnings**. Some examples of ways to share learning include: a standing agenda item at leadership team meetings; offering full or abridged versions of IBEN workshops; having a round-table sharing session; or communicating information via newsletters or blogs.
- Intentionally and repeatedly **make teachers aware of the IBEN resources** in their midst. Schools should intentionally share who their IBEs are and what expertise they have.



This snapshot was developed by the IB Research department. A copy of the full report, including methodological details, is available at: www.ibo.org/en/research/. For more information on this study or other IB research, please email research@ibo.org.

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