



AASSA Newsletter

Association of American Schools in South America

January

2020

The Tri-Annual Newsletter of The Association of American Schools in South America

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From Your Executive Director

Happy 2020 AASSA Friends and Colleagues!

We are better when we work together! Indeed, progressive learning in a safe and collaborative environment is essential to bettering the world. Respect, trust, and compassion generate positive relationships within a learning community. As we move into this new decade, may we each continue to embrace community, collaboration, and a common sense of purpose.

AASSA's mission is to enhance the quality of education in our American/ international member schools. Our vision is that we are a vibrant, membership-driven learning organization promoting visionary leadership, innovative programs, and fiscally sustainable services.

Our Purchasing Service is kicking into high gear as we provide a cost effect and efficient means by which our schools receive school supplies and equipment. We recently completed our face-to-face job fair with 47% of schools hiring at least one candidate and over 80% of schools making job offers to candidates during the fair. Our recruiting database is available all year to member schools that have signed up for our Recruiting Service

Salary survey results for Heads of Schools, Principals, and Teaching positions will be shared with the Heads of School of all participating schools.



Visit our blog to listen to AASSA Radio. If you're interested in participating in AASSA Radio, please contact Dr. Rhoads by email at (drhoads@aassa.com) to let him know your topic.

Be Part Of **AASSA**
RADIO

As a reminder, only participating schools will receive a copy of the survey results.

We have changed our Business Managers' Conference to **School Operations Conference**. The conference will remain in Miami in the summer but take on a broader focus to include advancement, admissions, facilities etc. as well as finance. The School Operations Conference dates are July 8-10, 2020 and July 7-9, 2021. Our **Governance Conference and Heads' Retreat** will remain connected for the coming year. The Governance Conference will be September 1-3, 2020 and August 31-September 2, 2021.

We are excited too for our upcoming **Educators' Conference** in Brazil. We have outstanding keynote presenters as well as breakout sessions planned and we expect great participation. The 2020 theme is *Future Ready? Share today, Shape tomorrow*, March 17-21, 2020. We are also excited to announce our 2021 location, dates and theme. For 2021 our theme will be *The Courage Effect: Thriving in Critical Moments*. The 2021 conference will be held at the American School of Guatemala, March 23-27, 2021. Our goal is to announce our conference locations and dates at least two years in advance. Please check our website for conference dates and details.

Visit the [AASSA blog](#) and check out our new [AASSA TV](#) section, listen to an [AASSA Radio](#) feature or read article. As always, I conclude my section of the Newsletter with One to think on...

One to think on...

"...although teachers matter, it is how they think, how they foster students becoming their own teachers, and how they can see the impact of their efforts through the eyes of the students that matter more"
(Hattie & Zierer, 2018, p. 101).

One to think on...

Best regards,

Dr. Dereck Rhoads
AASSA Executive Director

References:

Hattie, J. & Zierer, K. (2018). *10 Mindframes for visible learning: Teaching for success*. New York: Routledge.

AASSA2020

FUTURE-READY?
SHARE TODAY,
SHAPE TOMORROW

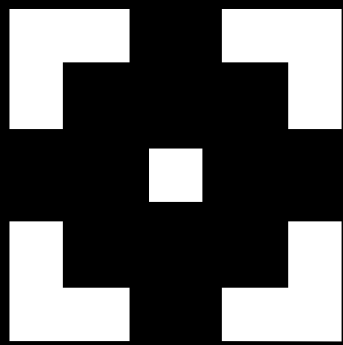
MARCH 19-21, 2020 • SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL
GRADED - THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF SÃO PAULO



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FUTURE-READY?
SHARE TODAY,
SHAPE TOMORROW

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A Renewed Focus on Professional Learning

By: Adam Slaton
AASSA Chief Learning Officer



Brazil, Here We Come!



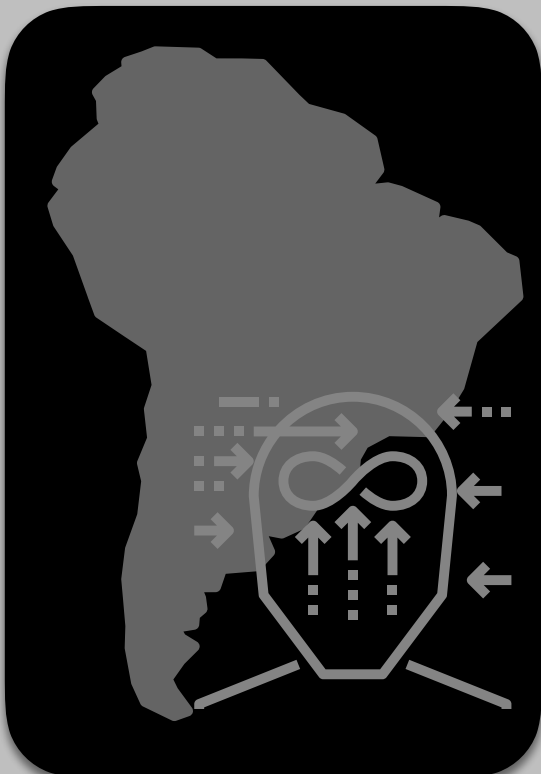
This March, hundreds of educators from AASSA schools throughout the region will converge on Sao Paulo, Brazil for the 2020 AASSA Educators' Conference. Our host school for the event, Graded School, has a spectacular line-up of world-class speakers and conference events that are sure to provide a highly enriching learning experience for all in attendance. It will be an educational opportunity that you won't want to miss!

Future Ready? Share Today. Shape Tomorrow.

The staff at Graded School and AASSA have been working for more than a year on organizing one of the best educational conferences in the region! This year's world-renowned Keynote Speakers include John Hattie, Cindy Moss, and George Curous, who will be constructively framing the conference theme of *Future-Ready? Share Today. Shape Tomorrow*. Additionally, over 25 consultants from Europe, the United States, and Latin America will be on hand to provide top-notch learning experiences and share expertise in the field of education. One of the highlights of the conference will be the 75+ learning sessions provided by educators from AASSA schools with the united goal of *sharing today* in order to help schools *shape tomorrow*. Attendees will have opportunities to network with colleagues from the region, as well as interact with our Partner Exhibitors. Participants will have a choice of attending learning sessions aligned to one of AASSA's three Professional Learning Strands: Visionary Leadership, Progressive Learning, or Vibrant Communities. Sessions will be identified by one of the three strands so participants can easily see the primary focus learning. Want to attend sessions only within one strand? Awesome! Want to take sessions from all three? Even better! This is simply a helpful strategy to help participants personalize their learning during the conference!

Maximize Your Learning through a Parade of Pre-Conference Options

Want to learn how to fly a drone? **Check!** Interested in learning alongside the 2019 NASSP Principal of the Year? **Done!** From women in leadership, drone certifications, and STEM academies, to athletic administration certification, social emotional learning, and early



childhood global citizenship, there is something for all learners during a one-day or two-day preconference. Space is limited for many of the pre-conference sessions, so register fast!

Conference Series: A Conference Within a Conference

Something new this year is the AASSA Educators' Conference – Conference Series. Participants have the option of signing up for the Conference Series at the time of registration. Space is extremely limited for this opportunity, which will allow participants an extremely deep learning experience around one particular topic throughout the entire conference. Conference Series participants will be learning with the same cohort during the three days of the conference, but will be participating in all conference activities and events with all of the other attendees, including the keynote speakers and social events. This year's Conference Series is: ***“Creating Vibrant Communities through Promoting Global Competence: Changing the World through Deep Learning Experiences in your School.”*** If you are interested in diving into this unique learning opportunity, do not wait to register!

As you can see, there is a little something for everyone at this year's conference. We are constantly working to expand learning opportunities to target a wide array of areas within our schools. Brazil will be the place to be in March, and we hope to see you there!!

Download the Conference Packet for more details on the Main Conference and Pre-Conference!

https://www.aassa.com/uploaded/AASSA_Conferences/2020_AASSA_Educators_Conference/



FREE Samples for Conference Attendees!



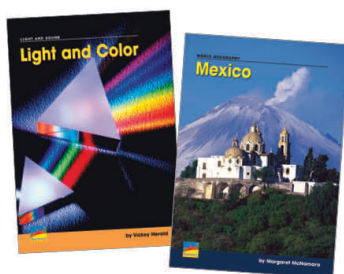
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Redesigning Time and Space for Quality



by Deborah Welch, CEO of the Academy for International School Heads (AISH)

Cognitive science has provided us with the essential principles for facilitating successful teaching and learning. We understand, for example, that what students already know affects their learning; that setting short term, specific and moderately challenging goals enhances motivation more than establishing long term goals; that interpersonal relationships and communication are critical; and that clear, explanatory and timely feedback is important. Psychological science has contributed greatly to enhancing what we do in the classroom. But is it possible to apply those same principles when time and space are redesigned in an online environment? And is it possible to apply those same principles to adult leaders?

At the Academy for International School Heads (AISH), we sought to find out. With a membership of 500+ Heads and Deputy Heads of International Schools in 90 different countries, our mission is to support advocate and provide professional learning for Heads of School. However, due to distance, funds, and a Head's taxing schedule, it is unrealistic to get more than 125 members in the room at one time and the time Heads can contribute to learning is quite limited. Additionally, Heads are experienced learners with unique, targeted needs thus opportunities for growth need to be differentiated and available "just in time."

If online courses could embed many of the principles of quality learning so that leaders could control the path, pace and place of their learning, we could establish the conditions under which agency could thrive. And, given that leadership is the second greatest influence on student learning in a school (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson and Wahlstrom) after the classroom teacher, we believed this to be a worthwhile endeavor.

AISH partnered with Global Online Academy (GOA), to develop online courses "by Heads, for Heads." Before developing content, the AISH leaders took a course

provided by GOA about quality online learning. We learned the importance of curated resources, which do what good museums practice by selecting only a few of the best artifacts to represent an idea. We learned how to create community online through video introductions and forums, because we know that learning is social. We learned about providing timely feedback through various discussion mechanisms and how to best involve the participants in providing feedback to one another. And we learned how to provide options online for short-term goals so that leaders could create their own path, according to their needs. As one of the AISH leaders expressed:

The first learning for me relates to the ability for the learner to access depth and breadth of the material in an online environment. We are dealing with complex issues in the AISH course material and need to honour the complexity and avoid taking the easy, simple, sometimes superficial options that may fit into the timeline, but not explore the depths and difficulties involved in something as involved in measuring mission, developing learning principles, or leading change.

I was also prompted to think about our pathways during an online course. Like a climber, we all go up, but rarely on exactly the same path. We need the flexibility to choose our route, stop when we need to, press on and take risks when we are ready.

The courses we developed are for leaders committed to continuous improvement and honing their skills. Mapped to the AISH Standards and Threads, each course addresses a critical leadership issue identified by international Heads of School. AISH leaders have curated all content and designed course activities. Skills courses are bite-sized, introductory courses that can be accomplished online in one-to-two hours. They are asynchronous, meaning that all content and activities are published in advance and participants are invited to work on their own schedule. Participants will gain an understanding of the topic, obtain resources, and acquire insights that can immediately be applied to your practice.

Should participants wish to dive deeper, we invite them to sign up for the Impact courses, which are an extension of the topic. Impact courses are four weeks

long, two to four hours per week. An experienced AISH leader will engage participants in a cohort group in practical, job-embedded discussions designed for immediate application and impact. Customized around the needs of an educational leader, there are choices within the courses so that the content is personalized for each leader's strengths, needs, skills and interests.

Have we been successful? Do our courses facilitate quality learning by utilizing the principles of teaching and learning in place where time and space are redesigned? Do our courses adapt for the leader's hectic schedule and specific needs? We believe so! But the proof will be how our participants evaluate their learning.

We encourage you to sign up and to let us know. AISH's Leadership Series is open to Heads, Deputy Heads, school leaders, and leadership teams.

Deborah Welch is the CEO of the Academy for International School Heads (AISH). She is an experienced international school administrator, most recently Director of the American School of Doha and Deputy Director for Learning at International School Bangkok. Deb will be providing sessions at AASSA's Annual Educator's Conference in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Follow her on LinkedIn and AISH on Facebook and Twitter.

AASSA Partner Panels for Research and Development






In December 2019 AASSA launched its first [Partner Panels](#) to provide a space and opportunity for research and development around school needs and products and services available and being developed. [AASSA Partners](#) and Schools engaged to provide expertise, perspective and feedback to each other as Schools seek to solve problems of practice and Partners seek to gain insights into the development of products and services. The Panels brought together consumers and creators of educational products and services to improve student learning. The Panels provided the opportunity for rich discussion and meaningful feedback to influence the development of products and services being offered and considered for development. In addition, the Panels provided excellent opportunities for professional learning and development around the most cutting-

edge solutions being provided to meet the needs of schools around the world. Through learning, sharing, and connecting Schools were able to make informed decisions when considering products and services and Partners are able to improve products and services based on expert feedback gained from panel participants.

AASSA would like to thank Platinum Partners Discovery Education, TieCare International and Gold Partner Edmentum International as well as start-up TeleTeachers for presenting an [AASSA Partner Panel](#).

Our next Partner Panels are being planned now for December 2020. Interested schools and Partners are encouraged to contact Dr. Rhoads.



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How USD is Preparing Students to Work Internationally

University training is a common factor shared by all educators. Qualifying for a degree in teaching, counseling, or leadership provides a foundation to build an educational career. Unfortunately, there are very few university training programs that address international issues or prepare graduates to work internationally. The University of San Diego has been working hard to infuse global perspectives into our graduate school of education for over a decade. As a faculty member within the department of Counseling and Marital and Family Therapy, I have been actively involved in these efforts. Recently, we (USD counseling program) have started working more closely with American International schools. We feel there is a tremendous amount of potential for more coordinated programming related to both student training and research. This article covers our journey thus far and offers some future ideas for collaboration within the AASSA community.



In 2008 the University of San Diego (USD) School of Leadership and Education (SOLES) implemented an International Requirement for all students attending our graduate programs in Leadership, Teacher Education, Counseling and Marital and Family Therapy. This requirement is typically fulfilled through short-term study abroad experiences (10 days to 2 weeks) often linked to required courses. Students receive reduced tuition for these travel courses and we've had amazing levels of participation. A very small percentage of students opt to fulfill the international

requirement locally through a point system, but being so close to an international border allows for some quality options close to home.

I joined USD in the summer of 2009. While I had an interest in international education and travel, I had no idea how this requirement would affect my teaching or scholarship. As a former school counselor and current counselor educator, my training and experience was very US-based. Despite this shortcoming, over the past eleven years I've had the privilege to lead students on fifteen international experiences. While the planning and travel involved can be daunting, this work has become one of my true passions.

The benefit of travel and cultural appreciation is powerful. I've coached students through their first airplane travel; stayed up late talking with students wrestling with their new identities as 'Americans;' spent my fair share of time in emergency rooms; watched countless sunsets; and am well practiced in the art of the group photo. Though beyond the surface power of travel, over time, it has become clear that something unique happens on these trips for new educators and professionals in training.



When we visit schools and clinics students see the thing that they have been studying from a new international perspective. This perspective sparks the comparative process and allows students to start mapping similarities and differences from a professional lens. Some comparisons are subtle or

reinforcing, while others are striking or challenging. For example, in Japan we toured a high school and learned that instead of students rotating from class to class, teachers rotate. We noticed that this small structural practice had far reaching implications for teaching, classroom culture, and student relationships. One of my students reflected, “why don’t we do it that way?” This led to a long discussion about systems and the power of tradition. I’m continually amazed that a short experience can provide enough perspective to keep students questioning and challenging the status quo well into their professional careers.

Early in my travels I chanced upon international schools and in particular, American International Schools. Routinely these schools are places that share a similar educational context, yet offer my students a chance to expand their ideas of what is possible. School counselor training, especially in California, is largely aspirational. Meaning that too often what we train in the classroom is not what many of our students see in practice. While we have amazing practitioner partners, there are just too many circumstances within the current Californian public education system that forces counselors into tough situations. We have tremendously high counselor to student ratios, major disparities in resource allocations (super wealthy high stress schools vs high poverty low expectation schools), and a lack of district or state leadership that promotes progressive school counseling practice. Despite all of this, our graduates do amazing work and routinely reach above and beyond what they witnessed in training. Their achievement is multifaceted (i.e., incredible to begin with, motivated, prepared), but I am convinced that our international experience and exposure to American International Schools are key ingredients to their success.

Recently we’ve (USD Counseling Program) began to partner more closely with the International School Nido de Aguilas in Santiago, Chile. I met Dr. Ana Maria Leon at the AASSA conference in Lima. She is an elementary school counselor at Nido and was instrumental in facilitating two trips to the school. In the past, trips typically involved several site visits with a day or two at one particular site. Both times at Nido we stayed for an entire week. Every day was like a full conference schedule with activities and projects at all levels. Students helped lead lessons and assemblies, cofacilitated groups, talked with parents, attended talks by administrators, and even guest judged a talent show.

Being welcomed by the school and whole counseling team at Nido got us all of thinking more creatively. It turns out a University in California CAN support masters-level interns in international schools. Currently, Nido is hosting their second yearlong intern and we have been

blown away by their experiences there. Coordinating online supervision and coursework has been a challenge, but these students have thrived in this environment and it has opened our eyes to the possibilities associated with training students in international settings.

As we engage with and learn more about American International Schools, we must recognize how naïve we are to the various issues that affect this system. Many of you have dedicated your entire careers to these schools and students and we would like to honor that as much as possible within our collaborations. One thing we have noticed is that there is a general lack of knowledge about these systems in university training and an underrepresentation in school counseling research literature. Therefore, we are very interested in pursuing a research agenda dedicated to international schools and their stakeholders. The first project that we are planning is a needs assessment specifically designed for international schools. We feel there are unique issues (e.g. mandatory reporting, third culture identity, mental health stigma) that may benefit from rigorous empirical study.

Many universities have a desire to work internationally. While there are countless examples, it is clear there is no blueprint or manual for how to go about creating quality partnerships or programs. Our process can best be described as iterative; we have had to learn along the way. The benefit of this approach has been a slow build towards greater capacity. The current capacity for international work at the University of San Diego and within SOLES has never been better. While I’ve shared my experiences within school counseling, many of my colleagues are equally invested in their areas of specialization and eager to partner. The university has also dedicated many resources to this work through the establishment of centers (International Center and SOLES Global) and specialized grants to organize and support this work. Capacity related to access and flexibility are also being taken into consideration as we design more online offerings. Even without a blueprint, I feel very confident welcoming potential partners to explore opportunities at the University of San Diego.

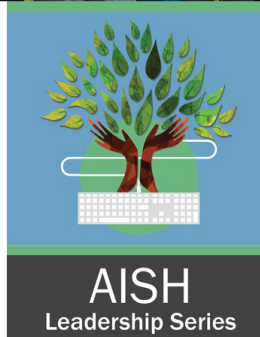
Thank you for the opportunity to share our progress and ideas with AASSA. Here are some further details and contacts:

Based on our experiences at Nido, my colleagues and I would like to further explore internship placements and expand our network to other American International Schools in Latin America. If interested, please contact me at: imartin@sandiego.edu

We are exploring potential professional development opportunities for those of you interested in International School Counseling. We are also testing the waters for



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interest in an international school counseling certificate that could be transferred into a Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accredited Masters program. If interested, please contact: If interested in any of the other programs offered by SOLES please contact:

My colleague (Dr. Cat Griffith) and I will be attending the first annual Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Conference held at the International School Nido de Aguilas on March 6th and 7th, 2020. Several workshops related to universal socioemotional screening, self-regulated learning, and system-wide SEL support will be offered to conference participants. For further information, please contact: counselingintern@nido.cl

Ian Martin EdD

Associate Professor, Counseling Program
School of Leadership and Education Sciences (SOLES)
University of San Diego

Dr. Ian Martin is an Associate Professor of Counseling at the University of San Diego where he teaches courses in school counseling and career development. Prior to becoming a counselor educator, he was a school counselor in Portland, OR. Dr. Martin has taught numerous international courses in South America, Europe, and the Caribbean; and was a visiting scholar at the University of Verona, Italy.

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AASSA Reads



by Julie

Smith

Julie teaches “people to critically view all the media they consume. How to evaluate it,

critique it, and analyze it, so they’re not sheep, but think for themselves, instead. So they make smart decisions about purchasing and voting, and so they don’t believe the stereotypes presented to them.”

Media, Information & News Literacy

These literacies are more important than ever in times of misinformation, disinformation, deep and shallow fakes, post-truth world, alternative facts, or truth-decay. We need to teach citizens of ALL ages the skills to navigate information, media and news. Julie Smith’s book is a great starting point for awareness and understanding of the above mentioned terms and learning how to be reliably informed with the ability to responsibly disseminate information.

Recommendation by Silvia Rosenthal Tolisano

Developing Problem-Solving Skills



By Gavin McLean, International Business Development Director, Edmentum International

Problem-solving is a key developmental area for students and is a skill set that has lasting, real-world impact. Being creative and introducing real-world applications is an effective way of integrating these skills into the classroom as it also allows students to learn about the world around them while developing practical skills that will support them in the workforce and in life. For example, money management and calculations are vital life skills and crucial in setting young people up for success, but presented as problems to solve also helps develop much-needed critical thinking skills.

A [multi-national survey conducted](#) by Adobe Creative Cloud education, found that 90% of educators surveyed stated that schools don’t do enough to integrate creative problem-solving into curricula. Employers also routinely complain that prospective workers lack the problem-solving skills that are essential in today’s workplace - something which is key to achieving success. The challenges are clear but how can we best support teachers and students to ensure they receive a well-rounded education that also develops important skills like problem solving and critical thinking? To this, Tracy Trowbridge, global lead, Education Programs, Adobe said that the answer can be found in collaborative solutions that place an emphasis on soft skills:

“Educators, policymakers and industry—technology in particular—need to come together to improve opportunities for students. Creative technologies can help educators teach and nurture critically important ‘soft’ skills, and policies and curricula need to evolve to complete the equation.”.

Addressing the challenge

Not only is it important to make learning fun and engaging, it must also be practical in order to help students reinforce what is being taught, with an emphasis on real-world problem-solving skills. This can all be achieved using the PLUS approach (Project, Learn, Use and Show), which is a model used by virtual schools such as Edmentum

International's Calvert Learning, to support students with developing creative problem-solving skills and to bring lessons to life:

PROJECT: *Planning the project students will be working on*

Projects should be designed to provide students with engaging real-world opportunities to creatively show what they have learned whether that be in groups or independently. They should provide students with a choice in how to plan, present, and be creative in a way that works best for them.

LEARN: *Follow with learning opportunities to delve into the project*

A variety of active learning opportunities should be available to students to encourage them to think independently and drive the project forward. Alongside this, it's important checks are put in place to assess understanding at regular intervals throughout the project.

USE: *Check understanding and use at the end of each lesson*

Assessments used at the end of each lesson help ensure students have achieved a deeper knowledge and have mastered the concepts needed to help them complete their project.

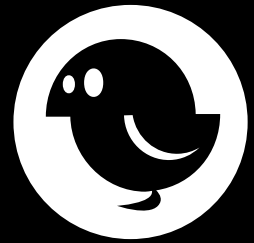
SHOW: *Show what has been learnt*

When it comes to evaluating the completed projects, it's important students are given the freedom and flexibility to present their final piece in a number of different formats, including written or digital.

Making an impact

Of course, virtual schooling like Calvert won't replace traditional schooling, but it's a valuable tool to extend the overall offering and support students more efficiently by providing a platform to explore problem-solving and enquiry-based learning. This is especially valuable for students who don't have access to high quality facilities or teaching, as well as students that move around within a country or internationally with their parents, as it gives students the flexibility and support to help them reach their highest potential.

Students work closely with their state-certified online teacher through regular communication via video conferencing, phone, and email. Parental engagement can also be increased as families will play a hands-on role in facilitating collaborative instruction, where the option of ELA resources are available, providing additional phonics and context supports to build foundational skills and promote fluency for non-native English speakers and struggling readers and writers. All with the goal of ensuring every student has the skills they need to succeed in the world of tomorrow.



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About Edmentum International and Calvert: Calvert Learning is part of a suite of solutions from Edmentum International and has been helping K–8 students learn outside of traditional classroom settings for over a century. Calvert's project-based curriculum (aligned to US standards) has been specifically designed to engage students in virtual and blended learning settings and encourage critical thinking. Resources and assignments included throughout each course have been carefully chosen to help students actively engage with their coursework and make real-world learning connections.

Author: Gavin McLean has nearly thirty years' experience in business and curriculum development in international education. Based in the United Kingdom, Gavin has worked for some of the largest international publishers including Macmillan Education and National Geographic Learning, and has consulted for public and private sector companies, multinational agencies and donors in various global markets. Gavin and his team are dedicated to working with international schools to implement technology that genuinely benefits teachers and students.

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**BOOK
RECOMMENDATION**

Book is... filled with his lessons on how to design meaningful educational experiences that unleash students' creativity.
—Tina Seelig, professor of the Practice, Stanford School of Engineering, author of Creativity Rules

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DESIGNING THE SPACE TO
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YOUR CREATIVE POTENTIAL
MICHAEL COHEN, THE TECH RABBIT

“True creativity stems from the desire to impact people and change the world around them.”
MICHAEL COHEN



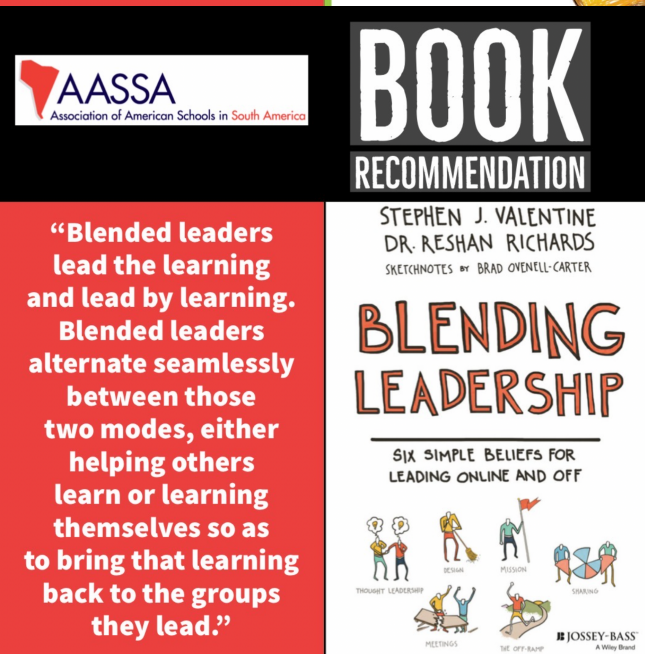
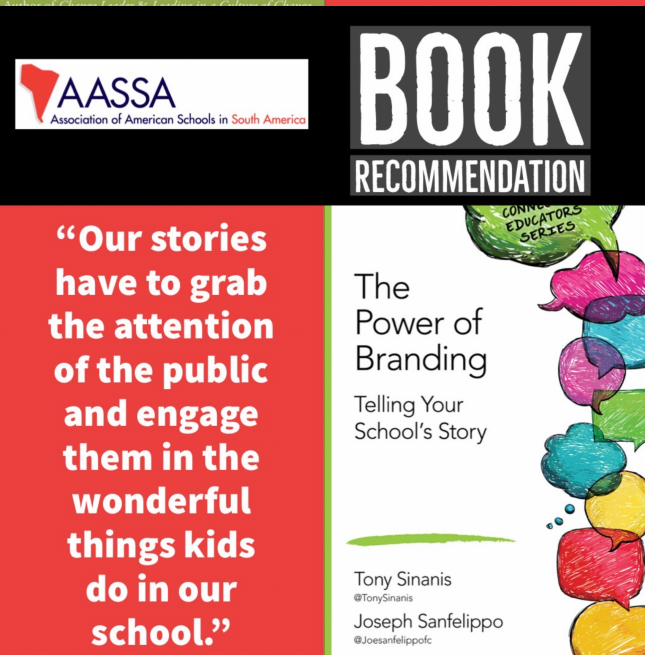
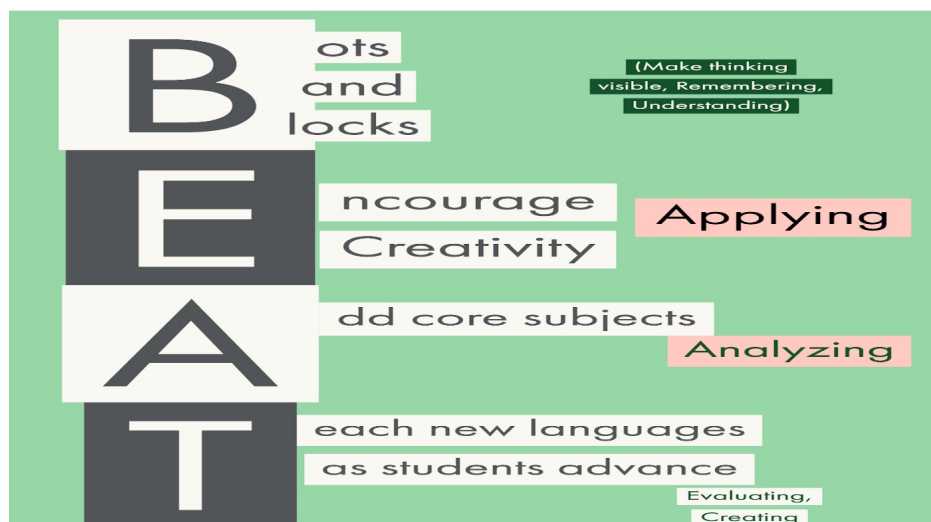
The BEAT Model- Simplified Coding for K-2 Students

By John Altamirano, Edtech Specialist at International School Colegio Nueva Granada

The BEAT model is a coding-teaching schema exclusively designed for *early learners*. This model was inspired by the [Bloom's taxonomy](#) and the [GANAG schema](#) and was developed after several years of Computer Science teaching experience along with active classroom research while serving children between the ages of 4 and 8 (Primary School).

This proposal was born due to the need of a lot of educators regarding a proper and simplified approach to teach coding in the early years. For many people, not only for PS instructors the term "coding" has been a sort of synonym of "complicated". Once you pronounce the word "programming" people think immediately about Python, Javascript and some other terms that bring back some bad memories from high school or college Computer classes. This schema was created to make teaching coding as simple as can be. K-2 educators can now use this model to take their first programming baby steps and include coding in their curricula in a meaningful manner.

BEAT SCHEMA ILLUSTRATION



This proposal aims to promote in-depth engagement in the Primary School years instead of just short-term programming lessons. BEAT will allow teachers to be more rigorous in terms of code literacy.

A Short History of this proposal

Back in 2018, I had the wonderful privilege to present at an International Conference with the theme “Stem and Coding Activities for K-2 students” I was quite surprised by how many teachers attended this presentation looking for guidelines on this specific topic. The main question was, when to start teaching coding? After

we shared some experiences based upon successful teaching practices the best answer was “The sooner the better”. However, another inquiry still remained; how do we teach coding in the primary school years? We teachers needed a proper and simplified way to start including programming content since kindergarten.

I have always used Bloom's taxonomy and the GANAG schema to design my curriculum units and lesson plans so I decided to use these approaches to enhance individual classroom research and build a sort of learning process framework to teach coding to early learners in an effective way.

BEAT SCHEMA EXPLAINED

The acronym BEAT stands for **Bots & Blocks**, **Encourage Creativity**, **Add** core subjects, and **Teach** new languages as students advance. I have used this model in every coding unit I have created and results have been more than satisfactory. Below you will find the explanation of every step and how it is connected to the Bloom's Taxonomy.

BOTS & BLOCKS (Planting the seed)

Students start to understand logic, four to five commands and the difference between real things and fantasy around the age of four. Therefore, they are ready to start learning coding which involves pretty much these same skills. Children under the age of 6-7 learn a second or third language real quick. So why not coding, it is a language after all. We just need to use the right approach to teach it.

Nowadays the best way to introduce coding concepts and engage the little ones in an entry level programming is by having them play with proper child-friendly-robot toys . There are many affordable didactic bots in the market that help

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students to make computing thinking visible as they take their first coding steps in a motivating and active way. Some examples of this kind of tools are

- [Bee-Bots](#),
- [Botley The Coding Robot](#)
- [Code & Go Robot mouse](#)

among many others that are surely coming soon. All of these are basically colorful, easy-to-use programmable robots for young children that are just perfect for educators to teach simple programming concepts. These robots come with arrow keys to instruct them to move forward or backward or turn left or right. Click on the links below to see these devices in action.

- [Bee - Bots](#)
- [Botley The Coding Robot](#)
- [Code & Go Robot Mouse](#)

Playing with these coding toys, in the first place, will allow students to acquire basic pre-programming concepts. Pupils will be able to understand that a program is basically a set of instructions, a sequence of short commands.

BLOCKS

Once students have played with these bots and developed a certain level of expertise they will be ready to jump in the tools that use block-based languages which allow them to have a notion of basic coding tasks and build their first programs on a screen. There are many of these out there and they are basically visual programming editors that make students get familiar with diverse commands and programming concepts like operators, events, control, structures, and more. To code with these kind of platforms they just need to drag and drop small

blocks and run the program when done. It is a whole lot easier than text-based programming which avoids students frustration in their initial coding steps. **These tools could be used even by adults who never took coding classes before. If you lack previous experience, this is the perfect tool to pick up and learn to code in a pretty basic and relatively quick way.**

These are some of the most known block based coding tools

- [Scratch](#)
- [Code.org](#)
- [Tynker](#)
- [Kodable](#)

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- [Alice](#)
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- [Code Karts](#)
- [Hopscotch](#)
- [Daisy the Dinosaur](#)
- [Lego WeDo](#)

Teaching to use Bots and Blocks is the first step on this schema. Students will have an understanding of coding and will remember basic functions - (First and second level of Bloom's Taxonomy).

ENCOURAGE CREATIVITY

Once pupils learn the basics of coding, they can start facing some challenges. At this stage, the main mission of the teacher using this method is to come

up with pretexts to encourage students' creativity and keep them wondering what they could do with the acquired coding knowledge. When students become more skilled at using any given process, coding in this case, teachers can give them "student-directed tasks" (Marzano, 2000) — tasks that are less structured and that give students less guidance. This kind of task requires much more of students, but also gives them more freedom to create and think independently (Marzano, Gaddy, and Dean, 2000). Tasks you could assign could go from programming a simple trivia to a semi complex Video Game using some of the tools described in the first step of this schema. Check the videos below for examples of some programs K-2 students could create easily .

- [Running Race \(Scratch Jr\)](#)
- [Dodge Ball \(Scratch\)](#)
- [Make a Square \(Hopscotch\)](#)
- [Make your own Maze \(Kodable\)](#)
- [Code your own Flappy Game \(Code.org\)](#)

There are other kinds of challenges that facilitate learners' inventiveness and problem solving skills. Platforms like [Code.org](#) and [Kodable](#) offer activities for students to fix a wrong code (sort of debugging) or change an existing code to make it more functional for instance. As a teacher, you could borrow some of these ideas or come up with your own. As stated above, it is the mission of educators using this model to provide children with scenarios for them to exploit their creativity and apply the acquired knowledge (Third Level of Bloom's Taxonomy).

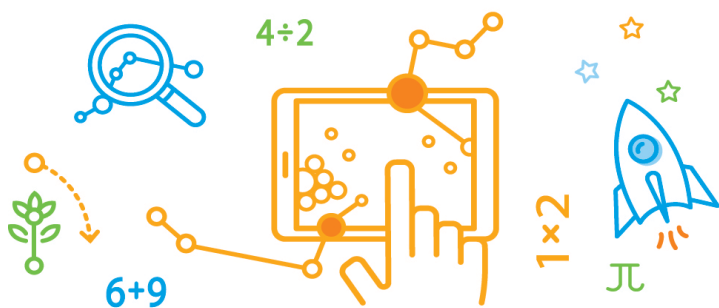
ADD CORE SUBJECTS

This step will make the coding experience more relevant as you connect diverse subjects to students' creations. For example, if you are working on your Science Unit (living things) you could encourage

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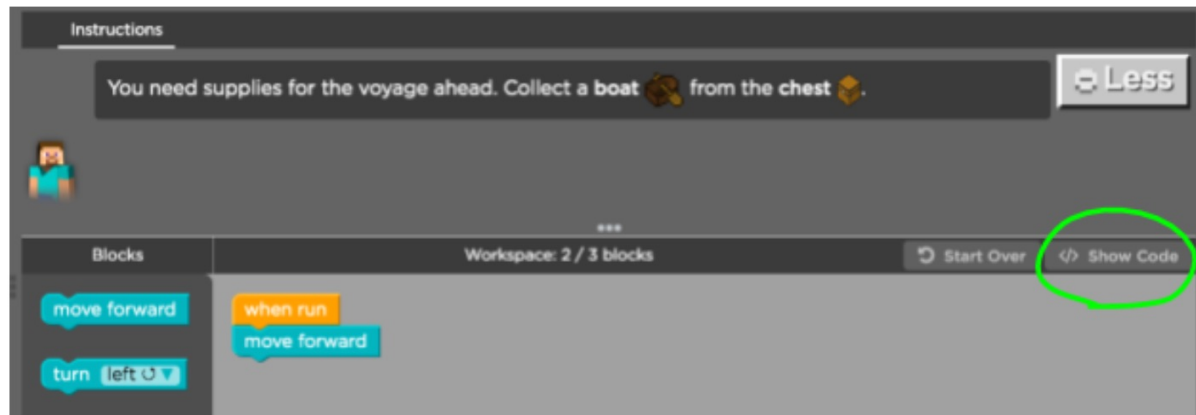
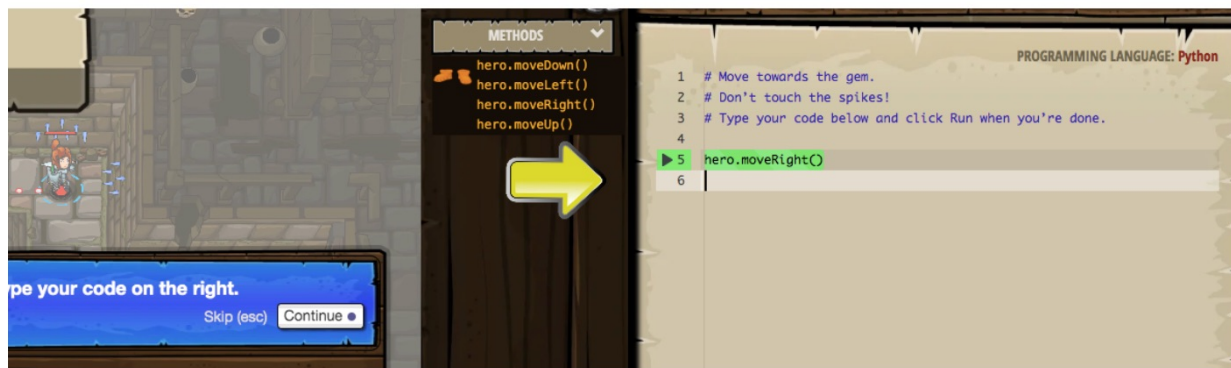
Seriously fun



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students to program an interactive book describing facts about their favorite animal or have students code a Math Game to reinforce equations. You name it! Basically you could assign any programming challenge related to the topic you want to teach and the coding tool you are using. Below, some examples of integration projects using basic coding platforms.

- [Math Problem](#)
- [Animals Project](#)
- [Plants and Pollinators](#)
- [Flood Gate](#)

This step will provide students with the opportunity to analyze not only their own creations (coding process), but also concepts related to the subject that is connected (Fourth Level of Bloom's Taxonomy).

TEACH NEW LANGUAGES AS STUDENTS ADVANCE

Once students have gone through the previous steps, they will be ready to try real programming languages. In this phase scholars will have a clear understanding of what coding is and how they can use it in a more complex way. They will be ready to take baby steps towards text based programming with simple activities at the beginning. There are several engaging platforms that introduce children to the world of text-based code.

A good option to get started is one of the newest platforms of this kind: [CodeCombat](#). It is an engaging game-based Computer Science program where learners type real text code and see characters react in real

time. Students learn to type Python and JavaScript by playing different games and they then apply the acquired knowledge to create their own games or websites.

Another great tool to include in this phase as well is code.org. As you can see in the illustration below students can click on “Show Code” to see the real JavaScript language so they are able to identify it and use it later as they advance within this platform.

Below are other options to work with text-based coding in this last phase of the BEAT schema

- [CodaKid](https://codakid.com)
- [BitsBox](https://bitsbox.com)
- [Khan Academy](https://khanacademy.org)

These are great tools to wrap up this coding teaching schema for early learners. I am sure there will be many more to come as time goes by.

This last phase of the BEAT schema offers the opportunity to encourage students to continue exploring the programming world either if they are becoming coders or not. It is well known that coding empowers a set of skills useful for any field and jobs in the XXI century. This is the phase where students can start using their knowledge to create, for example, a simple app or a basic website. The main goal of an educator using the BEAT method is to have students develop computational and logical thinking and higher problem solving skills by building up from simple instructions with diverse tech tools. (Fifth and Sixth levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy).

As stated before, any adult without coding experience can follow this schema to learn the basic of coding in a timely fashion and “beat” up code illiteracy.



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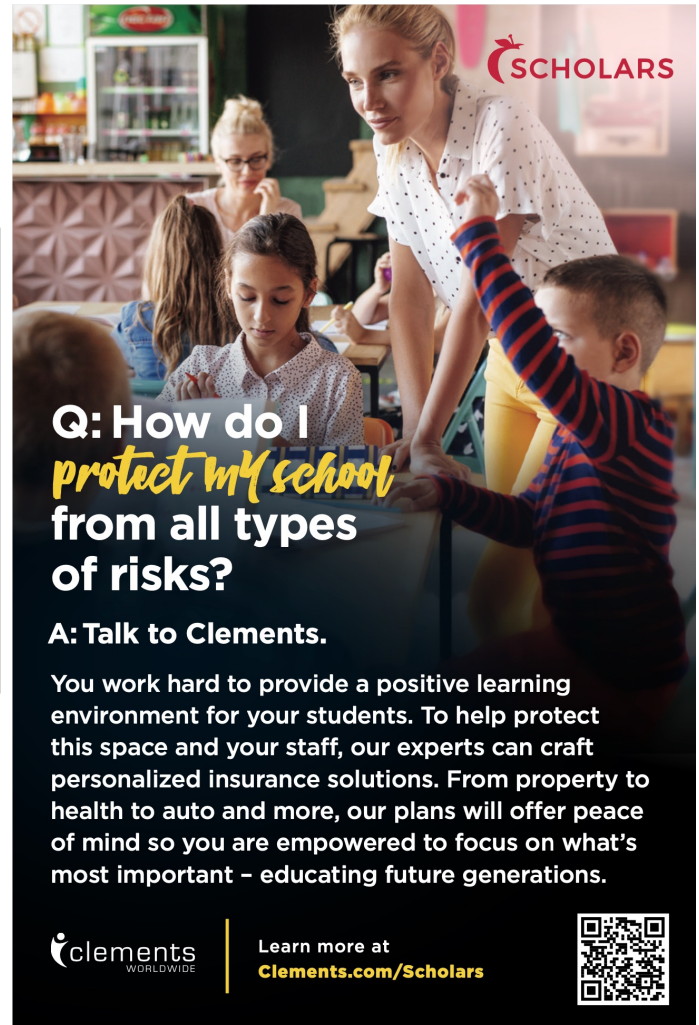
Note: Tech is evolving by the day, therefore the tools mentioned here are just suggestions. Educators using this model are free to include new resources as they come up and adapt The BEAT SCHEMA accordingly.

Kindergarten	First Grade	Second Grade
Bee-Bots	Scratch Jr.	Scratch
Botley	Code.org	Tynker
Code&Go Robot Mouse	Kodable	Codespark
Scratch Jr and similar	Daisy The Dinosaur	Hopscotch
	Scratch and similar	Lego Wedo
		CodeCombat
Suggested Teaching Focus:	Suggested Teaching Focus:	Suggested Teaching Focus:
Directionality, sequencing, estimation, problem-solving.	Computational Thinking, Collaboration, Computing Practice and Programming.	Game Programming and Design, Robotics Programming, breaking down problems into smaller parts, and real-world applications

The chart above along with the BEAT model will be beneficial for learners to go through a paced and steady progression to build a solid foundation in coding for K-2 students.

References,


Robert J. Marzano, Barbara B. Gaddy, Ceri Dean (2000) *What Works In Classroom Instruction*. Retrieved from http://www.pecworks.org/peec/peec_research/I01795EFA.3/Marzano%20What_Works.pdf


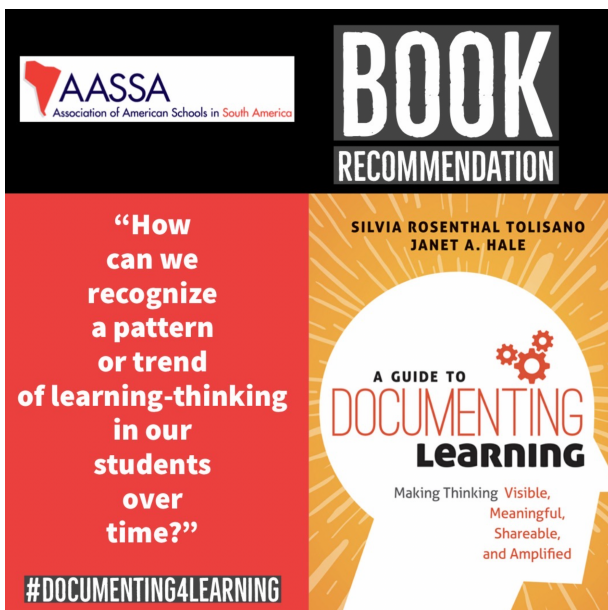


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Storytelling is an important part of the CHANGE PROCESS and deserves ongoing attention. Stories that paint a picture of the future of learning help audiences recognize the need for school change and celebrate the evidence of progress toward shared goals.

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Foreword by Ken Kay

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IFMA'S ESSENTIALS OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT (FM) WORKSHOP

Hosted at The International School of Port of Spain (ISPS)

Facility Management Training at ISPS

Written by: Aykean Matthews MBA, CFM, FMP –
Facilities Director ISPS & CO-Instructor



The International School of Port of Spain (ISPS) was pleased to host an AASSA Regional Institute which focused on a critical aspect of school operations - facility management. The International Facility Management Association (IFMA) defines facility



management as" a profession that encompasses multiple disciplines to ensure functionality of the built environment by integrating people, place, process and technology." As Facility Management practitioners we are charged with the responsibility of supporting the delivery of our school's mission and vision, which includes creating a safe and healthy environment for our educators and learners. IFMA's Essentials of FM Workshop helped participants from schools located in Brasil and Panama become more equipped with best practices in the field, during this 3-day Workshop which focused on:



- Introduction to Facility Management
- Operations & Maintenance
- Work Management in Facilities

Participants also toured the International School of Port of Spain and the island's famous Angostura Limited manufacturing facility where they got a glimpse into the history, operations and manufacturing process of their brands. My fellow Co-instructors Giselle Holder - Director of Acuitas Caribbean Ltd and Edward Kacal - CEO of Servus Ltd, along with the participants shared there challenges and experiences as we all seek to continuously improve our operations.

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"Thank you so much, everybody, for all your support and for the huge amount of amazing experience shared during the FM workshop! I really enjoyed everything a lot and, for sure, I'll recommend it to my fellows of FM in Brazil!!" Leonardo Lima - Escola Americana do Rio de Janeiro



Interested in hosting the Facility Management workshop in 2020? Please contact Dereck Rhoads, ASSA Executive Director at dereckrhoads@aassa.com or Aykean Matthews at amatthews@isps.edu.tt.

Cayman International School: Writers' Workshop & Project Based Learning

Cayman International School (CIS) was honored to host the dynamic professional development to support the writing instruction, using evidence-based effective strategies. The focus of the training was to deepen the teachers' understanding and implementation of the Writers' Workshop Teachers' College Units of Study. The implementation supports an inquiry approach to the writing mini-lessons and allows for individualized student conferencing and strategy groups.

To model this approach, our presenter, Natashya Hays, conducted lab sites in three classes with students, while grade level teams of teachers observed. The Natashya presented a 10-minute mini-lesson to the students using an inquiry approach to engage the students. Most of the workshop time was devoted to students' writing their narratives. This provided opportunity for individualized conferencing based on the student need. In addition, teachers observed Natashya meeting with a strategy group on one specific skill. While conferring with students, Natashya would pull teachers aside and debrief the instructional need for the class. The end of each workshop model concluded with a share out, whereas students reflected on how they improved their story that day. These sessions were very powerful to see the workshop model in action with students of all abilities and grade levels. This concrete observations drove the content and discussion for the remainder of the professional development.

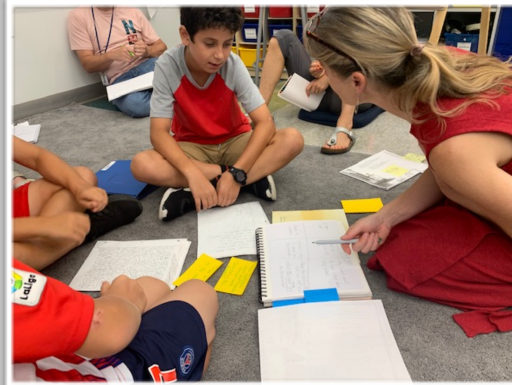
These lab site lessons, were conducted in a 1st grade, 3rd grade and 4th grade classes, allowing teachers to observe different strategies with different age groups.

The afternoon session was dedicated to analyzing the workshop model and deconstructing the mini-lessons. In grade level teams, teachers analyzed the upcoming Units of Study for the writing genres and developed and prioritized the mini-lessons for the new writing genre.

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On the second day, Natashya Hays provided several sessions for supporting educator roles. One hour focused on literacy coaching in the classroom to support the ongoing work of implementing the units of study. Natashya also provided a session and individualized presentation for learning support teachers. In this session, she addressed specific concerns on how to support students with different learning needs, even when the student may not receive learning support services daily. Strategies to scaffold the lesson, document progress and resources were provided to teachers.

Afternoon sessions included analyzing student writing rubric results to best meet the instructional needs of the students and writing across the content areas for secondary level teachers.



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Having Hard Conversations with Jennifer Abrams

Pan American School of Porto Alegre, Brazil
By Kristen Moreland

At the end of September, The Pan American School of Porto Alegre, Brazil, welcomed Jennifer Abrams, an educational consultant from Palo Alto, California, to lead workshops with our entire community about the importance of 'Having Hard Conversations.'



Jennifer's first session was open to our parents, and we had a full house! Forty-two members of our parent community came to be part of the workshop entitled "Finding Your Voice Around What Matters." Parents reviewed the key skills around having humane, growth-producing conversations, in order to be more effective communicators. This session was very well received, and many parents left asking for more!

Following this session, Jennifer consulted with the senior leadership team, and then delivered a 'keynote' address to our teachers.

On Friday, we welcomed guests from Bahia, São Paulo, Colombia and Chile for a morning workshop on "Emotional Intelligence: Being More Allocentric." This session taught us about how to be more 'other focused,' instead of always putting ourselves first. Understanding where someone else

is coming from is key to communication and understanding.

Friday afternoon, our external guests joined our teachers and teaching assistants for a workshop on "Having Hard Conversations" Jennifer provided us with tools and a framework for how to talk to someone about a difficult situation, and provided us time to practice.

Saturday, was a full day workshop called "Swimming in the Deep End." This session helped participants build a skill set of effective decision messaging capabilities, 'resistance management' communication strategies and 'stress tolerance.' It was a day of really looking inward at who we are and how others might perceive us, filled with much laughter and community building.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to welcome such an excellent facilitator into our school to guide us through deepening our knowledge and understanding of such an important and timely topic. We hope to see Jennifer back in the AASSA region again soon!



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Venezuelan and North American Schools (VANAS) Teachers Conference 2019

By Brian Horvath

The Colegio Internacional de Caracas is proud to have hosted the Venezuelan and North American Schools (VANAS) Teachers Conference from November 14-15, 2019. our primary sponsor, the Association of American Schools in South America.



This year, schools from across Venezuela joined together to offer 30 different sessions of teacher-led professional development across a wide range of topics, from instruction and leadership to post-capitalism and cognitive therapy. Additionally, a pre-



conference and extended sessions time with keynotes



provided opportunities uncommon to schools in the country.

In addition to formal presentations, teachers had time for good food, collegiality across grade levels and disciplines. The VANAS event was a great way to celebrate the efforts of educators in this region.



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GEORGE COUROS
INNOVATIVE TEACHING,
LEARNING, AND LEADERSHIP
CONSULTANT AND AUTHOR



JOHN HATTIE
PROFESSOR
AND AUTHOR



CINDY MOSS, PhD
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