

**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

FOR

**INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL EASTERN
SEABOARD**

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Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

The International School Eastern Seaboard (ISE) is an international, non-boarding, non-sectarian, American curriculum, proprietary school teaching in English to students, presently numbering 287, from PreK3 through grade 12. It is located within a golf course and housing complex near Chonburi, Thailand. The school was founded in 1994 and was opened to serve the students living in the Eastern Seaboard Industrial Region (ESIR). The school is licensed and operated by ISE Ltd, a registered Thai company, and is owned by the Burapha Golf Company, who is the developer of the Eastern Seaboard Burapha golf and housing property, and Northbridge Communities, Ltd., a Southeast Asia housing and international school developer.

Governance: The Board consists of representatives of the shareholders in the company that owns the school and holds the financial responsibility for the school's operations, buildings and facilities. The Board reviews programming, initiates and approves policy, and oversees the fiscal management of the school. The Board has assigned the CFO and the Superintendent to oversee the financial and educational direction of the school. The Board meets annually and as necessary.

Administration: Although the school has a history of rapid turnovers in administration (new superintendents in 2000, 2002, 2003), the current administration has been very stable in the past four years. The Superintendent, who also serves as the High School Principal, was appointed in 2006. The Elementary Principal and the Secondary School Coordinator were both appointed in 2007.

Enrollment and Demographics: The enrollment currently stands at 287. The number of students has fluctuated in the last five years between 409 in 2008 to 287 in December 2010. The opening of new international schools, especially a Japanese school in Sriracha, has impacted the enrollment of new students. Other important factors are the economic recession and the political unrest last year which deterred some companies from moving families to Thailand.

All of the ISE students live within the Eastern Seaboard Industrial Region (ESIR). A change in ESIR expatriate ethnicity has greatly impacted ISE. There is a significant downturn in the enrollment of North American, European and Australian expatriates and a proliferation of Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese students. In 2008, 106 students (28% of the student body) lived in the residential area at Burapha Golf Course and in 2010 approximately 15% of the students reside in the golf course area.

As of November 2011, the largest groups of students are from the following countries: Thailand (31%), Korea (23%), Japan (11%), America (11%), Germany (3%) and Taiwan (3%). This has impacted the languages taught and especially the ESL program. ISE students represent 21 countries with more than two thirds of the students coming from Asian countries. Currently, only 15% of the students come from countries where English is the native language. English as a Second Language (ESL) services are provided in grades two through ten. These services are offered at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels. ISE currently has 28% of students in grades 2-10 enrolled in ESL classes.

The annual enrolling and withdrawal of students has been an issue related to the change in employment of their parents. The annual withdrawal rate of students has averaged 20% with the largest total of 130 students leaving in 2008-09. The school enrolls an average of 110 students each year. The average length of stay for a current ISE Asian student is 3-5 years and a North American or European student is 2-3 years.

Facility: The school provides a total of 32 classrooms, four computer labs, three science laboratories, two libraries, an early childhood center, two gymnasias, locker rooms, a music center with practice rooms, and a soccer field and the ability to house a maximum of 550 students. These facilities are divided between two complexes. The Elementary Complex is composed of six-single story air-conditioned buildings and the Middle School and High School Complex is a three-story air conditioned building. The swimming pool, tennis courts and driving range are located nearby at the Burapha Golf Course.

Faculty: Currently, 35 teachers, three administrators, and a librarian are employed at ISE. Of the 39 faculty, 46.2% are recruited and 53.8% are locally hired. There are 19 (48.7%) female and 20 (51.3%)

male faculty members. ISE teachers represent 10 countries: 19 American, 4 British, 4 Canadian, 4 Thai, 2 Australian, 1 Greek, 1 Italian, 1 Filipino, 1 Japanese and 1 Korean. The faculty are experienced and well qualified in their instructional areas with 44% having a Bachelor's Degree, 51% a Masters Degree and 5% have earned the Doctorate Degree. The average teacher turnover has been 20.4% from 2005-2010 with it varying from 7.5% to 37.2%. The largest turnover occurred in 2008-09 which combined turnover with a significant drop in student enrollment.

Support Staff: In December, 2009, a survey was conducted and revealed that the support staff is primarily female with ages ranging from 20-40 years. Over half have worked at ISE for at least 7 years. Bachelor's degrees are held by 40% of the support staff and 15% hold Mater's degrees. Teacher assistants make up 30% of the support staff.

Student Achievement Data: It would be appropriate to quote the analysis of student data presented in the 2005 WASC report, "While there were charts of student results, any analysis, leading to program or trend conclusions, would be difficult. Any student data included is definitely skewed by the change in demographics, and no conclusions about student growth/curriculum development could be drawn from it." It was of note that the Self Study reported that many of their students take the PSAT and SAT exams but no analysis was provided.

Curriculum: ISE has pre-school to grade 12 standards and benchmarks for all subject areas. These standards are aligned with U.S. nationally recognized associations (e.g., Math standards are from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics [NCTM]; Social Studies standards are from the American Education Reaches Out [AERO]). ISE completed a revision of the curriculum cycle, the development of curriculum guidelines, and the creation of Curriculum Council to oversee the process. ISE is now in the process of collaboratively developing units of study that are aligned with the curriculum cycle.

Chapter II: Progress Report

Briefly comment on the school's major changes and follow-up process since the last self-study.

Beginning its affiliation with WASC since 1997, ISE completed the most recent 2011 self-study and visitation involving as many stakeholders as possible. The self-study provided the school an opportunity to review and update its Mission, Philosophy and Expected School-wide Learning Results. Focus groups studied the school's programs and identified areas of strength as well as areas for growth and improvement. These were prioritized to focus on critical growth needs, which became the basis of the school's action plan.

Since the last accreditation visitation, there have been many significant changes in school operations:

- Dr. Robert Brewitt was appointed Superintendent beginning in November, 2006. In 2007, Heather Naro was appointed as Elementary Principal and Andrew McDermid was appointed as the Secondary School Coordinator.
- Improvements have been made in both internal and external communications. Internally, every Monday starts with a "Monday Morning Meeting" which is a time for school administration to disseminate information and for faculty to make announcements. Every Wednesday school ends early allowing time within the day for collaborative groups to meet to achieve different purposes. External communication with parents has improved with enhanced use of electronic means. This includes the use of an email system with families as well as students, electronic report cards, and a monthly newsletter. In addition, ISE has revised the Parent/Student Handbooks and has developed a Program of Studies Book for MS and HS (note: the ES Program of Studies is within the Parent/Student Handbook).
- Improvements have been made to support students with learning needs. In the areas of English as a Second Language, program improvements were made by increased staffing, new materials and better intake procedures. This continues to be a goal for the school. ISE has revamped the Child Study

Team procedures and reports for addressing individual student needs. Finally, some progress has been made toward creating support for students with learning disabilities. The reading resource teacher who joined ISE this year has made improvements in many ways, including: working with ESL students specifically in reading (with the ESL teacher focusing on writing); promoting the love of reading across the school; and acting as a resource for teachers, especially in the area of leveled books. ISE recognizes that although the admissions policy does not allow for the admittance of students with special learning needs, the reality is that there are students who are identified with issues after starting at ISE. ISE has hired a Learning Needs teacher for the 2011-2012 school year to service these students with mild learning needs.

- A staff evaluation system has begun using a goal setting design. This includes formal observations every year. Additionally, administrators regularly conduct classroom walk-throughs. At the SS level, teachers submit unit and/or course assessments as an additional method of accountability.
- Assessment has been a focus for the school. ISE has developed a new ES report card and reporting system. The school has changed the parent conferences to include student-led conferences in the elementary school and parent/student/teacher conferences in the secondary school. ISE has implemented an all-school 6+1 Writing Traits (using a standard rubric), the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA2) in grades kindergarten to 5, and the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) in grades 3 to 8. A kindergarten to grade 5 checklist for the ESLRs has been created to use with projects and portfolios. Faculty members have begun to engage in professional development in both the development of quality assessments and using assessment results to guide instruction.
- Professional development and collaboration at ISE has improved. Although every Wednesday afternoon early release time has been in the ISE schedule since the 1990s, the use of this time has changed. With the advent of the Monday Morning Meeting time, this time on Wednesdays is now devoted to professional learning, collaborating about curriculum and/or unit planning, calibrating scoring of student assessments, and/or analyzing student results. ISE has developed an annual program for teachers to meet in grade level and subject area groups. The school has renewed the Professional Development program and created a Professional Growth manual.

Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.

The school’s administrative team has monitored the accomplishments of its action plans on an annual basis. In the spring of the year, administration determines the action groups that are needed for the following year. These action groups are based on school initiatives, many of which are based on WASC recommendations. In the spring administration analyzes progress that has been made in that year’s initiatives; this information is also used to determine action groups necessary for the following year. Progress of these initiatives is noted in the annual report submitted to WASC.

There were seven critical areas of follow-up determined by the 2005 Committee. The Mid-term Committee in 2008 stated: “The Visiting Committee believes that that school has made significant progress in completing the Schoolwide Critical Areas for follow-up... There was an obvious and well-deserved pride in all of the changes that have taken place.” The description below each recommendation highlight ways each area of follow-up has been addressed.

1. *“Because of the school’s changing demographics and the need to further clarify the school’s identify and purpose, it is recommended that the school articulate a vision that generates und understanding and support throughout the entire school community as to what the school intends to become. This vision should also consider program development in new areas of focus (e.g., IB, Middle School Philosophy and Practices, Foreign Language, Fourth Quarter ESL Immersion Academy for new students). The value of the vision is to: a) establish educational identify in the surrounding community to reinforce support among existing members of the school and also to be attractive to potential members and b) articulate a pro-active direction for the school that reduces reactionary responses and signals directions that the school fully intends to pursue and also*

sustain.”

In 2006, ISE adopted the following vision: *A caring community dedicated to academic rigor.* Along with the vision, the school adopted mission and philosophy statements. In 2009, the vision, mission, and philosophy statements were revised (as were the ESLRs). The new vision reads: *A caring international community dedicated to student success.* Although the vision has been revised to be more reflective of the current demographics of the school, there is not yet a common understanding in the community of the vision and how programs align to the vision.

2. *“It is recommended that the school consider ways to improve overall communications within and outside the school to ensure that all members of the school community are appropriately informed of opportunities, decisions and progress. In order to improve communication between the Board of Directors and the school community, it is recommended that the Board of Directors post ‘minutes’ of all meetings and also provides information about the financial plan that the Board of Directors intends to pursue to enhance the overall educational quality of the school.”*

Internal communication has been increased with an electronic daily bulletin and Monday morning meetings (a time devoted to information sharing) as well as an ES weekly circular (containing upcoming events, activities). External communication has been increased with the implementation of an email communication system between the school and parents. Teachers have set up website, wikis, and/or blogs to pass information to the parents; these are easily accessible from the ISE website. Biannual parent/student/teacher conferences are held to inform parents about their child’s progress and program developments. Board decisions are sent to the community by the Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer through a monthly newsletter that is disseminated electronically to all families.

3. *“Since ESL has become a major issue for the school, it is recommended that the school review all policies, procedures, program structures, evaluation criteria for determining program effectiveness, assessment instruments and measurements of student progress, resources, support, teacher expectations, and practices that impact the successful education of ESL students at the school and also the successful education of the non-ESL students in the regular classrooms (with the mainstreamed ESL students). Prompt attention should be given to appropriate placement of new ESL students in the final quarter.”*

All admissions policies and assessment procedures have been reviewed and, where necessary, revised by the administration and faculty; changes were implemented in 2007. Assessment of ESL students has also been improved. In the ES there is evidence of ESL and classroom teachers collaboratively using the results of beginning-of-year and end-of-year reading and writing data; this appears to be beginning in the SS. ESL teachers feel the program is well resourced and that they are able to act as a resource for all faculty members. The ESL program at the ES uses a combination of push-in and pull-out models that is flexible to meet the needs of the students as they arise; the SS focuses on a pull-out model. The Visiting Committee has noticed that although many significant positive changes related to ESL have occurred since the last self-study, this area remains a work in progress. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE strive to shift the culture from one of ‘the ESL teacher servicing students’ to one of ‘ESL students are the responsibility of all teachers.’

4. *“The Board of Directors and Administration should review staffing needs of the school in correlation with its Vision, programming plans for the future (including IB), changing demographics and needs of ESL students, project enrollment, secondary level administrative leadership/coordination, and essential support needed to ensure an optimum environment for delivery of a quality academic and social/co-curricular program to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all students. The Visiting Team strongly suggests that the Board and Administration revisit and re-evaluate the possibility that large class sizes of second–language students will experience success in a classroom delivering a curriculum based on US Standards and Benchmarks. Therefore, the Board of Directors and Administration should consider lowering the guidelines for maximum student-teacher ratios (particularly in grades 6-12) and strictly*

adhering to these new maximum guidelines, possibly requiring additional staffing when allocations exceed these guidelines.”

Currently, the average number of students per FTE is 7.3. This has remained relatively constant over the past five years, with a range of 7.2 to 8.0. Every spring the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Superintendent estimate enrollment for the next school year. Based on this enrollment figure, the number of teachers is determined. The Visiting Committee does not see this as a lingering issue.

5. *“Develop, adopt, and continue to review a quality curriculum for all subject areas and for all classrooms.”*

Significant work has been done in relation to this recommendation. ISE now has pre-school to grade 12 standards and benchmarks for all subject areas that are aligned with U.S. nationally recognized associations. The curriculum cycle that was established in 2006 has been reviewed and revised. Changes include aligning the cycle with the WASC self-study year and providing adequate time to search for the best resources and current practice to support teachers and students. A Curriculum Council has been established to oversee curriculum development. The Curriculum Council finalized a Curriculum Manual in the 2009-2010 school year. In alignment with the revised cycle, curriculum for Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Visual Arts, and Library have all been revised based on the new procedures. Science, Health, and PE will be focused upon next year. ESL, Modern Language and Technology will be focused upon in the future.

6. *“The Administration should establish a system of instructional leadership and support augmented by annual staff evaluations.”*

A system of instructional leadership and annual staff evaluations began in the 2007-2008 school year. This includes the administrator and teacher agreeing on annual goals that become the focus of evaluation, a formal classroom visit where a checklist of observations is completed discussed with the teacher, and regular classroom walkthroughs.

7. *“The School’s admissions policies should be reviewed to ensure that appropriate services and support are provided by the school for all students who are admitted (e.g., Learning Disabled Students).”*

Admissions policies have been reviewed and students with significant learning disabilities are not admitted. Students who struggle in class are reviewed by a Child Study Team (led by an administrator) and appropriate changes in programs are implemented. In the 2010-2011 school year, a reading resource specialist was employed to work with students who are reading below grade level. ISE has hired a Learning Needs teacher for the 2011-2012 school year to service students with mild learning needs who are already a part of the ISE community. Although the admissions policy is now clearer, ISE recognizes that supporting the needs of diverse learners, especially ESL students, remains a challenge. The 2008 Mid-term Visiting Committee made two additional recommendations. The 2011 Visiting Committee believes that progress has been made to address both of these areas.

1. *“The Visiting Committee supports the decision to adopt the IB. Students and faculty believe that this has proved ‘value added’ in terms of an increase in the rigor of the program and in terms of the PR value of how the school is perceived by outside potential stakeholders. The Visiting Committee recommends that the school further dedicate itself to supporting the students and teachers in their IB work.”*

The IB Program at ISE provides a rigorous academic framework that embraces all students in grades 11 and 12. The IB program is being supported with an experienced IB Coordinator plus experienced IB teachers. Also, the school has upgraded classroom equipment, library services and IT facilities to support the IB program. The school has purchased new materials for the science labs, maintains electronic databases in the library, and supports three computer labs in the secondary school (one is for graphic arts). Electronic communication with each family and some teachers are used regularly. Although the

timetable has been changed several times since 2008, scheduling continues to play a major role in student class selection, and this is partly due to the small student population. Higher level (HL) courses are at times combined with Standard level (SL); it has been observed that teachers are appropriately differentiating their instruction in these classrooms to accommodate student learning and the varying course requirements.

An area of growth for the IB program is to create a Virtual School platform at ISE. If there is ever to be an emergency in the Thailand region, students may need to continue their studies online. Although IB teachers regularly use emails, blogs and wikis with students, it is the strong recommendation of the Visiting Committee that ISE develop a platform for Virtual School online instruction (e.g., Blackboard) when school cannot be held on campus.

Another area of growth for ISE is to consistently achieve IB average scores that are above the world average. Along with being a highly inclusive IB program for students, maintaining high academic scores in the IB can be an effective way to market the school within in a competitive educational community.

2. *“In light of the turnover of staff at international schools, the Visiting Committee recommends that the school consider referencing and indexing all of its curricular documents and processes with previous editions or outside sources. For example, the standards for chemistry, listed in the curriculum documents, could be tied to the ‘NSTA standards considered by the science team in 2006, and regularly updated as NSTA updates their standards.’ This will give further strength to the curricular documents and decisions made regarding what is taught and appropriate for each grade level.”*

The curriculum process at ISE now includes standards that guide their program. Learner outcomes have been embedded in curriculum documents. During the 2010-2011 school year, unit plans are being developed in alignment with the curriculum cycle to give more support to teachers as they implement ISE curriculum. ISE continues to recognize this as an area that requires further intention. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE explore electronic means to support the warehousing of curriculum documents and the developing of unit plans.

Chapter III: Self-Study Process

Comment on the school’s self-study process with respect to the parameters and accuracy:

ISE’s self-study has involved a schoolwide collaboration to develop areas of concern and action plans. ISE used a multi-group approach to the self-study. Initially, focus groups were formed around the sections of the report. Upon completion of initial findings, faculty members were mixed into new focus groups to respond to the drafts and make revisions. Finally, faculty members were mixed yet again to give input into the drafting of the action plans. All faculty and administrators were involved. Input from parents and students had been solicited through surveys. Parents were also involved via representatives on focus groups. Although the parameters of the self-study process were followed and the report was accurate, the Visiting Committee notes that several sections of the report were very brief. The Committee encourages the school to include more analysis of evidence and greater detail in future reports.

The involvement and collaboration of school and community members in the self-study:

ISE has demonstrated its commitment to completing a self-study using the WASC self-study criteria. The self-study process has resulted in the involvement of many stakeholders, and the administrators and committee leaders have provided direction and guidance to the self-study process. The various committees, including the Vision Committee, the Vision, Mission, Philosophy Committee, and the ESLR Committee, included students, parents, faculty, and administration. ISE has used at a variety of sources including surveys, standardized test data, performance, teacher and committee feedback, and other records. Throughout the self-study process, ISE has endeavored to present a general framework of the school’s program.

The clarification of the school's purpose and expected school-wide learning results:

The school has defined its purpose through the vision statement, mission statement, philosophy and ESLRs. A committee was formed in 2009-10 school year to review and revise the school's vision, mission, philosophy, and another committee was formed to review and revise the school's ESLRs. These revisions are steps to move the school forward to meet the education needs of students. The Visiting Committee observed that this is a strength within the school and within the self-study process and the ESLRs have been embraced by the community.

The assessment of the actual student program and its impact on student learning with respect to the criteria and the ESLRs:

The Visiting Committee notes that this is an area where capacity building has begun but actual analysis has been limited. In the Fall of 2011, the school created a data team to begin a schoolwide assessment policy. External test results indicate a continuing need to focus on increasing students' academic achievement in specific areas due to an increase in ESL students in the student population. The next step also includes a sustained focus upon using the students' assessment results to routinely direct and enhance learning in the classroom.

The development of a Schoolwide Action Plan that integrates subject area program and support plans to address identified growth needs:

The school's administrative team annually develops a schoolwide action plan based on subject area program needs as well as recommendations that have emerged from WASC. Accomplishment of these action plans are monitored on an annual basis. In the spring of the year, administration determines the action groups that are needed for the following year. These action groups are based on the areas in the schoolwide action plan. In the spring, administration analyzes progress that has been made in that year's initiatives; this information is also used to determine action groups necessary for the following year. Progress of these initiatives is noted in the annual report submitted to WASC. The Visiting Committee encourages the administration to develop long-range action plans (e.g., five years) on which to base yearly action plans.

Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program

CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING

A1. School Purpose Criterion

To what extent has the school established a clear statement of purpose that reflect the beliefs and philosophy of the institution?

To what extent is the purpose defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?

ISE's mission, which identifies the purpose of the school, and the school's Philosophy reflected in the ESLRs, is the result of the rewording of the mission that took place in 2010. The vision is "a caring international community dedicated to student success." This rewording occurred in response to the changing nature of the demographics of ISE.

ISE's mission is evident throughout all aspects of the school. The school exists to "prepare an adaptable international student body for lifelong learning by emphasizing higher level thinking skills, successful communication techniques, and global responsibilities within a nurturing and stimulating environment." The Vision and Mission Statement are prominently displayed in areas throughout the school and in school related publications. Also, the philosophy for learning is also available on the school's website. The process of renewing, developing and expanding these foundational documents involved a Mission and Philosophy Committee which included representatives from many constituent groups within school community.

Along with the identification of ISE’s mission and philosophy statement, another committee was formed to review, redraft, and finalize the school’s expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs). This committee was inclusive of students, parents, faculty, and administration. Changes were made to include more “child friendly language”, and they were modified to accommodate the expanding English as a learning language (ELL) student population. Also, changes were made to better reflect “21st century” learning. The ESLRs further define the Vision, Mission, and Philosophy. These core statements are at the center of focus for subsequent activity at the school, and the mission and ESLRs create the basis for decision-making and professional practice. Although the revised ESLRs have a high profile, they have been in place for little more than a year and integration into teaching practice and curriculum is still in the emerging stages. During the visit, the Visiting Committee observed that students, parents, faculty, and administrators all viewed the ESLRs as a strength of the school. It is obvious to the Visiting Committee that the ESLRs are already beginning to be embedded in the program and life of the school and not just a set of statements found in publications. The ESLRs are assessed and reported on in the ES; discussion has begun in this area in the SS.

A2. Governance Criterion

To what extent does the governing authority adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school?

To what extent does the governing authority delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?

To what extent does the governing authority monitor results?

The International School Eastern Seaboard’s Board of Directors consists of representatives of the shareholders in ISE Ltd. which owns the school. ISE Ltd. oversees the school’s financial matters, including the school’s operations, buildings, and facilities. The Board has assigned Khun Charlie Chuvapitak and Dr. Robert Brewitt to facilitate the financial and educational direction of the school. The Board meets annually concerning financial matters. No procedure or policy is in place regarding the selection composition and specific duties of the governing body. Because the Board does not have any educational responsibilities, there is no pre-training of potential Board members in educational areas.

For the relationship of policies, the Board of Directors gives authority to the school administration on all educational decisions concerning professional development, school resources, and other educational items. Policy initiatives are the responsibility of the school administration, and the Board is kept informed.

The ISE School Policy Manual gives direction for the running of the school. However, there are no clearly stated evaluation procedures for the administration of the school. Moreover, there is no process for evaluating the effectiveness of the governing body of the school, the ISE Board of Directors. ISE should consider processes that will allow for parents and faculty to give feedback to administrators. This would improve accountability and facilitate greater communication amongst community members.

Faculty do not have clarity about members who are on the Board and the role of the Board in making financial decisions. The Visiting Committee recommends a greater degree of transparency in financial decision-making that support educational programs at ISE.

A3. School Leadership Criterion

To what extent does the school leadership make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent does the school leadership empower the staff?

To what extent does the school leadership encourage commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning?

ISE has a leadership configuration with defined responsibilities and relationships among administrators and teacher leaders, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook. The schoolwide Faculty is updated annually, and staff members are able to give feedback and ask questions related to aspects in the handbook. Communicating the organizational design is an on-going task to ensure that all members of the

community understand decision-making responsibilities, duties and expectations of each member within the organization.

Throughout the school year, staff members are empowered to be members of various committees to help lead the school forward. New committees are formed based on annual school goals and professional development initiatives. This is evidenced by a list of newly established committees that is regularly updated. Faculty members can volunteer or be assigned leadership roles as needed; as stated in the self study, "Different staff is assigned leadership roles at various times". Committees facilitate various schoolwide activities such as Book Week, International Day, Friendship Week, Thai Studies trips etc, and this ensures a shared responsibility and accountability of staff. During the visit, the Visiting Committee has observed that teachers feel that the committee structure allows them to give input be in on decision-making and have 'voice.' At the same time, it is noted that some of the committee work can appear to generate an excessive workload for teachers that is not always helpful. Additionally, teachers noted a desire for greater influence in decision-making. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE establish procedures to prioritize and coordinate the work of the many committees that may take place simultaneously throughout the year and to solicit faculty input into decision-making.

The commitment to academic success is evident in professional development decisions. Although every Wednesday afternoon early release has been in the ISE schedule for many years, the use of this time has changed. With the advent of the Monday Morning Meeting time, this time on Wednesdays is now devoted to professional learning, collaborating about curriculum and/or unit planning, calibrating scoring of student assessments, and/or analyzing student results.

Although some attention is given at ISE to cross-divisional collaboration to enhance student learning, ISE should strive to find more opportunities for these conversations. Additionally, although ISE has begun a curriculum planning process which enables the school to ensure increased levels of consistency in the identification of the learning outcomes and delivery of the educational program, this remains a key area for continued growth.

The Visiting Committee recognizes that the Superintendent and Elementary Principal are significant strengths of the school. During the focus group discussion, faculty commented on the fact that administrators play a very important role, know their faculty and the subject areas well, and are incredibly supportive of educational programs and best practices. It is the recommendation of the Visiting Committee that structures and procedures be developed to capture the work of the administrators in the eventuality that one or both depart ISE.

A4. Staff Criterion

To what extent are the school leadership and staff qualified for their assigned responsibilities?

To what extent are the school leadership and staff committed to the school's purpose?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning?

ISE administrators, faculty, and staff are highly qualified for the positions that they hold. All teachers have attained a teaching credential from their home country, and approximately half hold advanced degrees. Over half the teachers have 15 or more years of teaching experience, and 51% of current ISE faculty hold an advanced bachelor's degree or higher. They are committed to the Mission and Philosophy of the school as well as passionate about their students, their subjects and their work as demonstrated through their involvement in school committees, teams, and other commitments. The school brings new faculty into the community through a well designed orientation process that promotes ownership of the ISE Vision, Mission, Philosophy and the ESLRs as well as the academic curriculum. The self-study recognized that recruiting and retaining an excellent teaching faculty and staff takes time and effort. The Visiting Committee has been impressed with the caliber and professionalism of administrators, faculty, and staff. They operate as a community and it is obvious that there is genuine care for all community members. We appreciate the welcome and openness they expressed towards us.

ISE has a sound professional development network that supports student learning needs at the school. These professional development opportunities promote a wide range of opportunities for growth and development that are delivered at the school, within the EARCOS region, and at international conferences. They are systematically aligned with the priorities of the school and the needs of the faculty and staff members.

These initiatives are tied to professional development and are available to teachers with the approval of the superintendent. Teachers and administrators recognize the intentional linking of professional development offerings to identified teacher and school needs that impact student learning. Employees have access to 20,000 Baht per year for professional development. The benefit may accrue up to a maximum of 80,000 Baht. Teachers who attend professional development training are required to provide a short in-service during the Teachers-Teaching-Teachers in-service days. Thus, all faculty members have the opportunity to gain from peer professional development opportunities.

The Elementary School Principal and the Superintendent meet with every teacher at the beginning of the school year to help set professional goals. This goal-setting procedure is part of the evaluation process as well as internal professional development. Also, teachers are formally observed once a year with a post conference meeting. In addition, there are 'learning walks' that are conducted throughout the year. These walk-throughs allow teachers an opportunity to reflect upon their classroom practices and improve their teaching skills. While ISE has begun to establish supervision and evaluation procedures, there needs to be a greater degree of consistency between the divisions. These procedures should align with best practices in the field of teacher supervision.

Administrators recognize that it is important to link professional development offerings with the specific needs of professionals to better promote and support student learning. With professional development, the school has a foundation in place for the school to focus on the link between teacher evaluation, accountability, and the value of professional development. The Visiting Committee commends ISE for the robust professional development program on offer to faculty. We have learned from faculty that this is one of the reasons members remain at ISE for a longer period of time. To further enhance the professional development program, the Visiting Committee recommends that ISE determine ways to build internal capacity (e.g., teacher leaders, mentor teachers) to support professional learning in key areas (e.g., assessment, unit planning).

A5. School Environment Criterion

To what extent does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose?

To what extent is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student?

ISE has put in place strategies and systems to promote a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment for its students and faculty. Safety is paramount in the daily operations of the school with systems in place for security both on campus and in the bus routes as well as procedures for fire drills and crisis response. CCTV security cameras are used throughout hallways on campus. Bus monitors are on each van to help

supervise students. The school employs security guards that patrol the campus 24 hours a day. Also, all playground equipment is well maintained for safety, and there is adequate adult supervision for students during recess and lunches. Also, security passes are required for all campus visitors.

Support for health and wellness is evident in the school nurse, but no school counselor is available to students to help with stress management, other wellness options, and college counseling. Instead of a counselor, there is a social/emotional committee in place to encourage friendship and mutual support to students, and the Superintendent helps facilitate college counseling at the school. The school recognizes that this is not an ideal situation, but with current enrollment numbers it may not be justifiable to hire a new counselor at this time. ISE is being creative in how to best meet the social/emotional needs of students.

The school culture reflects the trust, caring and respect for differences inherent in the philosophy of the ISE community. There is an effort to making the school a welcoming place for community members through formal and informal means such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Thai assemblies, International Day, and Family Fun Day. Students see this as a strength of the school and faculty recognize that the school acts as a 'magnet' for the community.

A6. Reporting Student Progress Criterion

To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the school's expected schoolwide learning results?

To what extent does the school leadership and staff report student progress to the rest of the school community?

As shared in the self-study, student academic progress at ISE is reported at appropriate intervals to students and parents. Reports include traditional paper report cards and progress reports as well as parent-teacher and student-led conferences. In the elementary school, parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences is reported as 100%, and parent surveys reveal satisfaction with conferences. Reports are also generated through points of internal and external student achievement. These reports are not limited to but include: MAP, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and International Baccalaureate (IB) examination results.

When students experience lower academic progress, the elementary school maintains a Child Study Team to determine ways to help individualized plans to help specific students improve in their learning. In the secondary school, students who demonstrate unsatisfactory academic progress are placed on academic probation, and after-school study sessions are provided.

ISE recognizes that as the ESLRs become more integrated into each curriculum area, a means for assessing and reporting on student development in these areas will become necessary. The ES has included the ESLRs on the report card; additionally student-led conferences report on progress in the ESLRs.

The Visiting Committee notes that there is a lack of alignment of reporting procedures schoolwide. It is recommended that ISE develop a grading/reporting policy to guide schoolwide conversations that ensure grading and reporting is reflective of student learning. Additionally, this policy should be aligned to research-based best practices related to grading and reporting to increase validity and reliability of the reporting process. Current practices should be reviewed, and if necessary revised, in light of the developed schoolwide policy (e.g., SS language policy and the 10% grade increases for speaking English in school).

A7. School Improvement Process Criterion

To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students?

To what extent does the school leadership have school community support and involvement?

To what extent does the school leadership effectively guide the work of the school?

To what extent does the school leadership provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?

ISE facilitates school improvement by offering opportunities for faculty and administration to be actively engaged in continuous school improvement. Also, the parent community is invited to share and collaborate as partners in the process of improving what takes place at school to promote and support student learning.

The Visiting Committee has noted that ISE is responsive to situations that may impact student learning as they arise (e.g., a sudden decline in enrollment; an increase in ESL students). The administration and faculty have demonstrated efforts to align programs and structures through dialogue. Surveys and conversations indicate that faculty are committed to school improvement and are beginning to understand that data and research are used to make decisions and plan for the future of the ISE. The Visiting Committee notes that there is a need for greater transparency related to financial decisions that support student learning as well as long-range plans for the school.

In order to further formalize distributed leadership, the Visiting Committee recommends that administration develop and maintain shared leadership capacity. This would include team leaders as well as heads of department. Leadership training should be provided as needed and team/department budgets should be established to support student learning.

Although student learning and perceptual data was present in the self-study, there was no evidence of using the information to inform the plans of action. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE establish procedures for the regular collection, synthesis, and analysis of perceptual (e.g., annual surveys) and student learning data (e.g., IB scores). This analysis should be used to inform decisions regarding school improvement.

Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning Category

1. ISE has a clearly stated Vision, Mission, Philosophy of Learning, and expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs) that are visible throughout the school culture and provide a unifying element in all aspects of school operations. Students, parents, faculty, and administrators all viewed the ESLRs as a strength of the school. The ESLRs are already beginning to be embedded in the program and life of the school and not just a set of statements found in publications.
2. ISE has faculty and staff that are extremely professional and are of a high caliber. They operate as a community and it is obvious that there is genuine care for all community members.
3. The Superintendent and Elementary Principal are significant strengths of the school. During the focus group discussion, faculty commented on the fact that administrators play a very important role, know their faculty and the subject areas well, and are incredibly supportive of educational programs and best practices.
4. ISE has a robust professional development program on offer to faculty. We have learned from faculty that this is one of the reasons members remain at ISE for a longer period of time.
5. The school culture reflects the trust, caring and respect for differences inherent in the philosophy of the ISE community. There is an effort to making the school a welcoming place for community members through formal and informal means such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Thai assemblies, International Day, and Family Fun Day. Students see this as a strength of the school and faculty recognize that the school acts as a 'magnet' for the community.
6. ISE is responsive to situations that may impact student learning as they arise (e.g., a sudden decline in enrollment; an increase in ESL students). The administration and faculty have demonstrated efforts to align programs and structures through dialogue.

Key Issues for Organization for Student Learning that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

1. Faculty do not have clarity about members who are on the Board and the role of the Board in making financial decisions. A greater degree of transparency in financial decision-making that support educational programs at ISE should be established.
2. Because it was noted that some of the committee work can appear to generate an excessive workload for teachers that is not always helpful, ISE should establish procedures to prioritize and coordinate the work of the many committees that may take place simultaneously throughout the year as well as soliciting teacher input into decision-making.
3. Structures and procedures need to be developed to capture the work of the administrators in the eventuality that one or both depart ISE.
4. To further enhance the professional development program, ISE should determine ways to build internal capacity (e.g., teacher leaders, mentor teachers) to support professional learning in key areas (e.g., assessment, unit planning).
5. To address the lack of alignment of reporting procedures schoolwide, ISE needs to develop a grading/reporting policy to guide schoolwide conversations that ensure grading and reporting is reflective of student learning. Additionally, this policy should be aligned to research-based best practices related to grading and reporting to increase validity and reliability of the reporting process. Current practices should be reviewed, and if necessary revised, in light of the developed schoolwide policy (e.g., language policy in the SS).
6. In order to further formalize distributed leadership, administration should develop and maintain shared leadership capacity. This would include team leaders as well as heads of departments. Leadership training should be provided as needed and team/department budgets should be established to support student learning.
7. ISE needs to establish procedures for the regular collection, synthesis, and analysis of perceptual (e.g., annual surveys) and student learning data (e.g., IB scores). This analysis should be used to inform decisions regarding school improvement.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Self-study findings
- 2009 IB Report
- Focus group interview
- Individual faculty and administrator interviews
- Classroom observations
- Informal discourse
- Handbooks

CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

B1. What Students Learn Criterion

To what extent does the school provide a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) through successful completion of any course of study offered?

Overview of Curriculum

The Curriculum Council is comprised of faculty and administration. During the past two years, the school now provides a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's

purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) through successful completion of any course of study offered. The Curriculum Council is appointed annually by the superintendent, and consists of seven to nine members of the faculty. The responsibilities of the curriculum review teams are as follows:

- Review current research and trends in the discipline
- Review subject area standards
- Disseminate information necessary to successfully carry out the review
- Collaborate to write/revise/renew Pre-K-12 subject area curricula
- Collaborate to adopt educational materials
- Contribute to the implementation of the revised curricula

The Curriculum Council has selected a PreK-12 curriculum. A major effort has been made to revise the school curriculum to better meet the learning needs of the current ISE's student population. Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, Library, Life Skills, Visual Arts, Thai for Thai Curriculum, Thai for Non-Thai Curriculum have been revised during the 2009-2011 school years. The Mathematics curriculum is based on the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards. In Language Arts, the school adopted the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) standards. The Social Studies curriculum follows the standards from the American Education Reaches Out (AERO) program from the United States. The Library and Life Skills Curricula standards were based on Iowa City Community School District (ICCS) standards. In alignment with the revised cycle, curriculum for Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Visual Arts, and Library have all been revised based on the new procedures. Science, Health, and PE will be focused upon next year. ESL, Modern Language and Technology will be focused upon in the future. Curriculum information is available in the offices, conference room and is published on the school's website.

The Unit Planners were introduced to the faculty during the 2009-2010 school year, and they have been well received by teachers. The Unit Planners have provided structures and a format necessary to prepare an instructional unit. The Unit Planners are being used for collaboration between different grade levels to ensure appropriate alignment.

With the majority of the curriculum in place, ISE is working toward aligning the ESLRs with the curricular standards. During classroom visits and meeting with students, it was evident that the students understand the importance of the ESLRs and how the learning results impact their daily school lives.

The Visiting Committee recognizes that ISE has made appropriate progress in the area of curriculum development. The formation of a Curriculum Council has helped to advance this work. Having a standardized curriculum that spans pre-K through 12 sets a solid foundation for the unit planning work that is beginning. The Visiting Committee recommends that continued attention and support be given to the unit planning process.

Graduation Requirements

Twenty- four credits are required at ISE for high school graduation beginning with the students graduating in 2011:

- Four units of English
- Four units of Social Studies
- Four units of Science
- Four units of Mathematics
- Two units of Physical Education
- Two units of Modern Language
- One unit of Fine Arts
- One unit of Technology
- Two units of electives

Successful completion of the following courses are required to graduate

International Baccalaureate

ISE also offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program in grades 11 and 12. The IB program is a comprehensive and rigorous two-year curriculum with external examinations. The program is a specially designed pre-university course of studies that meets the needs of highly-motivated secondary school students. The program is widely recognized and respected by universities throughout the world since its inception in 1968. The IB program clearly enhances the ISE program and provides a foundation for higher education success for the SS students.

B2. How Students Learn Criterion

To what extent does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?

To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results (student learner outcomes)?

The Visiting Committee is impressed with the experience, training and expertise of the faculty. Teachers often share ideas regarding instructional strategies with one another in both structured and informal settings. The ES provides more structured opportunity for this instructional collaboration to occur. The Visiting Committee observed a wide-range of learning strategies used to actively involved students in the learning process.

The school uses ongoing professional development to enhance the curriculum and improve learning and teaching. The staff has a professional development committee in place that is described in the Professional Development Handbook. The teachers are motivated to participate in various professional development courses or workshops.

Teachers use various collaborative strategies to examine curricular design and student work to improve learning and teaching, including demonstrating critical thinking, problem solving, knowledge and application; this is more evident in the ES than SS. Additionally, teachers who have attended courses and/or workshops are required to share their information with colleagues during Teachers-Teaching-Teachers (TTT's) session. The schoolwide TTT's sessions are held twice a year, one in November and the other in May. During these sessions, there are approximately 10-12 workshops available from which teachers can choose.

The Handbook delineates procedures for funding and procedures surrounding the pursuit of professional development opportunities. Specific areas where curriculum and teaching have been enhanced include: IB, Technology, Assessment and Data (including training in MAP), and Reading.

The teachers at ISE strengthen student understanding and achievement of the learning outcomes through the use of a variety of instructional strategies that are selected on the basis of the learning purpose(s) and effectively engage students at a high level of learning. For example, ES teachers use common literacy terms for the 6+1 Writing Traits and have adopted 12 common reading strategies from Reading 44. Students are engaged in a variety of hands on learning activities to develop literacy, communication and collaboration skills. The faculty has been able to implement a wide range of challenging instructional practices through the adoption of quality curriculum resources, such as Investigation Mathematics.

Technology is integrated to help students improve their skills, apply knowledge, develop ideas and create projects. Many teachers have a class blog and/or wiki and the school's website is an interactive site that enhances communication among teachers, parents and students. The ES teachers have systematically integrated technology within the school so that all students develop a wide range of technological skills. There are twenty-four computers in the elementary computer lab and students from grade kindergarten-5 visit the computer labs twice a week. There is a computer integration specialist who works with classroom teachers to integrate technology into the curriculum at the elementary level. Even though there is not a systematic plan to integrate technology in the middle and high school, teachers have access to three computer labs in the secondary school to integrate technology into the classroom.

Student work displayed in hallways and classrooms provides evidence of challenging learning

experiences. Special events including student presentations highlight student achievements. Through student-led conferences twice a year, students determine their areas of strength and areas where they need improvement. Parents, teachers and students are encouraged to act as a team to help assist the child at getting the most out of school.

The school surveyed its students from grades 3 to 12 to gather information on students' learning experiences and their perceptions for the Focus on Learning process. Analysis of the survey data was not included in the self-study. The Visiting Committee has observed limited use of survey results to inform decision-making.

Teachers address various learning styles and student needs through the instructional approaches used. At the elementary level, ESL teachers work collaboratively with classroom teachers to address the needs of ESL students by providing direct language instruction during literacy and supporting the classroom teacher during social studies and science. A reading specialist is on staff and works with individual students as well as small groups. As necessary, students are provided with manipulatives, audio, and visual media in order to provide them with a variety of experiences based on their needs. Guided reading groups are used to support a variety of reading levels in a classroom, and weaker students are given individual review opportunities. If documented during the ES Child Study Team process, student work is modified. At the secondary level, ESL teachers are available to provide support for students in grades 6 to 10.

Students use resources for learning beyond the limits of the textbook such as effective use of collaborative activities, technology, library/media resources and community resources. ISE has both an elementary school and a secondary school library. Four computer labs are available for students to do research and use online material. For fine art subjects, in and outside school band concerts, art festivals, and drama performances are performed. Grade levels or subjects take a number of field trips. The Visiting Committee commends ISE for the professional development opportunities that are available for faculty members. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE focus on ensuring schoolwide alignment of key initiatives related to how students learn, including the use of differentiation and the integration of technology.

B3. How Assessment Is Used Criterion

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results (student learner outcomes)?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?

To what extent are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

Are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?

Students are assessed in a variety of ways with both summative and formative assessments. Assessments tools include tests, end of unit math assessments, projects, schoolwide writing 6+1 Writing Traits prompts, presentations, portfolios, group projects, class work and homework assignments, lab performance, DRA2s, MAP standardized tests, and IB exams. The Visiting Committee has noted that implementation of these assessment practices are further along in the ES than in the SS. It is the recommendation of the Visiting Committee that schoolwide guidelines for assessment be developed.

In the Elementary School, the examination of student work and snapshots of student engagement in learning demonstrates the implementation of a standards-based curriculum in the areas of reading, writing, and language usage. The students set personal learning goals at the first student-led conference that are monitored and re-evaluated at the second student-led conference. Portfolios and student-led conferences provide opportunities for students to comment on their achievements. ES Students have an Assessment Binder that includes assessments based on the curricular standards for each subject area. This includes the DRA2 Scores, 6+1 Traits Writing Rubrics, unit tests in Math and MAP scores. Additionally, ES teachers keep a yearlong portfolio of student's work to share with families. There is evidence that both formative and summative assessments are being used at both the ES and SS, though there is not consistency of practice. More work remains to be done in the area, particularly in the

SS, so that a broader range of formative and summative assessments aligned with learning outcomes, are utilized within all classrooms.

The faculty at ISE has been involved in a number of in-service workshops on assessment and student learning. The all-school workshops have been given during the Wednesday afternoon Professional Development time. Although a number of workshops have been given to faculty on data and assessment, ISE continues to train staff so that they can become data literate and use assessment to drive instruction. Continued efforts are being planned to expand assessment practices throughout the school.

ISE has policies in place regarding course completion, certification, credits, grades, homework, etc. that guide student progression through the program. In both the ES and SS, there are clearly defined procedures related to communicating about progress and homework. In relation to communicating about progress (i.e., report cards, progress reports, and conferences), dates are identified on the calendar for the upcoming year and the purpose of report cards and conferences are clearly articulated. In the SS, a grading scale is published to students and parents. In relation to homework, the purpose has been defined and guidelines are appropriate to the grade of the student. Additionally in the SS, procedures have been defined for High School class placement and graduation requirements (inclusive of both academic units that must be obtained and additional requirements regarding students transferring into ISE and how many courses must be taken each year.) The students' university admissions are recorded.

Student self-assessment is an important part of monitoring student progress over time based on the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) and the curricular objectives. Students and parents receive oral feedback by each teacher on conference days twice a year, and there are comments to help students recognize what is needed to improve their learning. Specific examples of student self-assessment include but are not limited to journal entries in language arts and social studies, oral feedback in math and science, as well as artwork in fine arts.

The Visiting Committee has seen evidence of progress related to assessment, especially in the development of assessment literacy. The Visiting Committee recommends that ISE focus on establishing schoolwide guidelines related to assessment to guide further professional development and implementation of best practices.

Areas of Strength for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Category

1. ISE has made appropriate progress in the area of curriculum development. The formation of a Curriculum Council has helped to advance this work. Having a standardized curriculum that spans pre-K through 12 sets a solid foundation for the unit planning work that is beginning.
2. Unit Planners are being created at all grade levels to improve planning and class activities.
3. Teachers have multiple opportunities to attend workshops and professional development conferences. Teachers share their knowledge from conferences and workshops with peers.
4. Assessment has been and continues to be a major focus for ISE administrators and faculty. The ES in particular has made progress towards ensuring quality assessment practices are in place across all classrooms.
5. Students understand the importance of the ESLRs and how the learning results impact their daily school lives.

Key Issues for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

1. ISE faculty members should complete the curriculum review and unit development process (including the development of common assessments linked to the standards being measured in each unit);
2. ISE administrators should develop comprehensive, schoolwide assessment guidelines that are

inclusive of assessments *as, for, and of* learning and link student achievement to the adopted standards and ESLRs;

3. ISE should focus on ensuring schoolwide alignment of the use of differentiation.
4. ISE administrators and the technology coordinator should develop a systematic plan for the integration of technology at the SS level.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- ISE Website
- ISE Curriculum Procedure Manual
- ISE Curriculum Binders
- Professional Development Handbook
- Observing instruction
- Schoolwide Focus Group dialogue
- Dialogue with students and faculty
- Extended dialogue with Leadership team
- Classroom visits

C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

C1. Student Connectedness Criterion

To what extent are students connected to a system of support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community to meet the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes)?

Classroom Support for Student Learning

Students at ISE are supported in many ways. To varying degrees, teachers offer personal support for students both in class, during lunch and after school to help them achieve success at school. Individual students who are having significant difficulty meeting the learning outcomes are referred by their teacher or grade level team to a Child Study Team (CST). At the ES, the Reading Specialist heads the CST; this responsibility will be assumed by the Learning Needs teacher next year. At the SS, the Secondary Coordinator heads the CST. A meeting is held involving all teachers who work with the student to develop an action plan. If necessary, the school refers students to a speech pathologist for speech therapy or to specialists to assist with diagnosis or therapy for learning delays. Additionally, the school may refer students to home tutors for extra academic and language support. ISE has employed a learning needs specialist to support teachers and assist individual students who have identified or suspected learning needs beginning in the 2011-12 school year. The Visiting Committee commends ISE for hiring additional student support personnel, especially in light of a decreased enrollment. We feel this shows a strong commitment to supporting student learning needs.

The SS requires that students who do not meet minimum academic curricular goals stay after school two times per week for academic probation. While this time is primarily used by students to complete their work, many teachers are available and willing to help individual students with specific academic issues. More students are choosing to stay after school to access teachers for assistance. Additionally, the Secondary School coordinator and the Superintendent offer personal help for all high school students while they are in the process of planning for university study after graduating from ISE.

In the ES and SS, support for student academic growth and a personalized approach to learning takes place in the classroom in a variety of ways but to varying degrees. At the ES level, teachers regularly assess students and measure growth through a writing prompt and the DRA2; this information is used to identify areas of need and possible accommodations or extensions. MAP testing results of Elementary and Middle School students help teachers individualize learning programs. The Visiting Committee has observed that although there are instances of differentiation taking place by classroom teachers, these

practices are not consistent. The Committee recommends that continued professional development relating to differentiation be offered to ensure that a “we’re all responsible” approach is followed as opposed to an “it’s the ESL/support teacher’s responsibility” approach. To help support this, the Committee recommends that schoolwide guidelines for differentiation be developed and evidence of implementation be included in the supervision process.

ESL Support

ISE has a large ESL student population. There is a policy concerning ESL student admission as well as initial screening and follow-up assessment procedures to determine level of placement. ISE has clear descriptors of ESL proficiency levels. The ES ESL program offers services for all ‘newcomers’ students (students with very little or no command of English) in grades 1 to 5 (note: during second semester of grade 5, newcomers are not admitted). In the ES, there is a combined push-in/pull-out approach. This year, ISE has added a Reading Specialist who focuses on teaching reading to the lowest levels of ESL students. Additionally she gives support to teachers to promote reading for all students. At the ES, there is evidence of on-going collaboration between ESL support teachers and classroom teachers to promote differentiation.

The SS does not admit baseline ESL students. SS students have one block of intensive language study (during the Modern Language block) and another class to provide specific English language support for mainstream subjects. Students are not pulled out of mainstream classes (except grade 6 beginners who are pulled out of English class). ESL staffing of 2 full time teachers and 1 full time teacher assistant is adequate to meet the program needs and classes are small (less than 14). Scheduling conflicts have limited the ability of the ESL program to provide adequate ESL academic support to all middle school ESL students this year, resulting in higher level ESL students not receiving academic support. Lower level students are placed in large mixed grade-level classes which do not meet frequently enough. In addition, there is minimal joint planning with mainstream teachers to support the learning needs of ESL students in the classroom. The Visiting Committee encourages administration to continue to seek creative solutions to the constraints scheduling causes for ESL services. At the SS, collaboration between ESL support teachers and classroom teachers is in the emergent stages.

The Visiting Committee recognizes that great progress has been made in ESL support since the 2005 Self-Study. The school is to be commended for the changes it has made. At the same time, the Visiting Committee has observed that there is a culture of depending on ESL teachers to ensure the success of ESL students. The Committee recommends that the school promote a philosophy that all teachers are responsible for the learning of all students. Professional development needs to regularly be offered to support ESL in the mainstream. Additionally, procedures and communication channels should be finalized to allow for a smoother transition between the ES and SS programs (specifically grades five to six). Efforts should be made during recruitment to hire new faculty who have experience in working with ESL student populations and to be transparent about the growing ESL population at ISE. Within the ESL program, the Visiting Committee recommends that schoolwide research-proven best practices be identified and utilized.

Special Needs Support

Specific support is not available at ISE for learning disabled students. Only students with mild learning disabilities are accepted. When an ESL student with a suspected learning disability is referred from a teacher to the administration, he/she can be referred to a psychologist in Bangkok who speaks their language and is trained to perform an learning needs assessment in their native language. Recognizing that there are students with special learning needs who are currently enrolled, ISE has employed a learning needs specialist to support teachers and assist individual students who have identified or suspected learning needs beginning in the 2011-12 school year.

Social/Emotional Support

ISE uses different strategies to develop students’ self-esteem and connections to the learning environment. Students are referred by teachers, parents or themselves to the administration for support for emotional, behavioral, teacher-student relationship or family problems which may interfere with their ability to interact positively with their learning environment. While information is confidential, the

administration communicates with the teacher and parents to support the student's self-esteem and learning success. Until this school year, ISE has had a full time counselor/psychologist. The decision was made to put resources into a Reading Specialist position and to delegate the counselor's responsibilities to administrators and teachers. For example, the Superintendent now helps students with college counseling. The Secondary School Coordinator now deals with admissions. The Superintendent and Elementary Principal act as counselors for students. During the visit, the Committee has noted diverse opinions relating to the effectiveness of this approach. The Committee recommends that ISE closely monitor the situation to ensure student social/emotional needs are being met and conflicts of interest are not occurring (e.g., students going to administrators for help when the administrators may also have to take disciplinary actions).

In the ES, there is a strong emphasis on developing a social/emotional program for pre-school to grade 2. The Middle School has developed a philosophy and program that is developmentally appropriate; ISE has appointed a Secondary School Coordinator who will work with staff to carry out implementation of the program. Plans are being made by the Middle School committee to increase the role of homeroom teachers in providing more personalized academic and emotional support. This includes building time into the schedule to focus on pastoral care as well as enhancing a course on Life Skills.

Co-Curricular Programs

ISE offers a variety of opportunities at each level for students to develop their personal growth and self-esteem through sports, musical and drama performances, art exhibits, speech competitions, the Talent Show, cultural performances, assemblies, student parties, student council and Thai studies trips. Every teacher participates in some capacity.

ISE belongs to the Mekong River International Schools Association (MRISA) which governs sports tournaments, cultural, leadership and MUN exchanges among the eight member schools in the Mekong region.

ISE has expanded its Summer School program from the 4 weeks after the closing of school to an additional two weeks before the opening. The purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to continue to develop their language, personal, and social growth throughout the summer months. Language, computer, sports, and creative project work make up the program.

All ISE students are encouraged to be involved in community service activities. All students participate in the annual Walk-a-Thon. Many students assist at school-sponsored functions such as Family Fun Day or organizing social events. Grade 11 and 12 students are expected to perform community service as part of the IB CAS requirement. A few grade 9 and 10 students volunteer in the local community apart from visits organized as part of a Thai Studies trip.

The Visiting Committee has noted that the co-curricular program at ISE meets the needs of students. This is attributed to the dedication of faculty who are willing to go 'above and beyond' to provide programs that add value to the overall experience of students at ISE.

Other Services

The nurse at ISE is pro-active in informing students, staff and parents about infectious diseases (e.g. H1N1) and other health related issues. The nurse is responsible for collecting health records and provides teachers with a list of health concerns, allergies, and other relevant medical information. She documents every infirmary visit and refers students to the hospital when necessary. She oversees the distribution of first aid kits to each classroom and for outside events. The nurse is present during all After School Activities. She coordinates vision and hearing screening by specialists from the hospital.

Strategies are in place to support safe transportation. Students who ride the bus are reminded of safety procedures and bus monitors are requested to inform teachers of misbehavior.

Food services and nutrition continue to be areas of attention for ISE. ISE has formed a cafeteria committee to overview the food preparation, the services and the variety of food offered to the students.

This committee includes five parents of different nationalities and two administrators. The committee is using parent survey data to inform their decisions to improve food services.

C2. Parent/Community Involvement Criterion

To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?

Parent and community involvement is integral to ISE's support system for students. There is an active PTA at ISE with Volunteer Coordinators at every level (Preschool, Elementary, Middle and High School) to ensure that parents are involved in classroom and school events. Cultural Representatives (Thai, Korean, Japanese) facilitate communication between the school and their communities. Events organized by the PTA bring parents, teachers and students to work and play together as a community.

Parents are welcome at ISE and their involvement in their child's learning, both in and out of the classroom, is encouraged. A new parent tea is held at the beginning of the year. An Open House is also held in each classroom and with specialist teachers in Elementary School and for each subject in Secondary School. Parent workshops are offered; past topics have included sleep and healthy eating for younger students. Student-led conferences are held two times per year in Elementary School. Parents assist in the classroom, for example, by reading with students; this is particularly evident in the Early Childhood Center. Parent-student/teacher conferences are also held two times per year in Secondary School. A Parent Appreciation Tea is held at the end of the year.

Besides actual involvement and face-to-face communication with parents as described above, the school communicates with parents and the community about student learning through both print (e.g., handbooks, progress reports) and electronic (e.g., email, blogs, website) means. Parents have been educated through in-services provided by the school about use of the Internet to send emails, access information on the website, and register for programs online.

ISE uses a variety of resources in the community to support students. This includes: organizing visits by representatives from both local and international universities; hosting visiting authors and specialists in the Fine Arts; employing specialists from the community for various sports, dance, martial arts, and cooking; working with the Fountain of Life Center (a local charity) to promote community service; utilizing experts from the Thai community build understanding on cultural, historical and environmental topics and issues; and utilizing medical specialists to conduct vision and hearing screenings and to educate students about health issues.

Efforts are made to help parents understand student achievement of the ESLRs. The ESLRs are published in the handbooks, on the ISE website, in the ISEExpress and are visible in every classroom and throughout the school. Illustrated ESLRs in "kid-friendly" language have also been created and are displayed in every elementary classroom. Parents learn about their child's achievement of the ESLRs through conferences, progress reports and report cards. MAP testing results are also an indication of ESLR achievement. Parents have learned how to understand these results through in-services provided by school staff.

Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category

1. ISE has hired additional student support personnel (e.g., Reading Specialist, Learning Needs teacher), especially in light of a decreased enrollment, showing a strong commitment to supporting student learning needs.
2. Progress has been made in ESL support since the 2005 Self-Study. The school is to be commended for the changes it has made. The ESL program is well developed, well-staffed, and generally successful in supporting students' English language learning so that they can succeed academically and socially. The program remains flexible and changes its structure as necessary to meet the ever-changing student demographics and learning needs.
3. The co-curricular program at ISE meets the needs of students. The After School Activities

program in elementary and middle school is varied and participation is high. The secondary school MRISA program for sports, cultural exchange, leadership, and MUN is popular among students as they have an opportunity to expand their horizons by interacting with students from schools in other countries. This is attributed to the dedication of faculty who are willing to go 'above and beyond' to provide programs that add value to the overall experience of students at ISE.

4. Parents and families feel welcome at ISE. There is a sense of community as parents, staff and students work together to support learning and growing. Families are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning.

Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

1. Continued professional development relating to differentiation should be offered to ensure that a "we're all responsible" approach is followed as opposed to a "it's the ESL teacher's responsibility" approach. To help support this, administrators and faculty should develop schoolwide guidelines for differentiation and that administrators include evidence of implementation in the supervision process.
2. ISE administration and faculty should continue to seek creative solutions to the constraints scheduling causes for ESL services.
3. ISE should promote a philosophy that all teachers are responsible for the learning of all students. Professional development needs to be offered regularly to support ESL in the mainstream. Additionally, procedures and communication channels should be finalized to allow for a smoother transition between the ES and SS programs (specifically grades five to six). Efforts should be made during recruitment to hire new faculty who have experience in working with ESL student populations and to be transparent about the growing ESL population at ISE. Within the ESL program, schoolwide research-proven best practices need to be identified and utilized.
4. ISE administrators should closely monitor the impact of the absence of a counselor to ensure student social/emotional needs are being met and conflicts of interest are not occurring (e.g., students going to administrators for help when the administrators may also have to take disciplinary actions).
5. Secondary teachers and administrators should continue to work together to develop and implement middle and high school programs that best supports the unique developmental needs of these children and helps students learn to make healthy choices and interact socially and personally in a positive manner. More individualized support for student learning and personal growth should be an integral part of the program.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Self-study findings
- Focus group conversations
- Staff Survey results
- Student Survey results
- Parent Survey results
- Child Study Team records
- Administrative records

D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

D1. Resources Criterion

To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes)?

Although no specific data has provided in the school's self-study regarding any financial information, meetings have been held with the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) during the site visit where all the appropriate information was distributed and discussed. The school report states that, the school teaching staff is involved annually in deciding the curriculum resources for each subject taught but that there is "no fixed budget" for any department or grade level. The budget process starts with each individual teacher identifying and supporting the needs of items that will be used to support their classroom activities. The CFO calls this type of budget a "ground up budget process."

Although the staff appears to be frustrated with the current method of requesting funds, the Visiting Committee believe that the resources allocated and available to the school are sufficient to provide an appropriate instructional program. The Visiting Committee recommends that administration discover ways to streamline the budgeting process, allowing decisions to be made in a timely manner.

The resources available to hire a well qualified faculty and staff are available. The salaries and fringe benefits at ISE are in the top 75th percentile of international school's in Thailand; they are the best paid in the Eastern Seaboard region.

During the discussion regarding the overall financial stability of the school, it was learned that in June 2011, the school will complete the final payment on their commercial loan. This has been a sixteen year process and should provide additional income for capital improvements and other school needs. ISE continues to have parent debt through outstanding capital assessment fee certificates, which will be paid back as students depart the school.

D2. Resource Planning Criterion

To what extent do the governing authority and the school execute responsible resource planning for the future?

During the site visit at the focus group meeting, it was agreed that improved communication back to the initiating teacher was needed to clarify whether the budget request was approved or not. The CFO strongly emphasized that he wanted teachers to develop a plan for projects that benefit student learning and overall school improvements. These plans, if approved by the site administrator, would be considered.

The CFO also has stated that plans are made for future capital improvements of the buildings and school site.

At numerous meetings during the visit, the Visiting Committee has been told of the need for the school administration and Board to develop and expand current efforts to attract new students and to better market the school.

Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development Category

1. The school will complete the payment of their commercial bank debt in June 2011.
2. The current salaries and fringe benefits are attractive and help to maintain current staff members.

Key Issues for Resource Management and Development Category that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

1. The administration needs to develop a budget process with procedures to identify real needs and the usefulness of items requested with improved communication back to the initiating teacher.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Meeting with CFO
- Self Study Report
- Resource focus group meeting
- Meeting with administrative staff

E. Thai Language & Culture

Standard 1: Students have Integrity, moral conduct and desirable values

Students value their cultural heritage

Thai Language and Culture curriculum at ISE aims to provide student the pride of their culture and tradition. There is a strong emphasis on student understanding of cultural heritage, national pride and identity, and civic consciousness as part of personal development.

At ISE, students develop a sense of empathy and understanding through educational fieldtrips, visits to local communities, and community service. The non-Thai students also build cross-cultural and inter-faith understanding by participating on the activities. To show respect for Thailand and the monarchy, all students learn the Thai national anthem and sing in the Thai language and cultural class. The Royal anthem is played prior to activities and performances. All students stand in silence to show respect to the king and the country.

They express appreciation of Thai culture, local wisdom and fine arts through cultural performances, dance, drama, music, national holidays and festivals. Significant celebrations, such as Loy Krathong, the King's Birthday. Songkran and Wai Kru at ISE are meaningful extensions of classroom activities and often involve all members of the school community, including parents and families who are very much a part of school life.

Students maintain their cultural identity and appreciate others

Students at ISE develop an appreciation for Thai culture in the integration of knowledge of the culture and make Thai language learning relevant. The Thai language and cultural curriculum is enriched with appropriate Thai literature, Thai history, and biography and autobiography of significant people of the country.

Students learn broad themes and ideas that have been pervasive throughout Thai history. How people lived, worked, and played is examined. Religion and Thai etiquette are important aspects of life and are included in the units of study in order to instill cultural identity and pride. Students develop critical thinking skills by analyzing and viewing historical events from multiple perspectives in order to appreciate the contributions of significant people of the past and be inspired by them. To foster national identity, students examine important elements that unite Thailand as one; the nation, religion, and the monarchy.

Standard 3: Students develop aesthetic and physical fitness through participation of fine arts, music and activities

Students appreciate and maintain good local Thai arts, culture and tradition

At ISE, the school activities provide students hands-on opportunities to meet and mix with local people and reach out to the local communities. At some point, Thai language and cultural class activities also allow students opportunities to reflect on life and culture of the local communities. Students are exposed to real life experiences in a meaningful, practical way that develops understanding about Thai culture and people. The presentations of Thai life are displayed prominently in the classrooms and around the school property. Though students follow Thai etiquette and perform "Wai" in Thai class, efforts could be made to strengthen this important tradition among the Thai as well as the non-Thai students.

In order to build caring citizens and emphasize the importance of civic responsibilities, students are encouraged to reach out to the local communities through community outreach programs. Students take greater ownership of their own learning and growth through the activities that reflects evidence of their involvement.

Standard 5: Students demonstrate essential knowledge and skills in the Thai language and culture curriculum

Students have an ability to communicate in Thai

At ISE, all students are required to take a full year of Thai Language and Cultural courses based on the Ministry of Education Standards to ensure that students have essential knowledge and skills in Thai language.

At the primary level, children learn to read by developing strategies of storytelling. Upper elementary classes use a literature-based approach. Students also study essential Thai grammar. Through an interdisciplinary approach, students develop an understanding of Thai language, culture, social study, history and literature. Various language activities encourage students to become effective language users through oral and written expression. The writing process is one of the strategies used to help students improve their writing. In high school, students study and analyze a variety of literary genre. Students analyze literature in depth and use language to participate in discussions and debate. Language skills are reinforced and refined within the context of literary analysis and writing compositions. Connections with contemporary and controversial issues in Thai society enhance student learning. The Thai studies program also provides classes for foreign students and helps them to be able to communicate appropriately with Thai people.

Standard 9: The instructors engage in a student-centered teaching

Thai Language and Culture teachers are effective in using student-centered teaching methods

Teachers design unit plans with student-centered approach. The combined classes also require teachers to differentiate their teaching style toward the various groups of students. Lessons and activities are designed for students who are at different levels but in the same class.

Students are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting to knowledge through a variety of learning activities from literature circles, storytelling, reciprocal reading, writing and group projects. Students are encouraged to explore, experiment, and discover on their own. They are not just memorizing information, but are encouraged to work with the information to generate diverse thoughts and perspectives on topics and issues. Teachers encourage their students to reach highest potential by accommodating various learning styles, learning needs and interests. Students learn collaborative and cooperative skills as well as independent learning with differentiated approach.

Standard 10: The administration demonstrates effective leadership skills

The administration develops skills in managing and empowering multi-national personnel

The ISE administration is committed to maintaining an atmosphere that encourages open communication and effort to involve personnel in decisions regarding school matters. Empowerment is evident as they share information through the regular schedule of staff and department meetings, in-service training, and one to one interaction; all of which build a sense of trust and team spirit.

Accountability of student learning and achievement is the responsibility of the ISE administration which, in addition to overseeing the daily operations of the school, is in charge of Thai curriculum development with the Thai teachers. The Thai teachers support their colleagues in teaching, reviews samples of student work, provides knowledge on current educational trends and methodology, and identifies appropriate resources, as well as sets plans and directions. Thai teachers have sufficient opportunities to grow professionally through on-site workshops at school as well as attend educational conferences organized locally.

The administration has demonstrated the ability to equitably supervise and manage a culturally diverse faculty and staff.

Standard 12: The school's curriculum and instruction is student-centered

The school provides activities that enable students to appreciate and take pride in their own culture, host country and other cultures

Each year at the International Day, students celebrate their unity of diverse cultures by holding the annual cultural show. The whole community is involved with cultural celebrations and activities that include performances, games, music, displays and cuisine from the various nationality groups. Significantly, students plan and prepare their own presentations for the Cultural Show with support from their teachers and parents.

Throughout the year, the Thai department provides teaching and learning activities, including educational field trips that aim to deepen student understanding and appreciation of Thai culture and wisdom. Students actively join in Thai national celebrations and festivals such as Thai Mother's Day, Loy Krathong, The King's Birthday, Wai Kru ceremony, and Songkran.

Standard 13: The School has a curriculum that is suitable for students and community, including appropriate resources to enhance the learning process

The school has a program on Thai language and culture

The teaching and learning of Thai language and culture at ISE are guided by the standard achievements and learning domains specified in the National Educational Act of 2001 criteria of quality assurance of SOR MOR SOR Standards for International School, and ISE ESLRs. Courses offered are Thai Language and Culture for Thai students. Thai studies and Thai as a Foreign Language for non-Thai students. The program aims to provide students with an understanding of Thailand, its language, history, people and culture. Through an interdisciplinary approach, the program develops an understanding of fundamental concepts and language skills from a wide variety of learning experiences.

Using the principles of the Backward Design for curriculum development, the Thai programs focus first on the learning goals. These are the enduring understandings that the students are to develop at the completion of the learning sequence. There is also a focus on a number of essential, or guiding, questions. The summative assessment is the culminating task that requires students to draw upon the skills and concepts they have developed throughout the unit in order to demonstrate their essential understandings, rather than a mere reporting of information.

The teachers meet, discuss and share their plans informally. Collegial sharing is very much a part of professional development. There is a need to periodically evaluate all courses in the Thai program in order to modify the program to maintain effectiveness. An example would be to incorporate more Thai dance, arts and music.

ISE has four Thai teachers and are highly qualified with teaching certification and wealth of experience locally and internationally.

Areas of Strength for Thai Language & Culture Category

1. Thai language and culture program has been well recognized and supported by the school community.
2. Students are well disciplined, humble and respect the diversity of others.
3. Students have many opportunities to broaden academic experience, both in and out of the classroom, and to develop a sense of commitment to serving others in various communities through structured learning activities that help them to become responsible members of society.
4. Both Thai and expatriate students have many opportunities to express appreciation of Thai culture and arts through school activities.
5. Through an interdisciplinary approach, students develop an understanding of Thai language, culture, social study, geography, history, and literature, including inviting in local experts and authorities.

6. Expatriate students have the opportunity to analyze and compare their own culture with Thai culture.
7. The school has developed a comprehensive coherent, relevant and challenging program on Thai Language and culture consistent with school, national and MOE standards.
8. Course offered are Thai Language and Culture for Thais. Thai Studies and Thai as a Foreign Language for expatriates.
9. The school provides good language lessons for students with gaps in their Thai language skills.

Key Issues for Thai Language & Culture Category that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students:

1. More structural common planning time for Thai department.
2. Formal process for curriculum review and alignment.
3. There is a need to periodically evaluate all courses in the Thai program in order to modify the program to maintain effectiveness. An example would be to incorporate more Thai dance, art and music.

Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:

- Thai Language and Culture Curriculum documentation
- Thai Department Activities calendar and picture folders
- Thai fieldtrip program documentation and pictures
- Student Portfolio
- Samples of student work

Part B: Synthesize the strengths and key issues from all categories into schoolwide strengths and schoolwide critical areas for follow-up.

General Comments:

In reading ISE's self-study and then meeting with the leadership team, numerous individuals and groups representing the school's stakeholders, the Visiting Committee found evidence of many positive aspects of school operations focused on the improvement of students' academic achievement. In fact, in some cases there are school strengths which were not cited in the self-study itself but validated during the visitation.

The culminating activity of the Visiting Committee is to validate the general areas of strength and also the areas for improvement for the school, and those schoolwide strengths and areas for follow-up are listed below. The Visiting Committee believes that the strengths and needs can be documented within the school's self-study, as well as from the many meetings held with staff members, students, and parents.

Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. ISE has a clearly stated Vision, Mission, Philosophy of Learning, and expected schoolwide learning results (ESLRs) that are visible throughout the school culture and provide a unifying element in all aspects of school operations. Students, parents, faculty, and administrators all viewed the ESLRs as a strength of the school. The ESLRs are already beginning to be embedded in the program and life of the school and are not just a set of statements found in publications.
2. ISE has faculty and staff that are extremely professional and are of a high caliber. They operate as a community and it is obvious that there is genuine care for all community members.

3. The Superintendent and Elementary Principal are significant strengths of the school. During the focus group discussion, faculty commented on the fact that administrators play a very important role, know their faculty and the subject areas well, and are incredibly supportive of educational programs and best practices.
4. ISE has a robust professional development program on offer to faculty. This is one of the reasons members remain at ISE for a longer period of time.
5. The school culture reflects the trust, caring and respect for differences inherent in the philosophy of the ISE community. There is an effort to making the school a welcoming place for community members through formal and informal means such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Thai assemblies, International Day, and Family Fun Day. Students see this as a strength of the school and faculty recognize that the school acts as a 'magnet' for the community.
6. ISE is responsive to situations that may impact student learning as they arise (e.g., a sudden decline in enrollment; an increase in ESL students). The administration and faculty have demonstrated efforts to align programs and structures through dialogue.
7. Due to tight fiscal control over the past ten years, the school has been able to complete their commercial debt payments this year. With the removal of the budgetary need for debt service, the school will be able to consider how to best incorporate these funds into the budget.

Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up

- 1) ASSESSMENT – ISE should establish high standards of consistent practice to ensure that assessment accurately reflects learning and is in support of learning. Specific areas include:
 - a. Utilizing a unit development process to facilitate the development of common assessments linked to the standards being measured in each unit;
 - b. Implementing schoolwide guidelines aligned to research-proven best practice related to assessment, grading, and reporting; and
 - c. Synthesizing and analyzing the use of assessment results to inform decisions at the classroom, division, and schoolwide levels.
- 2) DIFFERENTIATION - ISE should establish high standards of consistent classroom practice and resources available to ensure that each student is appropriately challenged and supported. Specific areas include:
 - a. Clarifying the identity of the school in relation to ESL and special needs;
 - b. Developing guidelines regarding differentiation in the mainstream classroom;
 - c. Identifying the necessary resources to support students with ESL needs and special learning needs; and
 - d. Providing on-going professional development to continuously build faculty capacity to differentiate.
- 3) SCHOOLWIDE ALIGNMENT - ISE should establish structures, procedures, policies, and methods of accountability (teacher evaluation) to unify the implementation of initiatives that will positively impact student learning. Specific areas include:
 - a. Building internal capacity (e.g., teacher leaders, mentor teachers) to support professional learning in key areas (e.g., assessment, unit planning);
 - b. Developing and maintaining shared leadership capacity;
 - c. Optimizing the use of available time for collaboratively focusing on student learning; and
 - d. Ensuring accountability of implementation of initiatives is built into the teacher evaluation process.
- 4) MARKETING - Facing significant changes in demographics and competition from neighboring schools, the ISE Board and administrators should actively develop and aggressively pursue a

marketing strategy, along with a plan to upgrade the school facilities that will keep the current students at the school while attracting new families to enroll their children at ISE. Consideration should be given to contracting the services of an outside consultant who will be able to develop plans for these programs as well as contribute to the implementation of the plans.

Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan

Originally, ISE proposed an action plan identifying ten critical areas which were based on the self-study and determined through input by the faculty. The Visiting Committee reviewed the ten critical areas and agreed that there were too many initiatives. Throughout the visit, four schoolwide areas for follow-up continued to emerge: assessment, differentiation, schoolwide alignment, and marketing. The Visiting Committee presented these areas to the administrators of ISE; they have taken the recommendations and revised their original action plans to address the four schoolwide areas for follow-up.

Comment on the school improvement issues

The original draft action plan proposed by ISE addressed ten critical areas for follow-up identified during the Self-Study; the Visiting Committee has prioritized these into four schoolwide areas for follow-up. ISE administrators are to combine, revise and further define the original action plans to address these four areas; a final copy of these revised plans are due to WASC and published to the community no later than June 1, 2011. It is the Visiting Committee's view that the action plan will enhance student learning. Based on the school's past history of implementing recommendations, the Visiting Committee is confident that ISE will use the action plan to form a comprehensive school improvement plan that will specify specific action steps, the person(s) responsible for implementation, resources necessary, a timeline, and evidence of accomplishment. With focused financial planning, the plan is feasible with the resources available. The Visiting Committee feels that there is a strong commitment to addressing all four schoolwide growth areas.

Existing factors that support school improvement

ISE has in place a school improvement process which includes setting specific goals that are based on the schoolwide areas for improvement. School administrators and faculty are committed to addressing issues that have been identified as necessary to improve student learning. ISE has a robust professional development program which provides time for both professional learning and collaboration. Additionally, ISE has a history of addressing WASC recommendations.

Impediments to school improvement that the school will need to overcome in order to accomplish any of the action plan sections

ISE will need to ensure that appropriate funding is available for implementing the actions necessary to address the schoolwide areas for growth. As the key leaders in any initiative at ISE, administrators need to continually be supported in deepening their own understanding of key educational initiatives, resulting in an increased capacity to lead the change efforts. Finally, there is inconsistent monitoring of the degree to which key initiatives are being implemented in the classroom; ISE will need to ensure accountability of implementation of initiatives is built into the teacher evaluation process.

Soundness of follow-up process to monitor accomplishment of schoolwide action plan

The action plan clearly outlines the tasks, responsible person(s), strategy, resources needed (including professional development), reporting of progress, and evidence of progress. The annual review and evaluation of the action plan will form the basis of the annual WASC Interim Report. As stated above, ISE

will need to ensure accountability of implementation of initiatives is built into the teacher evaluation process.

Closing Statement

The Visiting Committee finds International School Eastern Seaboard to be a school that exemplifies its vision: *a caring international community dedicated to student success*. It is most gratifying that students, parents, faculty, and staff interviewed during our visit value the educational experience at ISE. Parents and students are very pleased with the education that is offered. The Visiting Committee is confident that the faculty and administration will continue to be actively engaged in work that will insure that the educational program at ISE will continue to reach high levels of excellence. We wish the entire ISE community much success in its future!