Summary of Research Relating to the International Baccalaureate: Middle Years Programme

Here is a summary, for your convenience, of research pertinent to quantitative and qualitative effects attributed to student participation in the International Baccalaureate: Middle Years Programme. If you are interested in reading further, full studies are available via the Weebly site.

In a 2015 study of a large, socioeconomically diverse district of rural, urban, and suburban communities, outcomes of high school students who attended an MYP school were compared with those who had not. Higher percentages of students who previously attended MYP schools participated in AP exams compared with students who attended non-MYP schools. Furthermore, higher percentages of students who previously attended MYP schools achieved at least one college-ready score on AP exams as compared with students who attended non-MYP schools. Among the students who took at least one AP exam, MYP students took significantly more exams than their non-MYP counterparts. This study suggests students may have gained skills in MYP that prepared them for success in advanced courses such as AP (Wade, 2015).

In a 2015 study of a high school in a suburban school district in North Carolina, after three years of MYP implementation in grades nine and ten the school experienced a decline in suspension rates and an improvement in students' academic and self-perceptions. Students reported that they enjoyed being in school at more than double the national frequency. In surveys, students shared the positive impact of the MYP service learning requirement and indicated that the Personal Project was "a benefit, a significant learning experience, a challenge . . . and . . . the context in which . . . they had gained knowledge about the world and other cultures." Students also cited additional benefits including oral presentation skills, responsibility, independence, and time management (Cook, 2015).

A 2014 study of a Georgia middle school found that the IB: MYP had a positive impact upon students' academic performance by delivering an interdisciplinary curriculum, inquiry-based approaches to learning, real-world experiential activities, coaching and mentoring, and individual student responsibility and accountability. As stated in the study, "It is . . . through the application of content and concepts that learners not only learn new knowledge, but more importantly, they develop the capabilities to process and apply that knowledge to real-world situations" (Johnson, 2014).

In a 2013 study, previous enrollment in the MYP appeared to have a positive impact on students' global mindedness (Wade, 2013).

As part of a 2013 study focused on the impact of the MYP on students in poverty, teachers reported that the MYP helped students "see the bigger picture," "make connections between the mathematics curriculum and real world applications," and "think critically and reflect." Through the MYP, teachers worked together to create interdisciplinary lessons, they incorporated real-

world events, experienced increased collegiality, built more creative lessons, moved beyond memorization, planned higher-level lessons, and taught "beyond what is tested." Teachers reported that on the whole the MYP benefitted students by encouraging higher order thinking and educating the whole child. They also suggested that the MYP improved teacher pedagogy by encouraging collaboration and teaching beyond tested material (Kobylinski-Fehrman, 2013).

A 2013 study compared science performance of MYP students with their non-IB peers and found that MYP students outperformed the non-IB students on the Colorado Student Assessment Program across all grade levels (Healer, 2013).

A 2013 study of Texas MYP schools reported that IB students were on-task 87% of the time, as opposed to 73% of non-IB students (Alford, 2013).

A 2011 study within a large, socio-economically diverse school district in the United States explored student engagement and performance in five MYP schools in comparison to five non-MYP schools. Using state assessments as a benchmark, the results indicated that a higher percentage of MYP students achieved proficient or advanced performance on mathematics and science assessments than the matched comparison group (Wade, 2011).

In 2009, in an analysis of High School Survey of Student Engagement (HSSSE) results, IB students rated their levels of academic, social, and emotional engagement significantly higher than non-IB students. In the national sample, 63% of IB students had written papers of five pages or more on a regular basis, whereas only 49% of non□IB students had done so. 53% of IB students had discussed ideas from readings or classes with teachers outside of class, compared to 39% of non□IB students. 43% of IB students believed that their school had contributed very much to their ability to think critically, while 35% of non□IB students believed the same about their schools. 26% of IB students strongly agreed that they felt academically challenged by their coursework, whereas 19% of non□IB students strongly agreed that they felt challenged (Shah, 2010).

In a 2005 study of the impact of IB: MYP at a Southern California middle school, students who had received two years of MYP demonstrated significantly greater improvement in mathematics and English-language arts (as measured by the California Standards Tests) as compared to students in the same district who had not experienced the program. According to the study, "This finding is consistent with the literature [in showing] that innovative, comprehensive school programs with rigorous standards appear to be more effective than conventional education in meeting the academic needs of public school students." The study also demonstrated that the IB: MYP better prepared students for higher level math, as significantly more students in the IB school took the more advanced course option. In addition, according to this study, "These findings provide evidence that academic programs like the International Baccalaureate are effective in meeting the academic needs of students from diverse social, ethnic, and economic backgrounds" (Willcoxon, 2005).

In a 2002 study examining the development and implementation process of the IB: MYP in a suburban western Pennsylvania school district in grades six through ten, during the first year of MYP implementation, teachers demonstrated an increase in interdisciplinary connections and collegial work. Teachers reported that the program encouraged independent and global thinking. Administrators reported regret at not involving ninth and tenth grade teachers more intimately with program implementation from the beginning (Powell, 2002).

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