



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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**To:** District 97 Board of Education  
Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools

**From:** Melissa Cuculich, IB Coordinator and Special Area Coordinator  
Dr. Kenya Hodges, IB Coordinator and Special Area Coordinator  
Dr. Eboney Lofton, Chief Academic and Accountability Officer  
Dr. Tawanda Lawrence, Senior Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment  
April Capuder, Gwendolyn Brooks Middle School Principal  
Jeremy Christian, Percy L. Julian Middle School Principal

**Re:** IB Evaluation Report

**Date:** March 23, 2021

**Type of Report:** Informational

**Purpose of Report:** The purpose of this report is to provide the Board of Education an update on the International Baccalaureate (IB) program in District 97 as it relates to the IB Evaluation process and ongoing improvement. On October 5th and 6th, the IB evaluation team virtually visited Brooks Middle School, and on October 7th and 8th, a different IB evaluation team virtually visited Julian Middle School. The purpose of the evaluation was to provide each school with valuable feedback on the current implementation of the IB Middle Years Programme.

All IB World Schools are regularly evaluated to ensure that the standards and practices of the IB programme(s) are being maintained. Evaluation takes place at least once every five years. The overall goal of an IB Evaluation visit is to reflect and evaluate on the IB standards and practices in order to plan for continual improvement. As part of the evaluation, the school engages in a self-study process that is a key element in the school's continual improvement.

**Building Quality Curriculum (BQC):** The BQC process requires a team of expert curriculum reviewers to provide guidance and feedback on MYP unit plans. This involves supporting continuous improvement of written, taught and assessed curriculum. As a component of our Evaluation, the district participated in the BQC process during the winter of 2019. Eighteen units were sent to the International Baccalaureate Organization as part of the BQC process.

**Building Quality Curriculum (BQC) Results:** After reviewing the feedback from the Evaluation team, teachers were praised for their commitment to inquiry-driven curriculum and instruction. Further work on fully developing the Approaches to Learning skills, as well as documenting collaborative reflections, is already underway.

**Self-Study:** To prepare for the formal evaluation, the IBO requires that schools participate in an intense self-evaluation of all standards. All stakeholders in some capacity evaluated our progress based on the practices related to the standards. This was completed over the last two years. The Evaluation team used this document to inform their overall feedback for both schools.

**Evaluation Visit:** During the first week of October, 2020 three representatives from the International Baccalaureate Organization virtually visited District 97 for a total of four days, two days per school, to virtually tour the school, visit classrooms, and speak with all stakeholders. This visit, along with all documentation previously submitted, was used for the formal evaluation. The evaluation report provided our district with feedback on each school’s alignment with the IB standards and practices. The feedback for each of the standards and practices fell into one of four categories:

<b>Commendation</b>	Praise given for the standard being in place in a creative and/or above and beyond way.
<b>Finding</b>	The standard is evident.
<b>Recommendation</b>	The standard may be evident but not entirely. Improvements will need to be made prior to the next evaluation visit in 5 years.
<b>Matter to be Addressed</b>	The standard is not evident, and this must be addressed prior to IB granting continued IB status.

**Commendations:**

- The schools have clearly embedded the Learner Profile attributes into the school's culture.
- The Year 3 Individuals and Societies teachers have developed a tool whereby they can easily acknowledge and support all students.
- The special education teachers note that they have attended intensive training around co-teaching strategies and best practices.
- The schools have updated their Academic Honesty Policy to include the new requirements.
- The librarians’ roles include responsibilities related to the development and support of the MYP; they are passionate about their roles in the MYP.
- The district and the school are committed to providing a wealth of social and emotional learning support for its students.
- The schools have developed a system for collaboration that clearly aligns with MYP expectations. This system allows the teachers to effectively teach their students and meet their students' learning needs.
- MYP unit plans in many subjects include differentiation to allow for differences in students' previous learning experiences.
- MYP unit plans, in all subject groups, often include learning experiences that promote students’ awareness of local, national, and world issues.
- Teachers encourage students to become inquirers and thinkers, even during this COVID pandemic.
- The schools have systems in place to regularly analyze assessment data in all subject groups to inform teaching and learning.

**Recommendations and Matters to Be Addressed:**

- Reviewing and updating policies (Language, Inclusion, Assessment, etc.)

- Planning for incorporating service activities at each grade level to lead up to the Community Project
- Communication plan for sharing information with current and incoming parents
- Training for school administrators and teachers
- Working with science teachers about consistently incorporating a unit on Design into their classes to satisfy the requirement for 50 hours

Based on the written Evaluation Report, we are currently taking steps to incorporate their recommendations into improving our programmes. We have provided the steps we are taking to address their feedback below.

- IB coordinators and Department Chairs are reviewing and updating our policies during our Department Chair meeting times
- IB coordinators are working on creating a scaffolded Service as Action plan to create more opportunities for teachers and students to connect their learning to service
- IB coordinators are updating student and parent handbooks for the upcoming school year to include information about the IB MYP and Brooks and Julian
- To date, we have had 18 teachers and administrators attend virtual IB trainings and more will be attending in the coming months to learn about their new subject guides
- We are also training two science teachers in Design to help develop the Design component of the science curriculum
- The IB Coordinators, Senior Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, and each school's leadership team will continue to collaborate with the department chairs to plan additional professional learning for teachers

As we celebrate our 6th year of being an IB World School, we greatly appreciate the support of the Board of Education in growing our IB MYP!

### Works Cited

- Erickson, HL. (2012). *Concept-based teaching and learning*. International Baccalaureate Organization.
- Feldman, Joe. (2019). *Grading For Equity*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin.
- Stern, J., Lauriault, N. and Ferraro, K. (2018). *Tools for teaching conceptual understanding, elementary*. Thousand Oaks: Corsin.