Endicott Research Center Survey Analysis Report

Qingdao Amerasia International School received the results from the Endicott Research Center, and the report spoke to our strengths and areas of needed improvement, however, the overall findings were quite positive and reflective of who we are as a school. Though the official results came out in December 2016, the survey was given to faculty, staff, students, and parents during the 2015-2016 school year, and the delay in its official release was due to the restructuring of our board. Last spring, Director, Dr. Chris Vicari, gave a presentation regarding our school mission and vision statements, and afterward the staff was asked to complete a detailed internal survey. The findings from that survey supported many of the findings from Endicott, and based on its results, we were able to make significant headway in improving QAIS and our programs.

A. Significant facts about the number of people who responded to the survey.

We had a total of 181 respondents, with 47 of those students, 70 faculty and staff, 58 parents, and 6 board members. Based on the number of student respondents, we were especially pleased with the number of responses from parents, as they indicated a vested interest in student education.

The youngest age level surveyed was 9, and the oldest was 18, with the majority surveyed between the ages of 13 and 14. These ages included students from 5th to 12th grade and represented a balanced mix of male and female respondents.

Out of the 70 staff members who took the survey, 18 were male, and 52 were female, and all grades levels were amply represented. 46% of our faculty have between 11-20+ years experience, with nearly 47% maintaining a Master’s degree or higher. Some of our advanced degree holders include, DP English and Film instructor, Dr. Dan North, Principal, Dr. Eric Dustman, Director, Dr. Chris Vicari, MYP English and Writing Workshop teacher, Chris McCarthy, MYP Coordinator and Science teacher, Mark Brierley, IB Art teacher, Devin Smith and many more. 6 board members also completed the survey, and nearly 67% of those have been members for over 6 years.

65.5% of our parents surveyed had only one child in QAIS, and most had children in our EC and PYP programs. Our MYP and DP enrollment is significantly lower, thus the discrepancy. A vast majority of our parents, 60%, speak Chinese, with only 22% who speak English. Other languages indicated were Korean, German, Spanish, Japanese, Portuguese, and Kazakh, however, other than Korean at 8.6%, the others were relatively low at 1.7% each.

Overall, there was a balanced representation of respondents, aiding in the holistic review of QAIS.

B. Significant strengths of the school as perceived by the various community sectors.

There was high satisfaction with the overall mission and vision of QAIS. Between 90-100% of those surveyed felt familiar and comfortable with the QAIS mission and philosophy statements and practices, indicating they were in line with what the school stood for and reflected holistic education, while showcasing a strong appreciation for international and intercultural development and interaction.
91-100% of students, teachers, and parents are satisfied with the grading, level of expectations, and communication of standards at QAIS. In fact, 97-100% of students surveyed stated they know exactly what their teachers expect from them. Additionally, 100% of those students also felt respected by their teachers and are confident in their instructor’s knowledge of their curriculum and content. Furthermore, 100% of the parent respondents stated they feel confident and comfortable speaking with their child’s teachers about progress and/or concerns, with 98% satisfaction with teacher/parent communication. 100% of staff members marked they enjoyed working with their colleagues, and 98% felt respected by their students, noting there was also mutual respect between student peers and quality, multifaceted interaction.

95-100% of students and teachers felt the curriculum was enriching, and 95% of the staff stated they took full advantage of the diversity of the school in their lesson planning and curriculum development. High percentages of both students and teachers felt the curriculum allowed for all students to fully participate, and 100% of students felt they were encouraged and given opportunities to assess their own learning.

95-97% of staff and parents displayed confidence in QAIS school leadership and direction, with 100% of the school board exhibiting satisfaction of the school head. Over 90% of the staff felt comfortable with the way finances have been allocated, and 100% of the parent and board respondents indicated they felt the school was financially secure. 97% of faculty and staff are satisfied with their positions, stating they were good matches for their qualifications and talents. 95% of faculty and staff indicated their contracts were clear and fair, and there was a 98% feeling of satisfaction with the safety on campus, compared to 100% of students.

There is a high level, 90%+, satisfaction of trust, respect, and fairness felt by the school, with the vast majority stating they felt the school offered a friendly and welcoming environment. In fact, 98% of the parents claimed they’ve been invited to share their heritage and culture with the school in some way, which coincides with the 97% of teachers and staff who feel parents are regularly encouraged to be active participants in their child’s education. An astounding 100% of parents surveyed stated they felt well informed regarding school activities and events, supporting the overall satisfaction with the positive school atmosphere.

QAIS has both a Fall and Spring After School Activities program, and 98% of the faculty and staff felt it made quality use of the their talents and skill sets, providing a varied and engaging lineup of activities. This supports the QAIS vision of holistic education, and 100% of faculty felt the school encourages this approach in how they view students and their needs. Additionally, 100% of student respondents felt QAIS helped them understand and respect cultural and personal differences and diversity, while 90% felt confident in the leadership skills they were acquiring, once again speaking to the overall mission and vision of the school. 98% of teachers and staff actively and regularly reflect on their teaching and/or daily work, with 100% of students indicating they felt comfortable talking with school counselors about issues and concerns.

These numbers conveyed an overall positive and encouraging outlook and perception of QAIS. Parents, students, staff, and board members displayed overwhelming satisfaction with the mission, philosophy, curriculum, welcoming atmosphere, and inclusive environment housed at QAIS, speaking volumes about the success and progress of the school and its members.

C. Significant opportunities for improvement as perceived by the various community sectors.
Survey results also gave insight into several areas of perceived needed improvement, and though only a few sections had low numbers, the feedback provided avenues for discussion, planning, and progress. Improvement is needed in the areas of PD opportunities, library resources, and technology accessibility, especially in the PYP. Lower numbers were also seen from parents, students, and staff regarding the aesthetics of the campus and quality of school lunches. Other perceived deficiencies, such as a need for a Special Education Coordinator and Guidance Counselor, have been addressed this year with the hiring of new staff, along with the adoption of new policies and procedures.

Staff felt access to content-related professional development was limited, and hoped QAIS leadership would take advantage of its qualified and diverse staff to conduct more in-house PD. Furthermore, it was revealed through on-going discussion that although QAIS does provide an external PD stipend, the costs are allotted for online IB workshops and registration fees for live courses, thus travel and lodging are the responsibility of faculty and staff.

82% of parents and 78% of staff felt satisfied with the location and condition of the campus. Currently, QAIS shares space with a hotel, and though several adjustments and renovations have taken place, space is still quite limited and awkward at times. Plans to move to a new, larger, and fully remodeled campus are in place, and the official relocation is scheduled to take place in January of 2018. This should help with the 20% dissatisfaction with classroom and storage space. There is presently only one official teacher’s lounge, and it is located on the 11th floor, thus the 50% dissatisfaction from teachers and staff. Only 57-74% of students and staff are satisfied with school lunches and bathroom facilities. This was also one of the findings from our previous internal survey, thus both the school caterer and custodial staff were changed in September of 2016.

There is also a perceived lack of resources in the library. Some of the lowest numbers of the staff survey were in response to the need for more books, periodicals, and collaboration between faculty and library personnel. Additionally, there were low results regarding access to technology. All MYP and DP students are required to bring their own laptop, however, PYP and EC access has proven to be quite limited. Also noted was the struggle with Internet, often combated with strict Chinese access regulations.

Staff would like to see more time devoted to vertical and horizontal alignment and curriculum planning across grade levels and subjects. According to results, staff would also appreciate the opportunity to fine tune Scope and Sequences in a more collaborative setting, as well as acquire the ability to compare results of QAIS student achievement with those of students in other schools.

75% of staff indicated satisfaction with the salary scale in comparison with other schools in the region, and 25% asserted they’d like more input on the school budget. Only 52% of staff and 82% of parents claimed they fully understood the financial status of the school, and 23% of staff marked they did not have opportunities to express opinions regarding school operations. Finally, staff has stated they’d appreciate more PD regarding emergency, medical, and security protocol and procedures.

D. Significant differences among the perceptions of the four (or five) community sectors, and what can be concluded from them.

Though most survey results between contributing respondents were in line with one another, there were a few outliers and discrepancies in feedback. The most notable being results from our grade 5 students. Their numbers involving fair assessments, effective teaching, knowledge of resources, and perception of friendliness were significantly lower than students in different grades. Some of these students were no older than 9 when the survey was administered, and this may have played a part in the comprehension of certain questions. There was a 15% discrepancy between students and teachers...
regarding perception of differentiated instruction, as 100% of teachers felt they altered and adjusted assignments and lessons based on student needs, while only 85% of students agreed.

6th and 9th graders seemed to feel classes lacked interest and more attention to learning style needed to be given, and though 98% of staff felt the After School Activities program was diverse and engaging, only 87% of students felt the same way. Students and parents are regularly asked for their feedback regarding types of programs they’d like; however, the discrepancy may be a result of cancelled classes due to low student interest, thus limiting the types of activities offered.

The main discrepancy between the staff and board members was the perception of communication and transparency. Staff would like more clarity of the financial standing of the school, and they would appreciate more input into departmental budgeting.

E. Actions that have been taken, or have been firmly incorporated into school improvement plans, as a result of survey findings.

Based on survey results and previous discussions, the following actions have already taken place:

1) A new Special Education Needs Coordinator was hired in August of 2016 to address learning, social, and behavioral needs of students. Policies and procedures have been put into place, including clearly defined referral, tracking, and improvement systems. An all-staff professional development session was held in September, where all steps and systems were clearly explained. The SEN Coordinator now collaborates with faculty regarding accommodations, IEPs, BIPs, and classroom differentiation. Additionally, the SEN Coordinator provides counseling to younger students.

2) A new Guidance and College Counselor was hired in August of 2016 to address the emotional well-being of students. The counselor also fully assists with college and career planning and collaborates with faculty and staff regarding student progress and achievement. A professional development session was held with all-staff to go over the role of the Guidance and College Counselor, as well as the process in which teachers can refer students for counseling needs.

3) A Facilities Manager was hired in August of 2016 to address campus, bussing, Air Quality, emergency and first aid needs. Emergency first responder professional development has taken place, with additional first aid training planned as well.

4) New admission procedures have been implemented to afford teachers the opportunity to receive more information about incoming students, including their health and learning needs, academic standing, and language level. Assessment results and notes are shared directly with teachers, making communication more effective and efficient.

5) A new system was put in place to welcome and assist new staff with their transition to Qingdao. A welcoming committee helps with bank, phone, utility, and home set-up, and the newly hired Staff Care Coordinator helps with all other staff needs, including VISA and passport services.

6) As previously stated, QAIS has plans to move to a newer, larger, and fully remodeled campus in January of 2018. Many of the rooms and facilities will be purpose-based and should better address teacher, student, and parent needs.

7) As of February, 2017, both a new Registered Nurse and a Librarian are under contract.

8) Finally, Language Acquisition classes in the MYP have proven effective; however PYP and EC students require additional assistance and curriculum development. A team has been established to address ELL issues and concerns.
The team has:

a. Developed ELL support for teachers and students, including PYP.
b. Created lists of pull-out interventions
c. Created a Teacher Hub folder with comprehensive teacher ELL classroom support.

The ELL Action Team is in the process of:

d. Developing a comprehensive program and curriculum for all grade levels.
e. Developing differentiated instruction plans and procedures for teachers.
f. Compiling and sharing additional resources and tools for all staff.
g. Creating on-going professional development to all staff detailing all stages of the plan.