

# Learning Partnerships in Action

‘Unlocking the treasures within school and university partnerships’

## Presenters

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24th IB Asia Pacific Annual Regional Conference

*Unlocking the Treasure Within*

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**CONCORDIA**  
**COLLEGE**

*'Firm in Principle, Gentle in Manner'*

“...strong and genuine partnership between Flinders University  
and Concordia College...”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*



# Disconnected contexts

## Hidden treasures

The school...post-evaluation

Theoretical and practical educational developments – what is happening?

Understanding MYP fundamentals against current educational theory – is what we are doing relevant?

Questioning the validity of MYP pedagogical practices – can we do this better?

Personal careers and qualifications – how can we grow as learners and as professional educators?

The university...developing post-graduate IB programs

How can we integrate the theoretical aspects with authentic experiences?

Where will we source instructors with appropriate knowledge and training?

Who can we call upon for support and advice?

How can we gain access to IB resources?

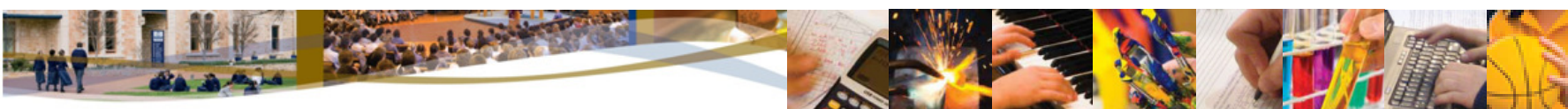


# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

## Potential treasures

Review of literature revealed many positives:

- Exemplary partnerships are widespread throughout Australia  
(*Teaching Australia*, 2009)
- There is strong institutional support for a great variety of partnership initiatives between schools and universities  
(Brady, 2002)
- Evidence indicates that schools are ready to embrace partnerships beyond the traditional practicum supervision  
(Brady, 2002)



# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

Potential treasures

Review of literature revealed many positives:

- Findings that there is overwhelming willingness of principals to embrace broad range of partnership activities

(Brady, 2002)

- The practical core of the school-university partnerships is the professional relationships that it initiates

(*Teaching Australia*, 2009)

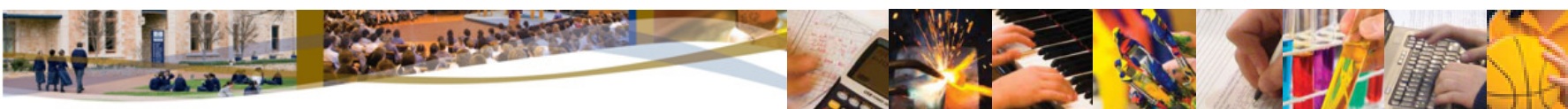


# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

## Potential treasures

Review of literature revealed many positives:

- The partnership gives stakeholders the space to initiate new learning, valuing contributions made by each partner  
(*Teaching Australia, 2009*)
- Schools and universities are intrinsically linked through the enterprise of preparing young people for adult roles  
(Noguera, 1998)



# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

## Potential treasures

The literature also revealed suggestions for sustaining effective partnerships:

- Effective partnerships don't just happen. Stakeholders need to apply explicit resources to initiate and sustain them  
(*Teaching Australia*, 2009)
- Define what is implied by the partnership and how this will be interpreted and enacted by the participants  
(Peters, 1997)



# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

## Potential treasures

The literature also revealed suggestions for sustaining effective partnerships:

- The partnership relationships must be based on mutual respect  
(Noguera, 1998)
- Each stakeholder has to contribute personal and professional resources, in the form of passion, commitment and professional understanding and expertise to make the partnership work  
(*Teaching Australia*, 2009)



# Contextualising partnerships between universities and schools

## Potential treasures

The literature also revealed suggestions for sustaining effective partnerships:

- It is essential to make sure that expectations and roles are clearly defined

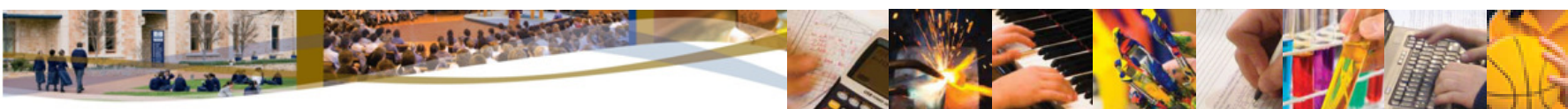
(Noguera, 1998)

- Each of the partners need to be involved in collaborative decision-making about goals and processes

(Peters, 1997)

- Enthusiastic and active support from partner leadership is important

(Peters, 1997)



# Contextualising the needs of MYP schools

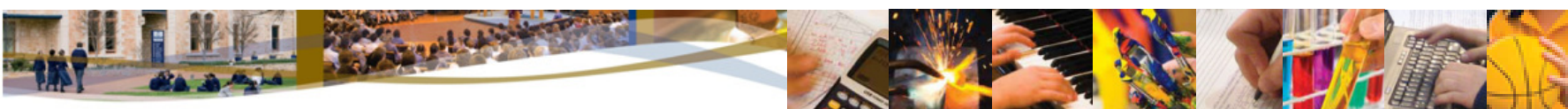
## Potential treasures

Expansion of MYP schools in South Australia, especially in schools with limited budgeting for international teacher training

Professional development for staff that gives higher degree qualifications and IB portability beyond workshop credentials

Adding credibility to the theoretical background that underpins the MYP principles and practices – Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Glasersfeld

Critical evaluation of the MYP in the light of recent and current educational debate and research



“...the commitment of the university and Concordia College to promote and model effective teaching and learning.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*



# Concept

## Phase 1 - dreaming of treasures

In 2006, Adrian Rudzinski (Director of Staff at Concordia College and outgoing MYP Committee member) approaches Colin McMullin (Dean of Education at Flinders University) with the concept of a partnership between the college and the university to enhance academic professional learning for MYP teachers. If implemented, this would be the first post-graduate course for MYP teachers in the world.

“Highly envisioned, enthusiastic, committed, innovative and collegial staff from both Flinders University and Concordia College.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*

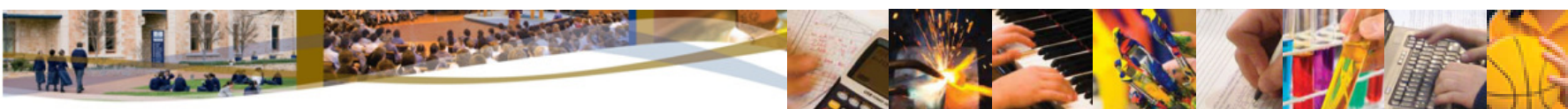


# Concept

## Phase 1 - dreaming of treasures

### OUTCOMES

1. An expression of interest is submitted to IB Teacher Education Services, co-signed by the Executive Dean of Faculty of Flinders University and Council Chairperson of Concordia College
2. Acceptance of concept by IB Cardiff Teacher Education Services and an application procedure is developed
3. Flinders University appoints Kathy Brady to develop potential post-graduate courses – Graduate Certificate in Education (IBMYP) and Masters of Education (IB) and to begin the application process from the university



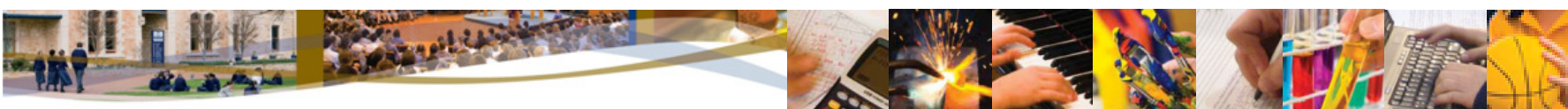
# Partnership

## Phase 2 – identifying treasure possibilities

Throughout 2007 and into 2008, multiple meetings are held between representatives of Flinders University and Concordia College to explore ways in which the two learning institutions can support each other in a post-graduate teacher education partnership

“...commitment demonstrated by the leadership and staff of both institutions, to work cooperatively on course design and delivery.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*



# Partnership

## Phase 2 – identifying treasure possibilities

### OUTCOMES

1. A formal Memorandum of Understanding between the university and the college is drafted, edited, legally scrutinised and signed by the Executive Dean of Faculty and Principal of Concordia College
2. A steering committee is established, with representatives from both partners, charged with overseeing the development of the partnership and agreed responsibilities
3. The university engages an independent education consultant with substantial experience in international and IB education to provide advice and expertise, and to in-service Flinders Education staff in IB principles and practices



# Planning

## Phase 3 – examining existing treasures

2007 sees planning, reflection, revisions, communication, more revisions – the transition of dreaming into practicalities and legalities.

Observations, advice, critique, feedback and questions are sought to varying degrees from a range of IB representatives and associates including Mark Waterson, Jonathon Marsh, Greg Valentine, Roger Marshman, Malcolm Nicholson and Ed Lawless.

Meanwhile, Kathy Brady continues to collaboratively develop the official IB application

“..commitment, enthusiasm and collegiality that has been demonstrated during the extensive planning and development phase.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*

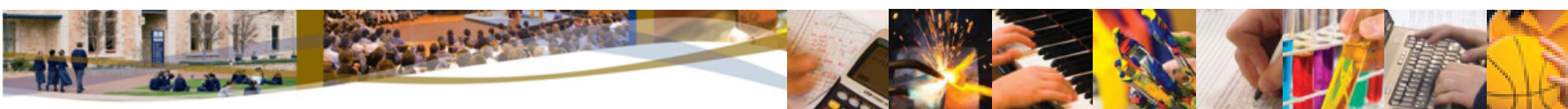


# Planning

## Phase 3 – examining existing treasures

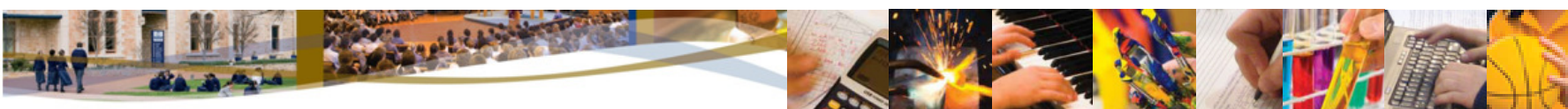
### OUTCOMES

1. Formal internal approval of the proposed post-graduate IB courses is gained at Flinders University
2. Field investigations by the post-graduates to be held on-campus at Concordia College are introduced into the course proposals
3. Interested Flinders University academic staff complete the IB in-service program
4. Concordia proposes modifying the MYP Coordinator role to encompass the partnership responsibilities



“The inclusion of field trips was also seen as a most positive innovation that would enhance the learning experience of participants and provide authentic ways for students to engage with IB teaching and learning in a school context.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*



# Consolidation

## Phase 4 – Coordinating resources and requirements

In the latter stages of 2007, while the application is being finalised, the partnership team steadily identifies and resolves a broad range of challenges to ensure that the proposed IB post-graduate courses meet the requirements of the International Baccalaureate and will fulfil the needs of the targeted student groups

“The deployment of experienced IB practitioners from Concordia College as mentors to participants on the Graduate Certificate would be a most positive innovation in that it would expose the participants to a wider and more diverse set of perspectives.”

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*

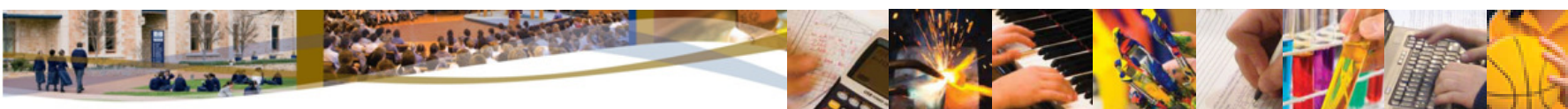


# Consolidation

## Phase 4 – Coordinating resources and requirements

### OUTCOMES

1. The Flinders University post-graduate courses are aligned the areas of inquiry, domains of knowledge and essential questions associated with the IB Teacher Awards Initiative
2. University is given access to IB documentation and resources
3. Full-time and casual teaching staff are identified for the courses drawn from an available pool of experienced formally-trained IB practitioners
4. The formal application is submitted to Cardiff, and accepted with requiring revision



# Implementation

## Phase 5 – From planning into action

In mid-2008, following receipt of the application, a formal Recognition Visit by IB representatives – Mark Waterson, Jonathon Marsh (Cardiff IB Teacher Education Services), Shani Sniedze-Gregory (retiring MYP Curriculum leader and editor of *MYP: From Principles into Practice* document) and Greg Valentine (Australasian IB representative) – is conducted to rigorously evaluate the partnership's offering. The project is unconditionally approved by the visiting team and the original dream shifts into reality

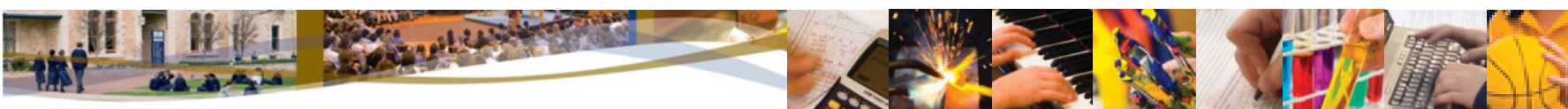


# Implementation

Phase 5 – From planning into action

## OUTCOMES

1. Formal unconditional approval is given by the IB for university to commence the post-graduate courses from 2008
2. Concordia College formally creates new role for MYP Coordinator to act as a contributor to the post-graduate courses
3. First post-graduate course – Graduate Certificate in Education (IBMYP) commences in October 2008
4. First Masters of Education (IB) commences in September 2009



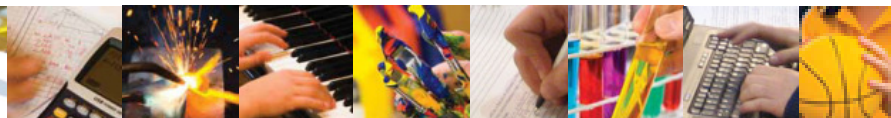
# Action

## Phase 6 – Finding the first treasures

Graduate Certificate in Education (MYP) started in  
October 2008

Designed for teachers with any level of teaching experience,  
but with limited or no experience in the MYP, who are  
appointed, or about to be appointed to, MYP schools

Completion of the Graduate Certificate will enable  
participants to register for an IB Level 1 Teacher Award



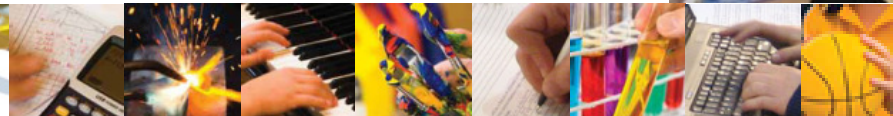
# Action

## Phase 6 – Finding the first treasures

A three topic program, each topic worth 6 units of credit, totalling 18 units for the Graduate Certificate, articulating if desired into the Masters of Education (IB)

Each topic comprises a five day intensive on campus at Flinders and a three day field investigation on a school campus. From 2010 topics also available through distance delivery mode.

First graduates to be conferred with their award in April 2010



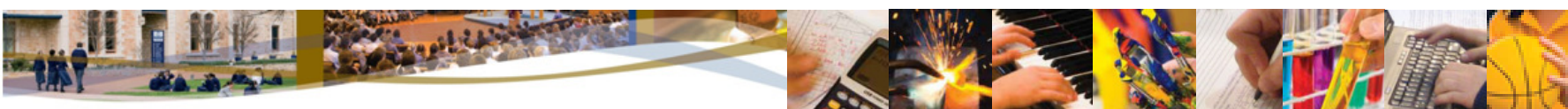
# Action

## Phase 6 – Finding the first treasures

Master of Education (IB) commenced in September 2009

Designed for experienced IB teachers, educators in leadership positions in IB schools, or educators in IB schools aspiring to such a position. Key aim of course is to critically engage with issues associated with international education and IB education, with a strong focus on practice based educational inquiry

Completion of Masters will enable participants to register for an IBO Level 2 Teacher Award



# Action

## Phase 6 – Finding the first treasures

Program requires completion of 2 core topics, totalling 18 units of credit, culminating in a systematic and rigorous IB practice-based research project. Any remaining required topics are selected from the suite of Masters level education topics at Flinders.

Core topics comprise 5 days of intensive workshops on campus at Flinders. Additional topics can be undertaken in distance mode.

From May 2010 core topics will also be delivered in intensive workshops in Singapore.



# Reflections

Concordia College – unearthed treasures

Re-invigorated a flagging MYP interest in the school

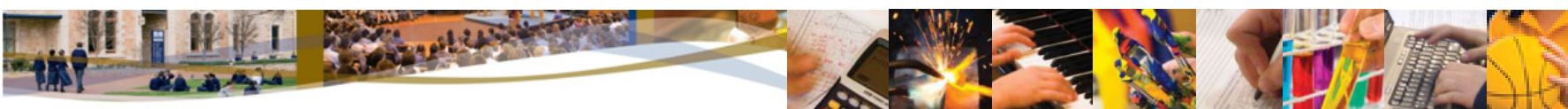
Created opportunity for teachers to pursue further study applicable  
to their daily practice

Provided an opportunity for teachers to form direct links with  
university teachers

Graduates on field investigations gave teachers immediate and direct  
reflection on their MYP practices

Interesting perspectives from SA schools

Generated tertiary teaching experiences for Concordia teachers



# Reflections

## Flinders University – unearthed treasures

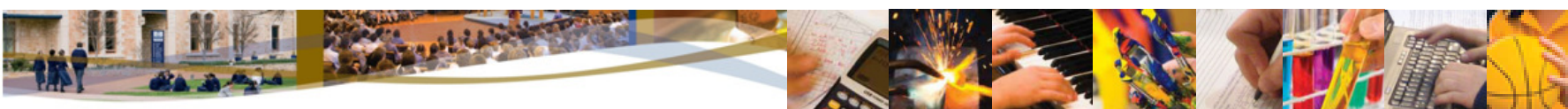
Partnership has opened up to Flinders academic staff the chance to become involved with other Concordia endeavours

Via Concordia, links with a broader network of MYP schools and educators have been established

This has led to research possibilities for Flinders academics in the area of IB practice

Access to IB documents and resources expedited

Collegial and collaborative relationships and interactions that could never have been dreamed of!



“...clear potential for building upon the existing relationship to establish one that is highly effective, sustainable in the long term and symbiotic. “

*Recognition Visit Report, June 2008*



# Future Directions

## Phase 7 – Enriching the treasures

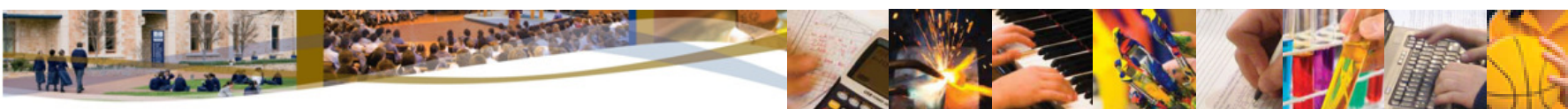
Revision of topics to fulfil course restructure process being carried out across all courses at Flinders

Field investigation component to be applicable to any MYP school agreeing to allow participants to conduct investigations on campus

Delivery of Graduate Certificate in Education (IBMYP) in distance mode from 2010

Development of a virtual field investigation for distance delivery topics

Master of Education (IB) delivery to expand into Singapore in May 2010



# Questions and discussion

