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Creating Equitable Access Pathways For All Students In South Carolina? A Study Of SC International Baccalaureate Diploma Programs

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**CREATING EQUITABLE ACCESS PATHWAYS FOR ALL STUDENTS IN
SOUTH CAROLINA?
A STUDY OF SC INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE
DIPLOMA PROGRAMS**

by

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Dedication

To my love, William R. Padula, for his encouragement and unquestionable commitment. To our children, Samuel V., William J., and Kimberly A., for their trust and youthful energy. To our parents, Isabel, Raymond, Jeanne and Bill, for their work ethic and solid foundation that lives on. To our sisters, Doris, Teresa and Cindy for their friendship and laughter.

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I am grateful for Dr. Doyle Stevick whose work stimulated my interest to pursue graduate studies. He recognized my potential and introduced Dr. Kara D. Brown, who mentored me throughout this six-year journey. Her professional knowledge of comparative education and international perspectives provided nourishment for my work. Her dedication, attention to detail and enthusiasm for her students is contagious!

I am thankful for Dr. Thomas Hébert for his thoughtful scholarship in Gifted Education. His book: “Understanding the Social and Emotional Lives of Gifted Students” (Hebert, 2011) has made me more attentive to equity in the classroom. His elegant and warm writing style is truly inspirational.

To my research participants, I am grateful for their trust in sharing their experiences for this case study.

Abstract

This case study adds insight to the idea of equitable access as it relates to advanced coursework available to students in public high schools in South Carolina. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IBDP) has become a viable choice since secondary-level magnet programs in SC have taken root for over thirty years. The IBDP originally developed in SC to attract the global elite, however in the recent decade, the IBDP has morphed into a program meant for all students. The concept of IB for All is marketed as a college readiness program within South Carolina IBDP schools. Access is multidimensional; it includes educational policies, leadership, and practices heavily shaped by the local-school policy actors. However, my analysis demonstrates that access is also a socio-cultural construct, formulated, or redefined, year after year in schools. The perspectives of IBDP coordinators from across the state of SC generated the central insights analyzed in this dissertation. Based on their responses to an initial questionnaire, coordinators were interviewed individually providing rich details about the patterns of change throughout the state. Then, focus groups and further one-on-one interviews were conducted with other key participants providing an historic and broader perspective from the state and national levels. This inquiry adds insight to the idea of what access to the IBDP looks like in relation to school reform, choice, integration, and giftedness. This case study presents the multidimensionality of access and will inform choice implementation through leveling the field for equitable opportunities for SC students to choose the IBDP option for college readiness.

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Chapter 1

“These are great things that are going on...”

The 1983 Nation at Risk Report put into motion a secondary-school based reform movement of college readiness for all students across the United States (Siskin, 2013; US Department of Education, 1983, 2008; Conley, 2007; Borek, 2008). This report responded to the widespread idea that American students were falling behind their international counterparts in the areas of math and science. These federal recommendations spawned debate and reform for over twenty-five years in the areas of content, expectations, and teaching (Borek, 2008). High schools have shifted from being “the people’s college” to the current “people’s ticket to college” whereby the aspiration--and expectation--to go to college has become more common among the high school population (Siskin, 2011). Research shows attempting college credit in high school to be positively linked to academic success in college (Achieve, 2015; Caspary, 2011; Conley et.al., 2014; Darling-Hammond et.al., 2014). The Obama administration has further made college “readiness”-defined by the metrics of scores on national tests and grades earned on advanced level high school courses (Conley, 2007; Siskin, 2013) -- a priority. College readiness means something different, however, for all stakeholders; this presents a challenge for schools, districts, and state-level administrators. Whatever the definition, it is apparent that college readiness programs in high schools have been

questionable especially for underrepresented students¹ (Schneider, 2011; Siskin, 2013; Resnik, 2015).

The most commonly used models of advanced academic programs for college and career readiness in U.S. high schools are Advanced Placement (AP), dual credit, and the International Baccalaureate (IB). Beginning in the 1980's, Advanced Placement (AP) was considered the gold star, elite program for gifted and talented populations in top high schools in the United States (Schneider, 2011). Dual credit offers the opportunity for students to earn college credit and high school credit at the same time, as long as the course is successfully completed (Achieve, 2015). Over the past twenty years, the International Baccalaureate (IB), has also entered the U.S. (public) secondary education market as a viable college readiness option for gifted and talented students (Walker, 2011; Andrews, 2003; Resnik, 2015). Though the benefits for college readiness are a celebration for the comprehensive and skill-based nature of the program, the support necessary to attain these benefits may at the same time pose a significant barrier for the development of a more inclusive IB program. Since 2007 the push from the International Baccalaureate Organization's headquarters is IB for All-- bringing to a head this program's historic exclusiveness and current call for more inclusiveness.

Tension has begun to develop between the historic exclusivity of IB and the growing pressure for it to be more inclusive and equitably offered to all students. Historically, *exclusivity* marked the IB program whose initial purpose was serve the

¹ Underrepresented student groups are defined in my research as non-white populations and/or having low-socioeconomic status. [Labels of student groups will be discussed further in Chapter 2]

private sphere, primarily the children of international diplomats. The first IB school authorized in the US was a private school in 1971; the first public school was authorized in 1978 (IBO.org, 2009). Expansion of the IB in US schools has been exponential since 2005. The first public Title I school to offer the IBDP was in 1989. As of 2009, the ethnic background of IBDP candidates was 59% White/Non-Hispanic, 15% Asian, 12% Hispanic, 10% Black and 4% other. Economically, only 16% of all IB Candidates in the US came from low-socioeconomic backgrounds, as measured by free/reduced lunch eligibility at school (IBO.org, 2009). As of 2015, IB researchers revealed an increase to 33% low-income student participation in the IBDP of which 48% White/Non-Hispanic, 13% Asian, 21% Hispanic, 13% Black and 4% other (IBO.org, 2015).

The current expansion of the IB in the public sphere introduces new challenges of accessibility for a wider population of students including the underrepresented (Walker, 2011). Reconciliation between the exclusivity and inclusivity of the IB within the public domain of college readiness options has piqued interest among researchers (DiGiorgio, 2010; IBO.org, 2015; Coco et.al., 2011, Resnik, 2015, Kyburg et. al., 2007). Even though every IB World School undergoes a rigorous authorization process by the IB Organization followed by subsequent audits every five years (IBO.org, 2016), the local context of each IB World School varies and research is limited on how IB Diploma Programs are implemented from school to school. Variations include coursework offerings, the size of the program, and implementation practices that include outreach to certain gifted and/or non-gifted student groups, and under-represented student population groups. At its core, within all schools, the quest to create expanded access to IB means finding the balance between equity and excellence. Equity is the quality of

being fair and impartial as the ideals of an egalitarian education provide equal opportunity for all students (Blankenstein & Noguera, 2015). Excellence is achieved through the pursuit of equity, “An equity tide lifts all boats” (Blankenstein & Noguera, 2015, p 5). The more equitable an educational system, the less the socioeconomic background determines the outcome (Sahlberg, 2015).

The gap in the research specific to IB and access. Two significant research gaps exist regarding access and IB. First, although the International Baccalaureate has shown a marked commitment to improve access to the IB Diploma Program (IBO, 2009), research is particularly limited on ways IB programs are implemented within these Title I and Title I Eligible Schools (Resnik, 2015). Based on interviews with IB Diploma school officials from twenty-four sites across the US, Resnik is one of the few researchers who has linked the IB with whole-school development (and survival) strategies for low performing schools. In her research on IB magnet schools, she categorizes Diploma Programs in three different ways: “The DP – a school within a school,” “The DP- the school’s crème de la crème” or “Improving all students’ scores through the DP” (Resnik, 2015, pp. 80-103). For schools that implement the “The DP – a school within a school,” students are integrated throughout the building, but not within the classroom; this proves to create a polarizing effect under one roof. “The DP- the school’s crème de la crème” refers to a DP school designed to attract gifted students, who are predominantly White to attend a school with a large majority of African American students. For schools that implement “Improving all students’ scores through the DP,” this IB for All approach opens IB coursework to all students to take on a course-by-course basis; in doing so, the test results for the whole school improve.

Second, research is also limited on the ways IB education is made available through its implementation to students of varied ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds (Willis-Darpoh, 2015). Research on unequal access to rigorous programs in Florida IB World Schools (Perna, et. al., 2015) reveals trends from 1995-2008 in the participation of underrepresented students in the IBDP. One finding from the Perna et al. study (2015) suggests that administrators and policy makers with an intention to create access and equity to the IB are developing Diploma Programs (DP) in schools and simply opening the doors. Researchers conclude that (1) all IB Diploma Programs are not the same; and (2) the full range of IB courses offerings may not be available within a school to attract Black, Hispanic, and low-income students (Perna, et. al., 2015). The need for supplementary support within inclusive programs requires extra outreach, recruitment, and pre-IB preparation (Bland & Woodworth, 2009 as presented by Willis-Darpoh (2015). Each school may implement the IBDP differently and dependent upon policies and practices unique to the school setting and its population. The balance of equity and excellence is challenged when addressing the needs of the students who might otherwise not consider the IBDP. Extra effort to create an inclusive college readiness culture within each school is dependent upon resourcefulness and the ways stakeholders think about being ready for college. Stakeholders are parents, students, teachers, administrators, district personnel, community members and school board.

Purpose. Through this dissertation project, I explore the ways that the implementation of IB Diploma Programs in South Carolina public high schools shape access to this college-ready curriculum. I situate my research both in local, statewide, national, and global contexts and within the frames of inclusivity and exclusivity. My

research focuses on the access-related understandings and insights of S.C. high school IB Program Coordinators. These key policy actors are the central teacher-administrators in the school who fully understand the capability and potential of the program within the school and for the students within the program. Recent research has begun to scratch the surface on the ways IB Diploma Programs are differently implemented in U.S. schools (Resnik, 2015). This dissertation project builds on Resnik's research to explore the ways administrative personnel view and contend with IB programs within the school. These locally shaped ways of conceptualizing and implementing IB Diploma Programs will help to expand our understanding of access and pathways for students to advanced programs, in this case the IB and lead, more broadly to insights about both the inclusive and exclusive nature of the Diploma Program.

The main questions guiding my research are:

(1) How are high schools in the US, in particular South Carolina, responding to the shift to offer a more inclusive IB Diploma Program?

(2) How are South Carolina Diploma Coordinators responding to the exclusive and inclusive tensions in the IB Diploma Program?

I am curious to learn through my research if SC IB Diploma coordinators perceive the IBDP as a school reform tool made available only to “the crème de la crème” or is it a reform that opens access and equity “for all.” Does IB create a “school within a school”? Or is it some combination of above? Does the IB coordinator's perception of the program as it currently exists in each SC high school reflect a change regarding the original purpose of implementation of the IBDP within that school?

Student access to the IB program is shaped by school policies (e.g., matriculation patterns, recruitment practices) and the prevailing social culture of parents, students and school personnel within each school and district. Since their authorization in 1988 (ibo.org, 2016), all the South Carolina IB Diploma-hosting schools have been granted the freedom and autonomy to craft any combination of these access policies to meet the needs of their students within their budgetary parameters. In other words, some schools may offer open access to IB courses taken à la carte, some schools may open access to the full Diploma, and lastly, some schools may present a combination of access of courses and the full diploma. As IB has expanded in the U.S. and S.C., IB remains a gold star, exclusive program (Resnik, 2015), however, the global priority shift of IB for All challenges this exclusivity.

This shift motivates me to better understand access issues related to the IB Diploma Program as the number of programs have expanded in the state. The benefits of student participation in the IBDP have been addressed fully in literature, however as I alluded to earlier in this chapter, a research gap exists in the participation and performance of underrepresented populations. My research explores the push to expand access for all students to IB within public schools of South Carolina, where there has been no research to date on IB-related developments. My focus on South Carolina highlights the state's history of segregation and underserving underrepresented populations. This state context adds complexity to the concept of access to college readiness through S.C. IB Diploma programs (see Table 1.1). As a researcher interested in exploring and understanding access, the current phase of IB Program expansion

comes at an exciting point in history where both the US and the IBO are concerned with access-related issues.

The IB Phenomenon: Growth & Distribution of Programs

Worldwide there are 4,173 IB schools in 146 different countries. The United States has the fastest growth of IB World Schools of any country in the world since the early 1980s. The US houses 41% of all IB World Schools; approximately 65,383 US students tested as IB Diploma Candidates in May of 2016 (IBO, 2016). Some IB Diploma schools represent magnet programs and have been developed in US schools since the 1980's to attract minority populations to a school site to support desegregation efforts (Resnik, 2015). The southeastern region of the US (i.e., Florida, North Carolina, Georgia and South Carolina) is the most concentrated area of IB World Schools in the country (IBO, 2015). Since 1982, the number of IB World Schools² in this region has grown to 359 schools, of which 172, or 47.9% house Diploma Programs (IBO, 2016). As of 2016, Florida leads the way with 83 Diploma Programs, North Carolina with 33, Georgia with 30 and South Carolina with 26 Diploma programs (see Table 1.3 for a cumulative, chronological list of IB schools in the Southeastern United States). Of the 26 IB Diploma Programs in South Carolina (see Table 1.2 for SC IB school listing by county), two are housed in private schools, 24 are housed in public high schools; four of these high school programs are considered district choice magnet schools and 20 are programs within a school. From an international comparative perspective, the

² IB World School²- Schools are designated as “IB World Schools” at the completion of an extensive authorization process by the IB Organization. IB World Schools may house Primary Years Programs (PYP), Middle Years Programs or Diploma Programs (DP).

number of total IB schools in the state of South Carolina--presently at 62 schools including primary, middle and high school programs--is comparable to the number of IB programs two years ago in India (80 schools) and China (58 schools) (IBO.org., 2014). Due to rapid growth in the Asia Pacific region, the number of IB schools has increased tremendously in two years; the current number in India now stands at 132 IB schools and China has 105 IB schools (IBO.org., 2017). South Carolina has more IB World schools than the combined number of total IB schools in Chile (28 schools) and Brazil (29 schools), however, most of these South American schools are private (IBO.org., 2017). The first official IBDP school in South Carolina was founded in 1988. Ten years later, there were 8 IB Diploma Programs in the SC. By 2008, there were 26 IB Diploma Programs (IBDP); this number has remained steady in the last decade, even though some programs were phased out/terminated and new ones replaced them elsewhere (see Table 1.3) (email correspondence vanderkamp@ibo.org, Oct. 12, 2016). Notably, in 2006 after 24 of the 26 IBDP schools in South Carolina were in place, IB changed its agenda from Growth to Access and the IB for All initiative unfurled. Perhaps this change by IB reflects the needs of US public schools from the viewpoint of the International Baccalaureate (Walker, 2011).

Global ideology. The state of South Carolina fosters a culture supporting this IB international perspective and the idea of globalization. This global perspective, or ideology, reflects, in part, the SC economy, whose Chamber of Commerce “represents over 18,000 business and over one million employees.”, (SC Chamber, 2017). Included in these businesses are international companies such as BMW, Mercedes, Hitachi, Sunoco located in the Upstate, the Midlands, and the coastal areas. Notably most of the

IBDP schools in the state serve students of families who are employed by these corporations. In effort to support the global economy in South Carolina, the state has aligned their vision of the future workforce in the document called the ‘Profile of the South Carolina Graduate’ (Figure 1.1). This document is a tool made by state level education officials to represent the ideal product (i.e., graduate) of the SC school system.

In preparation for college and career readiness, the SC graduate should have ‘world-class knowledge’, which I define as the ideology of knowledge necessary for the graduate to be competitive within the global economy gained through the language arts, math, multiple languages, science, and social studies. And, the SC graduate should possess ‘world-class skills’, those skills necessities to compete within the global economy through creativity, innovation, critical thinking, collaboration, communication and know-how. The ‘world-class’ wording implies, a gold standard for which to reach and that SC as a state adheres to the ideals of capitalism. In addition, the SC graduate should possess the characteristics of integrity, global perspective, work ethic, self-direction and interpersonal skills. The IB Learner Profile (Figure 1.2) and Diploma Program Model (Figure 1.3) (ibo.org, 2017) align with the Profile of the SC Graduate in powerful ways. Thus, this new conceptualization, the Profile of the SC Graduate at the state level demonstrates convergence of education models with the IB counterparts. The “Profile” is in harmony with global ideology of the IB Learner Profile and Diploma Program Model, yet the “Profile of the SC Graduate” upholds indigenous, state identity as if it were a SC homegrown product. Whether this is SC embracing the international or it is business mimicry at its best, it is a sign of the globalization of education in the state.

Access & IB: A shift in organizational focus. The International

Baccalaureate is a non-profit education foundation whose mission is to make a better world through education (IBO.org, 2017). IB supports education as a universal right in conjunction with the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2006) and Sustainable Development Goals; and, in 2006, it declared IB for All (IBO.org, 2006) in conjunction with the *Education for All: Quality Imperative Global monitoring report* (UNESCO, 2005). This was a shift in focus by the IBO that made official their change from a *growth* initiative to an *access* initiative. Though the growth initiative does result in more access through more schools, the access initiative is focused on offering IB coursework equitably to more students per school. IB is changing with the times; given the access focus of IB World Schools, the IBDP should be offered to a larger portion of the school's population, while retaining its exclusive reputation of excellence (Walker, 2011).

In the U.S. context, the new access focus of IB has resulted in an IB organizational focus in the Title I IB schools. The International Baccalaureate published a research update on Title I IB schools from 2009-2010 (IBO, 2012) that identified 1,389 total IB public schools in the United States -56% of which are Title I schools. Of these Title I IB schools, 71% are classified as "school-wide Title I," which means at least 40% of the IB students are from low-income families. Given this underserved population, these schools can receive federal funds to serve schoolwide programs like IB. Of the 56% that are Title I schools, 29% are "Title I eligible," which means that less than 40% of the students are from low-income families; these schools can receive federal funds to serve "targeted assistance programs" such as IB for students who are at risk for failure within core required subjects. Within the U.S. school-wide Title I

schools, elementary schools with IB Primary Years programs are 29% more prevalent than high schools with IB Diploma Programs. This commitment to Title I and Title I eligible Schools is expressed in IB-produced literature, but there is no way of knowing how the programs are implemented within the Title I and Title I eligible schools.

Insightful to my dissertation research on access to IB is the case of the Dutch government's support of enhanced access to IB Diploma Program³ in upper secondary education. Dutch students have participated the IBDP in public schools since 2007. Prior to this pilot program, the IBDP was only offered in private elite schools (since 1979). Pricharts (2010) explores this private-to-public shift, and the Dutch government's effort in keeping up with the forces of globalization, while preserving the national identity. The Dutch government case also highlights the ways governments contend with the potential barrier of cost; the Dutch government offers certain IBDP courses and mandates the use of free access to high school students. In the Dutch example, we are reminded, however, that free is not free due to IB program costs (Table 1.4). Notably, to implement the IBDP costs approximately \$25,000 with an annual fee of approximately

³ Clarification of key terms related to IB Diploma Program: to earn an IB Diploma, students must successfully complete six Diploma Program content courses, and complete the IB core. The IB core includes the TOK (Theory of Knowledge) course, the Extended Essay (a 4,000-word research paper), and evidence of CAS (creativity, activity and service). It is necessary to understand how the program is implemented within the school setting. For example, there are Diploma Program courses and then there is the IB Diploma. It is up to the school to decide if IB Diploma courses can be taken individually, in an à la carte fashion like AP courses, or alternatively taken as the comprehensive IB Diploma (six courses plus the core package). When referring to just "the DP" considering the change in focus by the IB, the IB for All access initiative can impose ambiguity to the term "the DP" and may be misleading to researchers and school officials alike.

\$11,000 no matter how many students are enrolled. And with every increment of 25 students, costs increase by over 50%.

Despite its growing popularity (or maybe because of it), IB is not without its critics. According to one critic, the International Baccalaureate as created a cultural war as the global is disrupts the local US education system in the state of South Carolina (Marks, 2005 as referenced by Bunnell, 2009). Though the IB is criticized from outside the U.S. as creating a 'class-for-itself' by serving the middle class (Bunnell, 2009, p. 353), it is also present in the top 34% of the Americas' Best Public Schools in *Newsweek Magazine*, (as cited by Bunnell, 2010). Further critique about expansion of the IB challenges the multicultural nature of the global education system as an ingredient to denationalizing the national education systems (Resnik, 2009, 2012). Similar are the challenges of globalization faced by the Dutch government, the expansion of the IB has stimulated global interest among educators of its impact on national education systems.

The research site: South Carolina

South Carolina has a distinctive history steeped in issues related to educational exclusivity, inclusivity, and fluctuating access to school programs. Educational historian Scott Baker (2010) identified SC as being "the last southern state to desegregate public education" (p. xxii), while also implementing a "new, more sophisticated system of white supremacy that has come to define public education in the twenty-first century" (p. xxiii). Baker postulates that South Carolina was the first to institutionalize standardized testing for public college entrance in the southeast in 1954 (p. 179), deeply disadvantaging access to higher education for African American students. Thus, long-standing segregation efforts in South Carolina have been a major

force in restricting access to educational opportunities and quality schooling. By the late 1980s, however, SC schools began using federal funds to improve programs within these once segregated schools. One of the strategies to improve schooling, and retain the middle class in public education, was the development of choice.

The implementation of choice programs within school districts has further separated communities by class (Baker, 2010). Widespread poverty is an important aspect of school demographics to consider for this research--84.5% of all public schools in South Carolina were Title I schools with 56.8% of the population being eligible for free/reduced lunch (NCES, 2012). Integration and the increasing concentration of poverty in public schools has contributed to White flight out of public schools and into the private sector (Lubienski, 2005). During the mid-1980s, magnet-school funding became rooted in the US federally-supported plans to support efforts to bring the white population back to predominantly black schools (Resnik, 2015). For over thirty years, magnet school implementation began in the Upstate and spread throughout the state of South Carolina to densely populated areas. Only four districts within SC are currently federally funding magnet programs, whereas the rest of the school districts implement magnet themes on independent of federal funds.

Intersecting policy for IB Diploma Schools in SC. With a mission of preparing students worldwide with the skills essential for life in the 21st century, IB promotes intercultural respect and understanding (IBO.org, 2017). Vital to this undertaking, the IB organization works with governments, districts and schools to maintain its standard of international education. To effectively carry out this global mission at the local level, an expectation exists of buy-in along each strata of policy

from the global to the local in South Carolina. Within this section, I will address global, federal, state, district, and school policies that are associated with the IB World Schools in South Carolina.

Beginning at the global level, all IB World Schools must pass an authorization process from the IB to participate as IB schools. Within this process are levels of commitment that pertain to funding, structure and support for each school. Once schools are authorized, stakeholders must then be trained on the IB philosophy, curriculum, and system. It is expected that each subject teacher is retrained within their curriculum cycle and all administrators, guidance counselors, and coordinators update training accordingly. Every fifth year, an extensive self-study of the IB Diploma Program is expected and that may include an onsite school visit from the IB (IBO.org, 2017).

On the federal level, all the IB Diploma Programs in South Carolina public schools are in counties that receive Title I allocations (See Table 1.2, SC IB Diploma Program schools by County). The purpose of federal Title I funding is for schools to provide opportunities for all children to meet the state performance standards (ed.sc.gov., 2017). This is accomplished by schools making the effort to provide school wide reform through accelerated programs, improved instructional quality, and an increased instructional time, professional development for school staff, and outreach to parents. Every school in the state of South Carolina is assigned by the state a poverty index based on many parameters that school districts report. The parameters of the poverty index include a families' participation in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), families receiving other means-tested benefits like Medicaid, families receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Programs (SNAP), and foster/homeless

children (dss.sc.gov., 2017). The Poverty Index levels for high schools within the state of South Carolina range from 5.4 to 95.2. The Poverty Index levels for each school IB Diploma Program school range from the 23.49 to 77.00 (ed.sc.gov., 2017).

Also on the federal level, besides Title I allocations some schools qualify for magnet-school funding. Four of the twenty-four, or 16.7% of, IB Diploma Programs housed in South Carolina public schools are designated as magnet schools affiliated with Magnet Schools of America (MSA) and recipients of specific federally funded grants in addition to the Title I allocation. The other 83.3% of IB Diploma Program schools are choice-themed programs within Title I designated schools/districts. Choice-themed programs could be considered schools-within-schools or a school with a specific collection of coursework geared towards science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), or science, technology, engineering, arts, math (STEAM) or pure arts programs. Schools offer advanced versions of STEM and STEAM courses traditionally through Advanced Placement coursework until the introduction of IB. The newest choice themes in South Carolina have a career, technology and engineering (CTE) foci aligned with technical colleges and generating dual credit courses. Provided students are successful in dual credit courses, they are earning college credit from the issuing institution while in high school.

Both magnet grants and Title I funds are at the federal level, however, magnet schools are historically tied to desegregation efforts to address inequities within local school systems. Magnet schools began in the late 1960's to promote choice as an alternative to forced desegregation efforts. Such choice options were considered the first "voucher" system that promoted public schools as a free market based system (Waldrip,

2000; magnet.edu, 2017). This marketplace effect enabled families to make school choices based on the individual educational needs of their students. By the early 1970's, federal courts mandated desegregation through a district level voluntary component of school choice options. This was the federal government's way of improving educational equity, by enticing with the carrot, rather than threatening with the stick. Choice programs that have successfully integrated need to establish innovative ways to pursue diversity through language, socioeconomic status, test scores and geographical measures other than race alone (Orfield & Lee, 2007). The premise of magnet schools is to enable district-wide equitable choices for families and to promote a balanced racial distribution across school districts (Interview with S. Wheeler, January 25, 2017).

At the district level, magnet schools today have grown, in part, to “reduce racial isolation” within school districts (Waldrup, 2000; magnet.edu, 2017. p. 4) across the United States (<http://www.magnet.edu/about/our-mission-and-beliefs>, 2017). The five foundational pillars for all magnet schools are: (1) a diversity cornerstone offering culturally competent educational environments; (2) a commitment to academic excellence; (3) innovative curriculum and professional development; (4) high quality, student-centered instructional systems, and (5) partnerships with family and community. Magnet schools have focused themes to attract different segments of student populations that are free to choose amongst various schools within a school district. Such themes could be science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) based, or also include the fine arts (STEAM), International Baccalaureate, or international studies, career and technically based (CTE) or world-language focused. The purpose of magnet schools is to provide students with choice to match their needs and result in a more cultivated and

successful outcome for each student. Most magnet schools do not have applications, but some have certain criteria based on gifted and talented designations such as AP and IB (originally intended prior to 2006). However, due to their popularity, some magnet schools practice random lottery based admissions procedures. Transportation may or may not be provided to the school of choice at no cost to the family; this policy is up to the district and state.

Districts make the decision to implement an International Baccalaureate Diploma Program at the school level in South Carolina. Since all SC IBDP schools are Title I schools, then the IB fiscal policies are connected with the federal level. The leadership responsible for implementing the IBDP, however, is at the school level. As long as state-level mandatory standardized curricular requirements are met, schools have the freedom to execute the DP according to their needs and their students' needs. At the state and school levels, IB is an advanced educational tool intended for excellence and equity that aims to prepare students for college and life-long learning.

The cost for the International Baccalaureate is a district- and school-level challenge to inclusivity of all students within a school setting within the U.S. and South Carolina. Adopting and maintaining the IB Program is a considerable expense for public schools, which may limit the adoption or expansion (and thus access). The participation cost for an IB World School \$11,090 annually (per the IBO for the 2015-2016 school year) plus a one-time per student cost of \$842. For an IB diploma program of 25 candidates, the cost totals a minimum of \$21,050 (IBIS.IBO.org, 2016); this does not include operational costs. The total cost of the program stabilizes when the diploma candidate capacity reaches 25 participants (see, Table 1.4). Researchers affiliated with

the ‘Bridging the Equity Gap’ project, funded by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation for the IB, have identified necessary factors, that make a difference in an IB Diploma Program’s access and incur further costs, for example, outreach programs, teaching/learning supplementation, and school wide support within public high schools (Casparly et. al., 2015).

IB Diploma Program schools in South Carolina have been incorporating the IB into their schools from 1988 through the present, 2017 (Table 1.3). They have embraced change and incorporated global concepts in their local ways of doing school. For example, within South Carolina, it is a state requirement that all students take United States History. Within the IB curriculum, a humans and societies courses are required, which could be satisfied through a myriad of options including philosophy, business and management, history of Americas, or environmental systems and societies to name a few. All schools within South Carolina have chosen the History of Americas course to cover both the state and IB requirements. Most IB students will take the history end-of-course exam after their first year of IB History of Americas. Critics of this approach to History of Americas claim that it is too U.S.-centered during the first year of the two-year course, yet this is school survival technique that satisfies both the global and the local requirements (interview data – findings 2017).

Noteworthy is the concept of change in the United States school system; it is incremental and the school system evolves as a result of an arduous and slow process (Ravitch, 2010; Schneider, 2011). As Confucius stated (paraphrased by Stobie) “While change is both inevitable and desirable, it needs to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary and grounded in an understanding of local context and culture if it is to

lead to beneficial educational outcomes,” (Hayden, M. & Thompson, J. 2016, p. 53). However, with the focus of the IB Organization now on access rather than growth (IBO, 2006) it opens the possibility for access to IB Diploma Programs to morph at the school, district, state, and national levels within the United States. An access focus is purposefully intended for equity and inclusion, while the original growth focus was originally with exclusive orientation. IBDP schools must balance between these tensions of excellence and equity.

Context and idea for this project

As an educator, I believe in public education, though this wasn't always the case; as a parent, I simply wanted what I thought was the best for my children at the time, public or private education. I have teaching and parenting perspectives from both the public and private spheres. By the time my oldest two children arrived in South Carolina, they were in 8th and 9th grades; as a family, we lived in three states and attended a total of seven schools (ranging from K-12). We were determined not to move again until all three of our children completed 12th grade.

The Confucius quote mentioned above “...change...grounded in local context and culture if it is to lead to beneficial educational outcomes” sticks with me as I reflect on my story. In 2005, I was getting acquainted with my new teaching post as a Biology teacher in a public school located in the Midlands section of South Carolina. In preparation for the evolution unit it was recommended by a colleague that I send a note home to inform parents that I would begin the teaching evolution, a SC State Standard. On the morning of the beginning of the evolution unit, a small group of protesters formed out front of the school. I felt as though I was living in a flashback to different

time and place, to the *State vs. John Scopes* “Monkey Trial” of 1925. That was the beginning of my striving to understand the local culture; I had a sense then, as Dorothy eloquently stated in *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, “Toto, I’ve a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore” (Leroy & Fleming, 1939).

Later that same 2006 school year, groups of parents were outraged and stood firmly on opposing sides over our school’s newly implemented International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Some parents were excited that this gold star program was being offered at our school, while others were vehemently opposed. The local community did not take well to this new IB program. Why was there this push back to global education at the local level? Was it a threat to our local education system (Bunnell, 2009)? I had one year to explore the options and to decide if my daughter’s needs aligned with what the program offered.

Flash forward, my daughter graduated in 2009; my son graduated in 2010. Both were IB Diploma Candidates who earned full scholarships to private four-year colleges. But by 2010, the IBDP at my school had dwindled down to only seven students compared to the large inaugural class of 2006 with 36 students. I was worried about the fate of IB at my school. I still had my youngest child whom I believed would benefit from the IB experience; he was in middle school at the time. So, I made an appointment to introduce myself to the new incoming principal. By this point, I had been employed by the school for five years, and the leadership was changing again to the third principal since my arrival in 2005. Something stuck with me, when the outgoing principal introduced me to the incoming one, he said, “This is that really great biology teacher I told you about...whose children went through *that IB Program*” it suddenly occurred to

me, that the outgoing principal did not support the program. The position of IB Coordinator was open, but not posted publicly. Since the beginning of the program at my high school, we had had three IB Coordinators. I asked the new principal if I could be the new Coordinator, I explained the benefits of the program and urged him to keep the program. We had to start over. No money was budgeted for the program to carry into the next school year. What I didn't know at the time was that the new principal's daughter was an IB Coordinator in North Carolina; he knew about the IB and supported the program.

Another flash forward to my youngest son, he graduated in 2016 as an IB Candidate with an 85% scholarship to a private college. His graduating IB class had 38 students and the incoming class of 2017 is 42 strong. The IBDP has taken root within my school and I am still the program coordinator. As a current researcher of South Carolina IB Diploma programs, I have come across articles that challenged my understanding of the IB expansion globally and within the United States. I think about these claims now in terms of educational practices, the impact of leadership changes, leadership styles and policy implications. I also contemplate the socio-cultural construct of what has become institutionalized within schools. This circles back to the evolution unit, that originally tickled my interest to learn more, evolution in Darwinian terms is the gradual responsiveness to change over time (Darwin, 1800's). I wonder about the nature of change and how it unfurls within an education system that is locally grown and globally inspired.

Table 1.1: IB Diploma Schools in SC

(based on geographical region) as of May 2016(source: <http://www.southcarolinaib.org/>)

South Carolina International Baccalaureate (SCIBS) Diploma Program Schools			
Myrtle Beach Area: Aynor HS Socastee HS	Charleston Area: Berkeley HS Fort Dorchester HS James Island Charter HS Hilton Head HS	Florence Area: Hartsville HS Lake Marion HS Wilson HS Latta HS Sumter HS	Greenville Area: Christ Church Episcopal School Greer HS South Side HS TL Hanna HS Woodmont HS Travelers Rest HS
Columbia Area: Lower Richland HS Lexington HS Richland North East HS A.C. Flora High School Irmo High School	Rock Hill Area: North Western HS Rock Hill HS South Pointe HS		

Table 1.2: SC IBDP schools by County, Title I Allocation, Poverty Index
Program options and Magnet Schools of America affiliation (source: ed.sc.gov., 2017)

County	Title I Allocation per county M= \$million 2015 - 2016	School Poverty Index 2010	School Poverty Index 2016	IB World Diploma School	Choice Option	Magnet School of America (MSA)
Berkeley	8.2 M	67.23	51.48	Berkeley High School	choice within school	
Dorchester02	4.3 M	47.36	44.06	Fort Dorchester High School	choice within school	
Charleston	15.2 M	45.62	38.23	James Island Charter	Charter	
Horry	16.6 M	66.57	56.52	Aynor High School	choice within school	
		56.09	48.34	Socastee High School	choice within school	
Georgetown	n/a			Low Country Prep	Private	
Beaufort	5.3 M	35.29	33.41	Hilton Head High School	choice within school	
Darlington	4.4 M	69.58	60.79	Hartsville High School	District Choice	MSA
Dillon03	0.5 M	76.17	63.64	Latta High School	choice within school	
Florence01	3.9 M	79.04	66.58	Wilson High School	choice within school	
Lexington01	3.1 M	25.08	23.49	Lexington High School	choice within school	
Lexington05	1.6 M	47.68	51.97	Irmo High School	District Choice	MSA
Orangeburg03	1.5 M	93.77	82.14	Lake Marion High School	choice within school	
Orangeburg05	3.1 M	86.51	77.00	Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School	Removed IB 2016	
Richland01	9.0 M	47.33	41.01	AC Flora High School	choice within school	
		79.30	72.60	Lower Richland High School	choice within school	
Richland02	4.1 M	60.26	56.80	Richland Northeast High School	District Choice	MSA
Sumter	6.1 M	66.43	60.63	Sumter High School	choice within school	
York03	3.6 M	56.54	50.20	Rock Hill High School	choice within school	
		49.58	47.80	North Western High School	choice within school	
		56.94	52.69	South Pointe High School	choice within school	
Anderson05	3.4 M	46.98	41.01	T.L. Hannah High School	Removed IB 2016	
Greenville	n/a			Christ Church Episcopal School	Private	
	22.9 M	56.94	51.17	Greer High School	choice within school	
		73.02	62.39	Southside High School	District Choice	MSA
		58.69	55.41	Travelers Rest High School	choice within school	
	58.81	47.65	Woodmont High School	choice within school		

Table 1.3: IB Schools within the Southeastern US

(Chronological and cumulative by year of authorization)

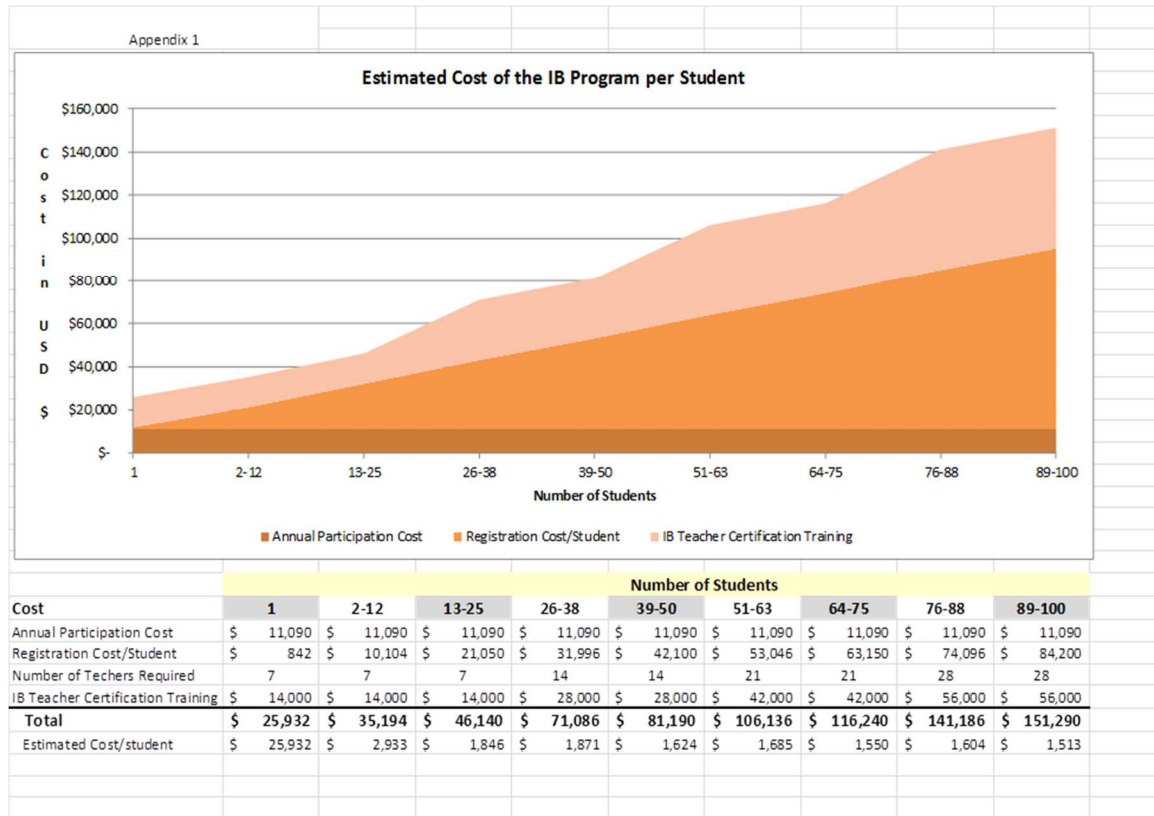
Year	FLORIDA				GEORGIA				NORTH CAROLINA				SOUTH CAROLINA				
	CP	DIPLOMA	MYP	PYP	CP	DIPLOMA	MYP	PYP	CP	DIPLOMA	MYP	PYP	CP	DIPLOMA	MYP	PYP	
1982							1										
1983		3					1										
1984		3					1										
1985		5					1										
1986		6					1										
1987		7					1										
1988		7					1							1			
1989		11					1							1			
1990		14					2							1			
1991		15					2							1			
1992		16					2			3				1			
1993		17					3			4				1			
1994		19					3			4	1			1			
1995		23					4			6	1			2			
1996		28					4			7	4			4			
1997		29					6			10	4			8			
1998		33	3				9			12	6			8			
1999		36	3				14			14	6			11	1		
2000		38	3	1			15			17	6			14	1		
2001		40	5	3			15			18	6			17	3	4	
2002		40	5	3			16			20	5			17	5	4	
2003		40	3	3			18			20	7	1		18	5	4	
2004		40	8	3			20		1	21	8	2		21	5	5	
2005		45	11	6			20		1	24	8	4		22	15	8	
2006		46	13	7			21		5	24	10	5		24	13	9	
2007		52	18	11			21	1	13	25	13	11		26	13	11	
2008		59	34	13			25	10	16	28	18	11		26	17	12	
2009		62	39	17			26	11	18	28	17	12		26	16	11	
2010		69	43	19			24	19	22	27	20	14		26	20	13	
2011		73	52	24			25	24	23	28	21	13		26	19	13	
2012	2	77	58	30	2		26	28	25	29	21	14	1	25	19	13	
2013	2	77	58	33	4		28	28	25	30	23	15	1	26	20	14	
2014	4	81	63	37	8		29	34	26	2	31	25	14	1	26	20	14
2015	6	83	66	38	9		29	34	25	2	32	25	15	3	26	20	13
2016	6	83	68	40	9		30	35	25	2	33	26	16	3	26	20	13

Provided by Emily Vanderkamp from research department at the International

Baccalaureate; October 12, 2016

CP-Career Program; Diploma-Diploma Program; MYP-Middle Years Program; PYP-Primary Years Program

Table 1.4: Scale of fees for the 2015- 2016 school year




Estimated cost analysis of IB Program per student. Note, annual participation fee is constant. Estimated cost per students levels off at 25+ students. Numerical values provided by <https://IBIS.IBO.org>

PROFILE OF THE South Carolina Graduate

WORLD-CLASS KNOWLEDGE

Rigorous standards in language arts and math for career and college readiness

Multiple languages, science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and social sciences



WORLD-CLASS SKILLS

Creativity and Innovation

Critical thinking and problem solving

Collaboration and teamwork

Communication, information, media and technology

Knowing how to learn

LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Integrity • Self-direction • Global perspective • Perseverance • Work ethic • Interpersonal skills

© SCASA Superintendents' Roundtable
 Adopted by: SC State Board of Education, SC Department of Education, SC Education Oversight Committee, SC Arts Alliance, SC Arts in Basic Curriculum Steering Committee, SCAGCD, SC Chamber of Commerce, SC Council on Competitiveness, SC School Boards Association, TransformSC Schools and Districts.

Figure 1.1 Profile of the South Carolina Graduate

(www.ed.sc.gov/newsroom/profile-of-the-south-carolina-graduate)

IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

<p>INQUIRERS We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.</p> <p>KNOWLEDGEABLE We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.</p> <p>THINKERS We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.</p> <p>COMMUNICATORS We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.</p> <p>PRINCIPLED We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.</p>	<p>OPEN-MINDED We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.</p> <p>CARING We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.</p> <p>RISK-TAKERS We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.</p> <p>BALANCED We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.</p> <p>REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.</p>
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The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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Figure 1.2: The IB Learner Profile,

(www.ibo.org)



Figure 1.3: Diploma Program Model

(www.ibo.org)

Chapter 2

Access, a sticky wicket

All students should have equitable access to an excellent education. An equitable education system is a fair system when entrusted to policy, leadership, support, and practices that should produce an excellent outcome for all students. Berends, Bodilly, and Kirby (as cited in Mayer, 2010) points to the necessity of essential factors for system transformation: “[The] implementation of key design components will change school and classroom learning environments and thereby influence students’ outcomes” (2002, p 171). The concept of access, as related to school, can be considered multidimensionally through historical, structural, and social lenses. Access as a socio-cultural construct is carried out year-after-year in schools to where it has become institutionalized as the accepted mode of education. In short, educational policies, educational leadership, and educational practices shape *how school is performed*. The implications of our constructed ways of doing school have created situations where equity becomes questionable. Access as it relates to equity in a school setting can be a difficult situation to address.

Metaphorically, from the game of cricket, a sticky wicket is the playing pitch or surface that is wet because of rain and creates awkward spin on the ball. Equitable access is complicated, messy and varies based on the context of each school.

Ideally, educational pathways should lead to a promising future of college readiness for all participants equitably. The system (teachers, administrators, guidance counselor

coaches, etc.) however, marginalizes students who become less likely to reach and retain higher education. In this chapter, I will explore what access looks like and the ways it is constructed through policy and the social dimensions of schooling. I will explore terms related to access such as minority, majority-minority, underrepresented, underserved, disadvantaged, quality and consider some of these terms from a comparative perspective. I will address access to advanced coursework through strategies that broaden access and introduce the modes of equity that align with proven success from the Finnish education system. I will consider the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program in relation to school reform, choice, integration and giftedness from the US standpoint. Collectively, these points will serve as a foundation as I set out to understand how the concept of IB for All is made accessible for college readiness in South Carolina IBDP schools.

Literature Review

As noted in chapter one, college readiness, and its link to academic success in college, means something different to all stakeholders and (Achieve, 2015; Caspary, 2011; Conley et.al., 2014; Darling-Hammond et.al., 2014). Research has identified three hurdles for college readiness: students must graduate high school, demonstrate literacy, and acquire skills through high school coursework required for college (Green & Forster, 2003). But using those three indicators alone has revealed disparities racially and ethnically among student groups; research identifies “college knowledge” as an additional and necessary ingredient to college readiness (Conley, 2007; Roderick, Nagaoka, and Coca, 2009; Villavicencio, Bhattacharya, & Guidry, 2013). Students must be ready for college through both the knowledge and skills learned through advanced coursework as well as the counseling for navigating postsecondary planning (Morgan,

Greenwaldt and Gosselin, 2014; Hallett and Venegas, 2011; Henfield, Washington, and Byrd, 2014). Accountability of college readiness is the financial record of funds by states used in bridging high school to college through awarding credit for high school students who complete advanced coursework (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Achieve, 2015).

Access to higher education for underrepresented students in advanced academic programming (i.e., gifted education, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate) in U.S. K-12 schools has been problematic for decades at various levels within the education system (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Childress et al., 2016, Rowland and Shircliffe, 2016; Bragg et al., 2006; Diette, 2011). For example, at the state level, researchers identify that “few state officials seemed to have a clear or comprehensive understanding of the academic pathways implemented by high schools” Bailey & Karp, 2003 (as cited in Bragg et al., (2006, p 32); Camblin, Gullatt, & Klopott, 2003). In the state of North Carolina, for example, researchers found a disparity Algebra 1 enrollment for underrepresented student populations especially in highly integrated school where the teachers were in majority White (Diette, 2011). To address this disparity, scholars recommend that systems need to be in place within high schools to support and equip students for the challenges of advanced coursework (Rowland and Shircliffe, 2016). One promising example of district-level efforts to close the Algebra gap is in Chesterfield County (VA) where opportunities were created that resulted in 95% of the middle school students taking Algebra 1 prior to high school (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2015, p 250).

Key terms

To further unpack this multifaceted puzzle of access, we need to consider key terminology, including the terms minority, majority-minority, underrepresented,

underserved, disadvantaged and quality which are foundational to my research related to access. Minorities are the most vulnerable student group in the U.S., presumably from low-income homes, but not always. In my research, I draw on the use of the term minorities as presented by researchers from the United States who define minority students in schools similarly, as being predominantly African American, Latino and low socioeconomic status. Historically in the US, minorities have been shortchanged by the education system (Flores, 2007; Jackson, 2008; Roderick, et. al., 2009; Perna et al., 2015). As schooling in the US evolves, attention to the needs of minority students become increasingly imperative due to the projected “majority minority” population trends (Wiggan & Watson, 2016; Frankenberg, Hawley & Orfield, 2017):

Such tectonic shifts in the public school population are a harbinger of what is to come for the American population as a whole within the next three decades. By 2043, the U.S. Census Bureau projects, higher birthrates among Hispanics, combined with declining birthrates among Whites, will lead to a United States where a majority of residents are nonwhite. During that time, African-American population growth is expected to rise modestly, while Asians are projected to more than double their share of the population by 2060, according to the Census (Maxwell, 2014, p 2).

The challenge to address this projected broad change calls for attention to cultural-based leadership and teaching, explored later in this chapter. It is important to note, however, the regional prevalence of these concepts in the literature on educational access, particularly to IB, in the US. Researchers from Europe and Canada do not focus on either of terms minority or majority as factors shaping student access to IB (Danic,

2015; Prickarts, 2010). However, a study from Canada looks at the US perspective to understanding the choices made by students, parents, and teachers that effect school communities (DiGiorgio, 2010). In that study, the term minority is used to describe linguistic, cultural or socioeconomic disadvantage (Mayer, 2008, as cited by DiGiorgio, 2010). Notably, within U.S. schools and school systems, the term minority is used to describe students and is prevalent in publications about access issues in the United States.

The terms underrepresented and underserved are used more broadly in education to address the students who are economically disadvantaged and not represented within and served by the education system because they tend to drop out (Gandara, 2001). I define the terms underrepresented and underserved as being non-majority participants of advanced coursework within the US education system (Villavicencio et al., 2013; Blankenstein & Noguera, 2016). These minority students are less likely to participate in advanced coursework, and therefore are considered underrepresented. The term underserved refers to the same group of students, but through the accountability lens, meaning underrepresented students who have not been aided by the advanced coursework (like the IBDP) provided by the system. Research on college readiness among underserved U.S. students identifies “opportunity gaps” resulting from gender expectations, the role of poverty, and barriers of language and culture especially faced by Latino and Black students (Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013; Henfield, Washington & Byrd, 2014; Olszewski-Kubilius, P. & Clarenbach, J., 2014). National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests results reveal that few culturally different and low-income students were moving into advanced level coursework like AP and IB, “so few that reached the advanced level in 2009 that estimates rounded to zero” (Olszewski-

Kubilius, P. & Clarenbach, J., 2014 p 104). Nationally, 61% White high school graduates took at least one AP exam, compared to only 7% Black and 14% Latino graduates (ETS, 2008 as cited by Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013, p 32). On more general terms, Black and Hispanic students are less likely to have the opportunity for advanced coursework due to attending under-resourced schools or to suffering negative stereotypes associated with high suspension rates from schools that offer college prep coursework (Henfield, et al., 2014).

Researchers call for serious change within the education system to address these opportunity gaps (or this lack of experiences) that underlie outcome based achievement gaps (Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013; Henfield, et al., 2014). The Young Men's Initiative (YMI) in New York City has spurred development of the Expanded Success Initiative (ESI) whose purposes are specific to college readiness (Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013). The ESI experience provides insight for practice and policy including the need for an explicit focus on college readiness beginning in the ninth grade, increased rigor and opportunity for more advanced coursework, the cultivation of student leadership, strategic partnership building, and, lastly, training of school staff to be more responsive to the cultural components of education. Another study specific to tackling the opportunity gap impacting Black gifted males advises the school community to be explicit in providing exposure to academics and out-of-school activities in addition to multicultural training as professional development (Henfield, et al., 2014). Such policy and practice focused on closing the opportunity gap offer important educational models for recruitment and retention practices of underrepresented students who attend IBDP high schools within South Carolina.

The term disadvantaged refers to students who experience socioeconomic disadvantage, institutional (school) disadvantage, and/or the intersection between the two. Students who don't finish school, students with low qualification levels and those who are high risk for unemployment are also considered disadvantaged (Danic, 2015). Per the lifelong learner model in Europe, access to higher education secures competitiveness and inclusion in the labor market. Specific barriers to access to higher education include “structural, institutional and student agency” factors (Danic, 2015, p. 77). Comparatively, and in contrast to the US, are countries, such as Finland and Slovenia, where a broad liberal arts curriculum is available to all students. While in countries with tracking built in along the way, like the US, Germany and the Netherlands, access to higher education has a higher selectivity and proves to be more competitive. However, the US education system has the most accessible range of options - access to higher education is facilitated through access to advanced coursework like the International Baccalaureate (IB). Notably, the IB originated in Europe and has taken root successfully in both private and ‘state’ supported schools in all the countries mentioned above regardless of the tracking within the education system (IBO.org).

Finally, the term quality in relation to access and specifically to the International Baccalaureate intersects where gifted education is disproportionately serving students of a higher socioeconomic status. Historically, the IB for All initiative was implemented in 2007 in response to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. This demanded accountability from schools to promote proven educational methods for all children (Walker, 2011). IB received an Advanced Placement Incentive grant of \$1.06 million from the US Department of Education (2007 – 2010) to increase access to the Diploma

Program within Title I eligible schools. IB for All also aligned with global access goals as promoted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs, 2000 – 2015), at the mid-point when IB advanced its new vision, promoted access universal primary education. By 2015, higher enrollment rates for primary education were achieved, however, the quality of education declined (Walker, 2011). Subsequently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were implemented; and the education component aims for quality of education. Target 4.7 (UNESCO, 2017) states,

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

This goal aligns with the IB mission to work with schools, governments, and international organizations to develop rigorous programs to encourage compassionate life-long learners (Walker, 2011). The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programs located in Title I schools in the United States were implemented as gifted choice programs along with Advanced Placement. Researchers from the College of William and Mary, (Van Tassel-Baska, Johnson, and Avery, 2002) targeted new ways for South Carolina to identify gifted students in late elementary school. This offered flexibility and a decentralized, site-specific approach to gifted identification. Thus, access to the IBDP intersects with gifted education, Title I schools, and quality.

Strategies to broaden access

De-tracking. Strategies to appeal those students who are disadvantaged and underserved by the system are in place that broaden access to advanced coursework. The Finnish model of highly comprehensive education fostering access to higher education suggests strategies pertinent to my research on expanding access to advanced coursework for disadvantaged youth. The first promising strategy is to broaden access through de-tracking, or de-streaming. Research on de-tracking internationally highlights the Finnish experiment that eliminates tracking successfully (Blankenstein & Noguera, 2016; Burris, 2014). Here the idea of disadvantaged, or anyone not on the “academic track,” is systemically removed at the start of schooling. This type of schoolwide reform faces tremendous challenges, but the benefits for all children to have access to IB coursework outweigh the barriers. Importantly, de-tracking approaches dovetail with select efforts to organize access to IB programs beginning as early as the 9th grade to prepare students for the IBDP beginning in 11th grade (Burris, 2014).

Balance of equity and excellence. The second strategy to broaden access is to establish a balance of equity and excellence. This approach is based on research that also calls attention to the Finnish education system. As an equitable education system, the key to Finnish education policy has focused on the equity of inputs. This includes the following components: flexible spending on the needs per school, early intervention in special education, well-being and health services daily, balanced curriculum to serve multiple intelligences and personalities, and teaching as a profession (Sahlberg, 2015, p. 181). The balance of equity and excellence should align with policies that address the specific needs of the individual school that invests in its people. Such specific tailoring

includes offering coursework that addresses students' interests and for teachers, counselors and administrators professional development that is pertinent to the school's vision of equity and excellence (Blankenstein & Noguera, 2015).

Mode of equity – 1. Leadership. The implementation of this second strategy for broadening access by establishing equity and excellence requires three modes of equity: leadership, policy, and systems of support. The first mode--equitable leadership--is one of the main components of access to rigorous coursework for all students. School leadership sets the tone, or culture for access within the entire school community. Effective leaders establish the mission for teachers, administrators and counselors to create opportunities for students as part of their daily approach to work. When teachers tactically work with an equity purpose for all students, it creates a 'can do' mindset, or prevailing culture that opens the doors of access to advanced coursework through the eyes of multiple stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, administrators and community members (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Childress, et al., 2009; Sahlberg, 2015; Anderson, 2014; Brooks, et al., 2007). Leadership must remove the barriers to entrance into advanced coursework through establishing policies, practices, and a culture of access to Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework in areas of the Arts, English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies (Anderson, 2014; Childress, et al., 2009).

Leadership training that is culturally-based is an essential key to effective and equitable leadership where leaders are engaged in courageous conversations that address diversity, biases and racism (Agosto, Dias, Kaiza, McHatton, & Elam, 2013). Issues related to equitable access must be dealt without compromise to this commitment through

this culture-based leadership. It is imperative for leadership to break through restrictive ‘micro-politics’ within a school/district to put the needs of the student first (Brooks, et al., 2007, p 393). Targeted strategies for access to rigorous and advanced coursework can be realized through a culture of equity and excellence for all students; this requires leadership to work towards a growth mindset (Dweck, 2006). For example, the question “Why are only 5% of the economically disadvantaged students taking Algebra in middle school?” must be addressed to identify barriers and required actions to open access for underrepresented students to advanced coursework (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016, p.250; Diette, 2012). Specific to the IB curriculum, the question could read, “Why are there no economically disadvantaged students taking Higher Level Mathematics (Calculus-based)?” The inadequacies of the system will continue to surface if the root of the problem at the leadership level is not addressed first. Leadership must be intentional to organize, encourage, and reward out-reach by school personnel to the students and families who ordinarily would not be placed in the advanced classes. Leadership must be explicitly focused on equity and excellence through a purposeful lens to encourage and invite underrepresented students to participate in advanced coursework (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016).

Mode of Equity - 2. Policy. The second mode related to access is equitable policy. This is represented by the curriculum and structures within the secondary school system that create access to advanced coursework for college readiness. However, these policy initiatives may be under-utilized or only partially supported on either end of this bridge, which is detrimental to the success of underrepresented populations. For example, a bridge between secondary and postsecondary schools called Academic Pathways to

Student Success (APASS) is an effort to develop nine different pathways for success and access to college in the U.S. (Bragg, et al. 2006; Bragg et al, 2005). AP, IB and dual credit coursework (which is emphasized in this SC IBDP case study) make up three of the nine categories, the others include, GED programs, distance learning, tech prep, and other middle college opportunities. At least forty-nine states have policies to support APASS, however, none of these programs have demonstrated considerable success supporting underserved populations. States reporting high priority for the AP pathway for underserved students include Alaska, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Virginia, and South Carolina. States identifying high priority for the dual credit pathway for underserved students are Arkansas, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, New Jersey, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, and Vermont. No states reported high priority for IB pathway for underserved students (Bragg, et al. 2006, pp. 10-11).

Research suggests that policymakers examine policies within the school and district related to the placement of students in rigorous courses. Along with this, there is a need for more diversity within the teaching staff, as Black students do not excel as much with all White teachers (Diette, 2012). An example of successful implementation of policies in the pursuit of excellence is the Montgomery County Public School system that boldly claims the vision, “Let’s aspire to create a school system where achievement is no longer predictable by race” (Childress, et al., 2016, p. 141). For ten years, this Maryland district has helped tens of thousands of low-income and minority students beat the odds that would have been stacked against them through creating and establishing equitable policies for access to advanced coursework. Training teachers for “culturally responsive

pedagogical competence” will help to build much needed relationships between African American students and their teachers (Hoard, 2015, p 6) as they work towards taking STEM advanced courses. These studies inform my research on the implementation of IB Schools in South Carolina since the IB Diploma program must operate within layers of multiple policies inclusive of school, district, state and international levels. Awareness of equity within each policy line and between policy lines must be understood and potentially re-negotiated for optimal student success within college readiness program.

Mode of Equity - 3. Support. The third mode related to access is equitable support, which is the deliberately fair (and strategic) sharing of information about advanced coursework and college readiness with students and their parents. Creating a college readiness culture within a school that supports the idea of college going, and reinforces it with “college knowledge,” is an important aspect of recruitment and retention (Conley, 2007; Roderick, Nagaoka, and Coca, 2009; Villavicencio, Bhattacharya, & Guidry, 2013). Research needs to be conducted on the recruitment and retention of students in college preparatory gifted programs; this is fundamental to high school reform to foster a better understanding in the value of working hard to go to college (Roderick et al., 2008; Conley, 2007). A particularly important study related to this point is the Hertberg-Davis and Callahan (2008) survey of 23 schools on recruitment and retention. Researchers conducted focus group interviews of 3-5 students who were currently enrolled in AP or IB, and individual interviews with students who were once AP or IB enrolled and had dropped from the program. Researchers also interviewed separately eligible students who decided not to participate in AP or IB programs. Results of this study indicated that majority of AP and IB students were satisfied with the

challenges of their coursework and appreciated the future benefits. Students reported having adult-like rapport with their teachers and feeling that the learning environment of their AP and IB courses is suitable. However, minority students expressed the ‘homogeneous nature’ (i.e., the underrepresentation of students of minority and low-income students) within their AP and IB classes made them feel unwelcome (Hertberg-Davis and Callahan, 2008, p 206). Researchers found that students who left the program expressed that the classes did not meet their expectation of learning style, lectures were rigid, and didn’t align with how they learned.

Hertberg-Davis and Callahan concluded that in order to create equitable support for college readiness through AP and IB coursework several steps need to be taken (2008, pp. 210-213): (1) emphasize the benefit of experiencing genuine challenge; (2) provide updated teacher training consistently; (3) make achieving equity within AP and IB courses a priority; (4) train teachers with the skills to coach a wide range of learners who are gifted and bring recruitment information into the community instead of expecting the families to always make the trip to the school; and (5) go beyond the AP and IB classroom to attract a variety of learners, arrange additional ways to learn through enrichment opportunities like internships and mentoring.

The New York City Expanded Success Initiative incorporates these suggestions to form partnership alliances to create a robust, engaging and equitable effort to college readiness (Villacencio et. al. (2013). More attention is needed to build infrastructure such as the Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) program and vertical teaming prior to high school. Vertical teaming is a collaborative and professional effort by a small number of teachers across grade levels who share a goal to help students transition

through a common curriculum (Bertrand, Roberts, and Buchanan, 2006, p 1). Such efforts foster the participation of underrepresented student populations for readiness, and encourages teacher advocates to promote access to advanced coursework (Rowland and Shircliffe, 2016; Martinez and Klopott, 2005; AVID.org, 2016). These studies suggest points of investigation for my research as I probe into the experiences of SC IB coordinators regarding issues that require extra support for access to advanced coursework and the IB Diploma Program.

Reform - Choice. The strategies for broadening access to advanced coursework such as de-tracking and balancing equity with excellence (through three modes of equity) offer reform with emphasis at the school level. However, another significant reform, I highlight for this research, is support for district-level choice programs. Intuitively and superficially it appears that school choice would open access. Reflective of our market-based economy, parents in choice districts can choose where to send their children based on an array of program options offered by school districts (Lubienski, 2005). Whether choice programs open access for underrepresented populations remains questionable; in fact, researchers find that equitable schooling improves slowly through choice (Roderick et al., 2008; Ravitch, 2010; Schneider, 2011). US Reform movements that appear logical like smaller class environments, or incentives for highly motivated new teachers (Teach for America) or more rigor for all students (Schneider, 2011, p 137-139) are not necessarily successful because the social conditions for all students are not the same outside of school. The nature and laborious endeavor of “real” school reform, like increasing access to “elite” programs like IB, occurs gradually because of continuous effort over time (Ravitch, 2010. p 271). The supposed beauty of choice programs is

wrapped in the liberty and enablement to choose and decide for one self which education journey to take. Ravitch (2010) argues that one lesson from studying school reform over the last century is that it is dangerous to spread a good idea too thin and quickly.

Social influence as a component of choice. Research from two other case studies reveal social influence as a component of the choice decision for students both with and without social capital. Parental demand as the highest motivating factor for a district's implementation of the choice of the IB Diploma Program for their students (DiGiorgio, 2010). Parents who have the resources and social capital often research the International Baccalaureate and demonstrate an understanding of the IB "advantage" -- the potential educational capital that students carry to college from participating in the IB experience in high school. This post-secondary advantage causes parents to become advocates in support of the school offering the IB Diploma coursework. Also, parents who possess this economic and social capital encourage and sometimes push their students to participate in the program. Thus, many students may feel overwhelmed by the rigor of IB coursework, and the rigid structure of the IB program – this perception of workload among students along with parental pressure can be intimidating to potential IB candidates, especially low-income students (Caspary, et al, 2015). Both research studies are pertinent to this case study because they introduced the idea of a prevailing culture at play within school and school choice.

Other comparative studies on schools in the US and South Africa show convergence on social interaction that thwarts efforts to integrate (Carter, Caruthers and Foster, 2009; Oakes, Welner, Yonezawa, and Allen, 1998). Though these studies are not specific to IB schools, they do identify "zones of mediation" as being a complex set of

social interactions that include racial, social, economic and cultural phenomenon practiced within schools (pg. 351, Carter et al., 2009). These studies demonstrate everyday school transactions between people with underpinnings that emphasize the tensions between the school community and the goals of the school to integrate. Important to this case study on access to the IBDP is the potential of awareness of these multifaceted “zones of mediation” that surface and underline tension in school environments designed to integrate.

IBDP as an integration tool. To what extent can the International Baccalaureate in the United States be used as a reform tool to integrate schools? Notably, since the US Supreme Court rulings in the Louisville and Seattle case, it is unconstitutional for schools to take race into account to desegregate (Orfield and Lee, 2007). Research on successful IB programs serving underrepresented students in the US is limited and research specifically identifying the IBDP as a program used for integration is non-existent. However, based on the recommendations of Orfield and Lee (2007), “the triple segregation of ethnicity, poverty and language” (p.49) facing immigrant populations can be addressed through language immersion programs, because there is no limitation on creating schools that are integrated through language. School authorities should be pursuing diversity in terms of socioeconomic status, language or geography. Orfield and Lee recommend magnet schools that are successfully integrated to create multifaceted admission criteria that is permitted for integrative purposes.

All students benefit in an urban school when culturally responsive pedagogy is embedded in the curriculum; such research provokes thought about the urban school situation, “It’s not the culture of poverty, it’s the poverty of culture” (Ladson-Billings,

2006a as cited by Wiggan & Watson, 2016, p770). For integration efforts to be successful, new socio-cultural habits must be established based on an understanding of educational social equity that benefits all the students involved (Carter, Caruthers & Foster, 2009). Additional factors influence the implementation of the IB in a diverse, urban school. Mayer (2010) analyzed the work of Fixen, (2005), who identified factors of success for underrepresented populations: staff selection, pre-service training, consulting or coaching, staff evaluation, staff and program evaluation and facilitative administrative supports (though they did not consider the environment of the school as being suburban, urban, or rural). However, putting these factors to the test in an urban high school, researchers discovered that they sufficed as an internal checklist for an IB program to become established as high quality and to operate in schools that are considered low-performing. Four of the six factors should do with teachers - the selection of staff, training, coaching, and staff evaluation. This research shapes my inquiry to learn about the prevailing culture of the school and the culture of the IBDP within the school from the IB coordinators' perspective. My interview questions were open-ended to allow the participant the total freedom to describe what the IBDP looks like at their school site.

Regarding IB Diploma Programs, a support alliance for recruitment between the school and the district is expected to be in place at each IB program site per IBO guidelines (Resnick, 2015). Research conducted on underrepresented populations and their successful IB participation in Texas and Florida schools (Bland and Woodworth, 2009) reveals that when the IBDP was offered as a magnet choice within the school district it allowed for greater exposure to more students than if the programs were restricted to neighborhood residence. In both success cases, the school districts practiced

early preparation by implementing Primary Years Programs (PYP) and Middle Year Programs (MYP) at several schools in the district. However, the school in Tampa, Florida offered a “pre-IB” school rather than an MYP experience to serve 9th and 10th grades. Recruitment and outreach shape motivation that extends beyond high school to focus on opportunities offered by colleges for highly-motivated students. The school in Florida had selective admissions procedures, while the Texas school had an open access policy. Attrition is a problem in Texas, while in Florida most of the initial registrants stayed through until graduation (Bland and Woodworth, 2009).

These findings are relevant to my research on the implementation of the IBDP in regard to access to advanced coursework for underrepresented populations. Both the Texas and Florida schools uphold the integrity of the Diploma program by keeping the program numbers manageable. Also, both schools offer school-level support to manage workloads and study habits. District support is prevalent at both sites to maintain the professional development of teachers, program funding and school level decision making. Lastly, state-level supports offer academic incentives for IB Diploma recipients and financial incentives for teachers and schools who perform well on IB exams.

Gifted and talented. Research on teachers of gifted students is also important to consider for this project because historically IB Diploma programs were meant to serve elite and gifted students in the United States. Since the shift by the IB for All in 2006, one potential barrier to access could be the perspective of teachers, who may have been accustomed to educating only non-minority gifted students in their IB courses. Szymanski and Shaff (2013) explored teachers’ perspectives on their training once working in multicultural environments particularly in relation to effectively teaching

Hispanic gifted students. The researchers found that teachers who do not understand the cultural behaviors of the diverse students in their classrooms may be contributing to their students' low achievement (Ford, et al., 2001 as cited by Szymanski and Schaff, 2013). Additionally, this study notes the contribution to cultural deficit theory, whereby minority students are viewed as lacking (Ford, Grantham & Whiting, 2008; Ford et al., 2001; Townsend, 2002); this sets a negative outlook for teachers and creates bias against English language learners, culturally diverse students, and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Teachers who view students through a personal bias, may not think it is possible for these students to be high achievers (Szymanski and Schaff, 2013) and implicitly connect culturally diverse students as being nonelite. However, as noted by the researchers, the implications for this study are quite critical for future training of teachers at the intersection of two programs--Gifted and Talented and English Language Learning.

Also, relevant to my research at the state level, IB is housed under the Gifted and Talented umbrella for accountability within the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) (interview, Blanchard, 2017). For thirty years, since IB has been present in the SC, it has been employed as a gold standard program for Gifted and Talented (GT) students. Research supported by SCDE named Project STAR, added a new third performance-based dimension to the two existing dimensions based on standardized reading and math achievement test scores. Thus, the identification of minority and economically disadvantaged GT students has increased (Van Tassel-Baska, Johnson, and Avery, 2002). Over a period of six years, from 2000–2005, another longitudinal study suggests the need for instructional accommodations to be in place for the portion of

students, who qualify for GT through this non-verbal performance-task dimension alone (Van Tassel-Baska, Feng, and deBrux, 2007, p 26). This complicates matters at the school level; GT class sizes have increased and challenges to meet the needs of more diverse learners must be met by traditional teachers of GT students. Again, the idea of mindset (i.e., fixed versus growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) here in particular reference to the mindset of teachers of GT students, surfaces as another driving factor for this case study on investigating equitable access to the IBDP in SC high schools.

IB Core. Besides academics, the intersection of IB core with access needs further research particularly an exploration of the impact of the IB core components including the extended essay and CAS (creativity, activity and service) on equity and access commitments. Munro (2003) and Connor (2009) argue that the process of writing the extended essay could create a cohort culture within the group of second year IB Diploma Candidates. The independent research of the extended essay, the expectations of the program, teachers and the collective shared experience by the students in navigating their values sets the stage for how individual research and student engagement can be governed by the group norm (Connor, 2009). Knowledge of the group norm from previous years becomes prevalent and can travel like wildfire to the next year's cohort of IB students through student word of mouth. This may have a positive or negative affect on access, this idea of a prevailing culture may be a tool or barrier to access for the incoming groups of students and could have relevance in data analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Ontologically, this qualitative research was based on constructivism whereby the reality of the phenomena being studied is interpretive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). Prasad

(2005) links the ontology of the interpretivist perspective to the word subjective that gives meaning to social reality; this is counter to the positivist view that reality is fixed. Max Weber contributes to interpretive research with the term *verstehen* - that focuses on individual experiences to help explain how things work on a macro scale of society (Schwandt, 2007). *Verstehen* is key to understand meaning from the actor's (i.e., participant's) point of view.

Epistemologically, this inquiry was transactional and subjectively connected to the commonality of a shared reality and constructs; this is the essence of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012; Prasad, 2005). Prasad identifies the "unpeeling of reification" (p. 16) as being a goal of interpretive research. Reifications are those things that seem unchangeable within a social organization or phenomena, which may appear natural and when accepted as the norm, imprison us. The experiences of the participants in this study provided meaning to the social and contextual knowledge that is fluid.

The nature of knowledge and the accumulation of knowledge for this research were practically addressed via constructivism (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). The two research questions were dependent upon others (i.e., participants) whose responses addressed a phenomenon at their school. This is directly linked to individual and collective reconstructions of knowledge by the participants and informed by their experiences. Noted below in the research design, the methodology of knowledge accumulation was primarily grounded in dialogue (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012) between participant and researcher, and between participants via focus groups.

The contextual theoretical frame for this inquiry spans three decades, and is appropriately aligned with the onset and duration IB in the state of South Carolina. The

theory of globalization captures the spread of economics throughout the world but doesn't capture the social aspects of technological advancement (Stromquist, 2002). Parallel to globalization is the idea of neoliberalism based on satisfying the needs of people through the production of goods. This idea, increases the activity of the private sector and deregulates the states, in terms of the marketization of education that conceptualizes of choice within the United States (Anderson-Levitt, 2003). With the spread of education throughout the world, the idea of Global Convergence (Samoff, 1999, p 48) circles back to social interactions throughout history based on pirating and takeover. Thus, a reminder that within the modern era, educational achievement is connected to elitism and international motivation. The commonalities of the basic features and policies of education, along with the claims of autonomy and freedom stand out despite the diverse setting, or location. Lastly, this research is framed by post-modern theory that moves away from the binary thinking of global versus local and introduces the idea of social phenomena and power relations (Stromquist, 2002).

Within globalization of education comes the economic growth and education expansion that employs international organizations such as UNESCO (United Nations Education and Scientific and Cultural Organization) and OECD (Organization of Economic Development), who are key agents/actors responsible for the vast spread (Resnik, 2006). In being identified as actors, these international agencies possess intrinsic values of identity such as knowledge, influence and power. Resnik proposes that these international organizations be taken seriously and as major players that influence education systems throughout the world and ultimately create a world education culture.

In espousing the global agencies as actors, Resnik was informed by the Actor Network Theory as a point of entry to understanding the concept of global education.

Insight from the Actor Network Theory in education is useful in understanding the ongoing, ever changing, varied, and rich phenomena that is underway at each school site (Fenwick and Edwards, 2012). My research will provide a multidimensional glimpse of a network that encompasses the materiality of education, combined with the social sphere of each actor (case study participant). In search for new vocabularies within education discourse, Beech and Artopoulos (2016) discuss avoiding the binary global/local relationship by delving into the network and space that spans the two. Insight from Resnik's (2006) use of Actor Network Theory calls for the serious acknowledgement of these agents who are located between the global and the local. I have gathered the voices of my participants whose perspectives represent their understandings of the actors who play a role in these phenomena.

Research Design

Using a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2014; de Marrais, 2014), I wanted to understand the meaning and construction of access to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program from the perspective of the IBDP Coordinators within South Carolina public high schools (Table 1.1). My research was divided into four categories of data collection: (1) Level I: a questionnaire (Table 2.1) to understand broadly IB developments in SC; this was used in the initial stage of data collection to set the foundation for the subsequent three levels; (2) Level II was comprised of one-on-one interviews (Table 2.4) with IB Coordinators; (3) Level III was focus group sessions (Table 2.5) conducted with the help of other lead IB Coordinators at a state level IB

conference; and finally, (4) Level IV was comprised of interviews and website analysis. One interview was at the national magnet-school level and the other was at the SC Department of Education - state level. I explored the South Carolina Department of Education website IB reports in addition to participant IBDP school websites with regard to information access and user-friendliness. In the sections below, I discuss data analysis at each of the four levels of data collection and address trustworthiness of this research through member checking along with my positionality and subjectivity statements.

Focus on IB Coordinators as primary research participants

IB Diploma Coordinators have the most comprehensive understanding of school policies and practices related to the IBDP. The position of the Diploma Coordinator, as set out by the IBO, should be a teacher within the school, who is given time in their schedule to perform this duty. As the program grows, the time allocated for this position generally increases as well. Markedly, Greenville is the only district in SC that has a district level position designated as IB District Coordinator. Throughout the rest of the state, individual IB coordinator positions are assigned to one teacher at each school. The Diploma Coordinator is involved in planning course matriculation matrices, marketing, student recruitment, college recommendations, and IB program management and maintenance (IBO, 2016). This person must be able to communicate with every department in the school, since the IB curricula spans all subject areas including English, World Languages, Humans and Society, Science, Math, and the Arts. Additionally, the Coordinator must work with a range of policy actors including the US regional IB organization from a distance, district personnel, “in-house” school administrators, teachers, students, families, and the community. Given these broad responsibilities, the

IB Coordinator plays a role in shaping access since they represent the school when families make the decision for their child to participate in the program. Through the perspective of the IB Diploma Coordinator, I hope to better understand their socio-cultural construction of access and ways access to the IB Diploma is formed within their school.

Data collection

Level I data collection. My initial design is informed by Resnik's (2015) and DiGiorgio's (2010) studies, which focused on schools that were emblematic representations of the implementation practices of various IB Diploma Programs. This approach is both informative and practical; it serves to map the range of implementation methods linked to access. First, in May of 2017, I sent an online exploratory questionnaire (Table 2.1) via Google-form to all the IB Coordinators in South Carolina focused on access in their schools. I asked the site coordinator about the extent of commitment to the IB, budget affiliation, the process for student application to the IBDP, coursework and the IB core. Based on their initial responses to general questions about their programs and course offerings I determined if patterns exist in the structure and the changes in access to the IBDP.

To begin my research, I asked permission of the South Carolina IB Schools presidents, Marie Mulholland (President) and Jonathan Bradley (President-elect) who gave me the go-ahead to write an email to all the SC Diploma coordinators informing them of my research (see Figure 2.1 initial email to SCIBS). The email was sent on May 31, 2016 to 26 IBDP Coordinators throughout the state; at the time, there were 27 IBDP Coordinators in the state. I did not send a questionnaire to myself as a DP Coordinator

since my role here is researcher. One month later I found that two IB Diploma Programs had been dropped: TL Hanna High School in Anderson County and Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School in Orangeburg County. I also discovered that two of my questionnaire recipients were from private schools, Low Country Prep and Christ Church Episcopal School, which I did not include in my findings. Out of 22 possible respondents from public schools, I heard back from 17 or 77% of the total public-school DP coordinators through my Level I findings.

My initial questionnaire was a Google-form that presented 23 questions, eight short answer and 15 multiple choice (see Table 2.1 Level I Data- Online questionnaire). The first three questions were at large about the age of the program, and how long the coordinator has been in place within the program. Questions four and five were specifically about access to the program and if this process has changed since the program's inception. These first five questions were designed to capture a window of time and change and specifically access. Questions six through eight were simply to gather context about program within the district, the budget, and magnet affiliation. Questions nine through fourteen focused on IB coursework offerings designed to inform of depth and breadth of commitment to open access, beyond the school's *starter kit of coursework*. I define the starter kit of coursework as the course offerings elected by the school at the point of IB authorization, the inaugural year. Questions fifteen and sixteen are on the program size and general categories of student testers from the May 1016 session. Questions seventeen through twenty-one are based on the IB core outreach through the extended essay and CAS components. Theory of Knowledge though part of the IB core is not included in this questionnaire. Questions twenty-two and twenty-three

allow the participant to share anything else that they wish to include in addition to their school's name and contact information for possible further communication towards my research.

Level II data collection. I proceeded with Level II interviews with specific IB Coordinators selected based on representative of patterns of program implementation. Previous IB-research focused on Diploma Program implementation also relied upon interviews with DP Coordinators, school administrators, and teachers (Resnik, 2015; Caspary, et al., 2015; Di Giorgio, 2010; Mayer, 2008). I set out to better understand the patterns evidenced in the questionnaire responses by conducting recorded interviews with IB Diploma Coordinators from various schools (see Table 2.3 One-on-One Interview Prompts). In general, Level II one-on-one-interview questions delve deeper into issues related to patterns obtained in Level I questionnaire responses such as IB outreach, leadership, support, IB courses, and the IB core. Level II data collection entailed driving throughout the state of South Carolina and took place during the summer of 2016 due to schedule constraints (Table 2.4 One-on-one Interview Dates). The recording of each approximately hour-long interview was uploaded to an online transcription service. Upon receipt of the transcriptions, I listened to the recordings while reading along to ensure the transcriptions were verbatim.

Level III data collection. The South Carolina International Baccalaureate Schools (SCIBS) Conference meets annually during the autumn months at the beginning of each school year. At this meeting, I gave a mini research update on my initial questionnaire findings and analysis at the conference since all my participants (i.e., SC IB Diploma Coordinators) were present in one room at the same time. Immediately

following my session, I conducted multiple focus group sessions with the help of SCIBS leadership serving as focus group leaders (Table 2.5, Level III focus group participants). Specific prompts were given to the focus group leaders in effort to keep the 20 minute recorded conversations on topic (Table 2.6, Level III focus group prompts). In general, these are bigger picture prompts based on themes identified in Level II one-on-one interviews such as coursework and CAS as barriers or tools to access and themes presented from Level II interviews. Each focus group's digital recording was uploaded to an online transcription service and returned to me for further verification and coding.

Level IV data collection. I researched the South Carolina Department of Education website and archives for all IB policy documents and related data. I included in my search information on South Carolina's poverty index, the schools' report cards and IB reports. I have chosen a five-year time frame to capture a snapshot of the recent evolution of the IB program. Lastly, I researched online the websites of each of the six schools that were emblematic to the change in access as discovered in level one and I added an additional school to include the SC district magnets (these seven schools are nested in six districts). I looked for school-specific information on marketing the magnet high schools and their IB Diploma Programs. This included magnet window availability set by the district, and general marketing details specific to the IBDP each school. I have approached each website systematically through a marketing perspective (Table 2.8, website exploration) including the ease of finding information about the IBDP at each school (i.e., access friendliness) such as: the number of clicks to IB information, and general information such as What is IB? Why is IB important to consider? If interested how do I signup? Are there deadlines?

The third part of Level IV findings demonstrated the iterative process of this research. I scheduled three additional interviews from people who helped me better understand the bridge between the State and District: Robert, SC Department of Education; SUZANNE, President of Magnet Schools of America; and Nora, Greenville County IB District Coordinator and first DP Coordinator in the state of SC. Comprehensively the interviews provided breadth of information not previously found such as historic perspectives, and the concepts of gifted education and magnet schools in South Carolina (Table 2.7 Level IV one-on-one scheduled dates).

Analysis

Level I data analysis. I investigated patterns of program implementation that emerged from the responses and summary of responses on my initial questionnaire to all the Diploma Coordinators in S.C. Since patterns were evident, I grouped SC IB schools accordingly and choose representative schools emblematic to their group (Resnik, 2015). The first evidence of a pattern was linked to any change in access since each program has been authorized at the school level. By change, I mean if the coordinators understand access to have become more open or closed since each program's initial implementation (Table 2.2, Level I responses). The second evidence of a pattern was related to specific IB coursework offered that may or may not be accessible to all students and the array of course offerings beyond the coursework starter kit. General pattern analysis focused on the nature of the response and the gathering of similar responses through simple mathematical calculations such as percentage of total responses for each question asked.

Level II data analysis. Based on the schools which are emblematic of the patterns evidenced through Level I data analysis, I scheduled interviews with the IBDP

Coordinator from each site between July and October of 2016. On average, each of the six interviews lasted one hour and thirteen minutes, totaling 7 hours and 48 minutes of audio recordings, which generated over 240 pages of transcripts. Consistent across all my Level II interview findings were responses (by each IBDP coordinator) to open-ended questions relating to enrollment practices, policies and prevalent social culture within the school (Table 2.3 Level II Data Collection interview prompts). Also, at the end of each interview, I asked each coordinator what best described their IB Diploma Program by presenting three individual sticky notes that read, ‘school within a school’, ‘crème de la crème’ or ‘IB for all’. This connects directly with Resnik’s (2015) proposed categories for Diploma Programs within magnet schools. Once the digital files of each audio recordings were returned from the transcription service, I listened to and read along with each transcript to ensure that transcript was indeed verbatim for each interview. Once I confirmed the transcription myself, I sent a corresponding copy to each interviewee for member checking. Upon a primary coding analysis of the transcript for each interview patterns emerged (Saldaña, 2009) related to access. I analyzed through a secondary coding analysis to see if overall themes related to access were evident. I delved into further research as my findings suggested since I am aware of the iterative and recursive nature of qualitative research and analysis (Chenail, 2011; Yin, 2014).

Level III data analysis. As scheduled, my project execution continued as I presented a research update to the Diploma Program members of SCIBS at the Annual Conference, Fall 2016. At the completion of this briefing I conducted four focus group sessions with the help of the SCIBS officers to whom I provided discussion prompts (Table 2.6, Level III Data Focus Group Prompts). Each focus group had from three to six

participants who were mostly DP Coordinators, however two participants were principals and another was an IB English teacher. Due to time constraints, the focus groups took place simultaneously for an average duration of 26 minutes which amounted to 36 more transcription pages. I conducted a primary coding analysis for each transcript then followed with a secondary coding analysis to identify themes for key findings. Just as in Level II, I sent a copy of the transcript and the recording to each focus group leader for member checking.

Level IV data analysis. I visited the websites of each of the six schools that were emblematic to the change in access as discovered in level one and I added an additional school to include the SC district magnets (these seven schools are nested in six districts). I rated through my own spreadsheet analysis based on the website's access friendliness (i.e., number of clicks to IB information, and general information such as What is IB? Why is IB important to consider? If interested how do I signup? Are there deadlines?). I looked for emerging patterns and reflected on the patterns from previous levels as well to better understand the frame of each program. I also delved into the SC Department of Education website to review the school report card information, IB scores and poverty index information for each school as posted. I created additional spreadsheets for organization and analysis purposes (Table 1.2, IBDP Schools by County, from Chapter 1).

The final section of Level IV findings demonstrated the iterative process of this research. The three additional interviews scheduled during the winter of 2017 generated an additional 138 transcript pages and 4 hours, 38 minutes of interview time (see Table 2.7 interview dates). These interviews informed my understanding beyond the high

school building into the levels of district, state and magnet offices. Comprehensively, the interviews provided breadth of information not previously found such as historic perspectives, advanced coursework, and the concepts of gifted education and magnet schools in South Carolina. Upon primary and secondary coding analyses, I identified patterns and my themes solidified.

Comprehensive data analysis of Levels II, III, and IV. Access is a multi-dimensional idea and presented in Chapter 3 as opposing themes: tools to access and barriers to access. My findings resulted from my development of coding patterns using an access grid that I devised to analyze my data (see Table 2.9 Access grid, a Schematic View of Findings and Analysis). Upon coding the transcripts, multiple categories of organization surfaced as I made sense of the collection of data obtained from hours of one-on-one interviews with coordinators, focus group sessions, and further interviews. These categories--organized vertically--marked levels within the school system (either in practice or prevailing culture): school, district, and state; and the categories organized horizontally marked equity modes: leadership policy and support. Two sets of vertical and horizontal categories surfaced, one for tools to access and the other for barriers to access. This access grid helped to magnify the presence and absence of equity modes that revealed the affective strengths and weaknesses of access within the school system. Some sections of the access grid were bulging with direct quotes (i.e., strength in the given category), while other parts of the grid were empty (i.e., category lacking). Through secondary coding (Saldaña, 2013), subsequent themes arose that are listed on the top of the Table 2.9 such as tools to access: commitment to resources, choice, pathways generated through leadership and social momentum. In contrast, barriers to access

surfaced: gatekeepers, attrition, choice, and again social momentum. Such themes are connected with the ideas of access, or opportunity for students, to participate in advanced coursework such as IB.

My analysis of data suggested a powerful overlapping of findings; this is where access becomes sticky and complex. However, more patterns were evident, intersecting deeply across levels of school, district, and state while merging within practice and prevalent culture. These themes evoked time and change, which I refer to as the evolution of the IB in South Carolina. Also surfacing as themes were the ideas of the business of education, related to convergence and/or choice. Leveling the field for equity and the need to inform or educate the prevailing culture are two themes that remain open ended for contemplation and future contribution. These complex themes lend themselves to opportunity, or access for students that span state, district and school levels presented in Chapter 5.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of my research was multifaceted to ensure that all validity threats were addressed. In addition to the integrity of my methods of data collection, I also attempted to eliminate my implicit biases that play an integral part of my triangulation analysis. To add further validity to my qualitative case study, I examined and identified my own positionality and subjectivity as the researcher. The following section addresses in more detail these factors of trustworthiness through my data, positionality, and subjectivity.

Trustworthiness through data

I compiled and drew on all information gathered to create a convergence of evidence (Yin, 2014) to include my initial questionnaire, one-on-one interviews/focus group transcripts, school-based website information, SC Department of Education and Magnet Schools of America data on each IB Diploma Program. Based on my analysis of these converging data sets, I considered the schools' approaches, motivations and rationales for creating new and possibly, equitable pathways to college readiness. For validity measures, my analysis of the multiple data sources (i.e., initial questionnaire, one-on-one interviews, focus group interviews, school website information, SC department of education and magnet school information) helped to determine the consistency of evidence and integrity of my research at each site (Glesne, 2011). Also, I reached out to the IB research department via email (October 12, 2016) to learn the authorization timeline of IB World schools in South Carolina per IB records. I felt this necessary because all findings in this case study have been self-reported through the experience of the IBDP coordinators, most of whom were not in their role when the DP began at their school.

Lastly, I member checked my analysis by sharing it with the Coordinators whom I have interviewed to ensure that I am conveying their voice per their perceptions of access to the IB program (Maxwell, 2013). I shared information with the Coordinators at three different times throughout my research endeavor: (1) I sent the written transcript via email to each one-on-one interview participant; (2) I shared my findings and interim analysis with the group at large during the fall 2016 SCIBS conference; (3) I sent the

transcript of the focus group interview to the focus group leaders who conducted each session during the fall 2016 conference.

Trustworthiness through my subjectivity and positionality

As the sole researcher in my project, I have professional and personal obligations that influence how I view the subject of access to college readiness through the IBDP in public high schools. I have addressed each separately with the understanding that my awareness of professional and personal biases is the first step in warding off potential validity threats that exist throughout the entire process of this qualitative case study. Also, my cognizance of professional and personal growth and expectations have helped me manage my understanding throughout this journey.

Subjectivity

Professionally, I am the only expert on the subject of the IB Diploma Program within the parameters of my school - a large, public high school located in the Midlands region of SC. I am employed as the IB/AP Coordinator. My knowledge as a practitioner on the subject is based on what I have learned over the past six years as the IBDP Coordinator for my school/district. So, in a way, I represented my program in this study through the execution of my case study, through the questions I asked, through the analysis and conclusions drawn from my data. I have not, however, included myself as a participant in this case study, because I would have had an unequal representation of my own school – through my questions asked, and through my responses. I have a respect for the nature of qualitative research and the complexity of the subject - access as a component to the college readiness through the IBDP. Therefore, it was essential for me to completely separate my work and my research; keeping a researcher's journal helped

me with this task. In doing so, I am not blinded by my involvement as an IBDP coordinator; I am informed. My awareness of the knowledge within this subject is based on my professional experience; I know where to look to find answers to the many challenges faced through program operations. I am aware that program implementation is different at every site and, I know enough about the subject to ask relevant questions. I am definitely not an expert on the topic of access to the IB at each site; I understood these experts to be my participants at each school.

Positionality

Personally, I am a parent to three IBDP alumni who attended the high school where I am employed. While two of my three children were students at my place of employment, I was a full-time Biology teacher who had no connection to the IBDP other than being a parent to two students who were in the program. However, as my third child entered the program, I was the IBDP Coordinator and my son's TOK teacher. I only started my role as an active researcher on this project after he graduated. Frankly, my role as a teacher/coordinator influenced my parenting more than my parenting influenced my profession. The ways I present myself to families within my community has probably been influenced the most by being a parent. I know many of the decisions and challenges families face when their children are preparing to go to college.

As a researcher who will be interviewing other IBDP Coordinators throughout the state of SC, I bring my awareness that some coordinators may be parents as well. This may influence their passion, understandings, and their level of commitment as professionals. As a researcher, I have interviewed my counterparts as they were the participants/experts of my case study. We share a mutual respect and rely on each other

for program guidance in certain situations such as what IB books have been purchased, how to implement a new course, engage with master scheduling ideas, etc. I may have more or less experience coordinating than some of my participants, but we hold the same position in our buildings. No doubt we have an unspoken trust between us and without hesitation those of us with experience automatically help the newest coordinators. I had a good rapport with my research participants since we understand the common challenges that we face. I have purposefully not engaged in a leadership role in SCIBS since I knew I might be interviewing my counterparts for my academic research; I wanted to avoid any position of influence that could have arisen. I have maintained my relationship with my participants as their equal, which I think has fostered a healthy discourse for subsequent interviews.

I believe that being a parent and an educator has also fueled my reason to turn to academia to learn more about the IB and its place on our schools. I wanted to better understand what was going on around me; there was a disconnect between the message at IB conferences and the message from the members of my school community. Yet, I knew that the IB Diploma experience had a positive impact on my whole family and, as an IB parent, I believe it is worth learning about to make it available to more families. My knowledge of the subject through the eyes of a professional and parent has driven my cause to stretch academically as a researcher.

Keeping a researcher's journal has helped identify my implicit biases, personal struggles, and growth. Through my doctoral studies, I have come to realize my privilege, my children's privilege, and the privilege of non-low socioeconomic students in gifted classes. Being an educator, I am aware of the extra energy and creativity involved in

attending to all my students equitably. I am also more observant and responsive to the needs of my students; I offer them healthy snacks and I do not ask, or judge, I encourage, and move forward with their best interest. I have also grown through this inquiry; I was formally trained as a quantitative scientist, and now I am becoming qualitative researcher. Theoretically shifting from a fixed reality with repeatable experimentation, to a socially interpretive reality with capturing change through constructivism, I believe there is a time and a place for each paradigm. Again, I am privileged to be educated, ambidextrous in my knowledge of inquiry, and more confident than ever to say, “The more I know, the more I don’t know”!

My researcher’s journal helped me discover and separate my own expectations and the expectations of others involved in education. My research has informed me that while some DP Coordinators have engaged in notable efforts to strive for equity, other DP Coordinators (though fewer) are still upholding the pre-2007 selective process for access. Realizing my own naivety in expectations, I was astounded by the commitment of resources to the IBDP within South Carolina school districts and the limited understanding that goes along with it by educators, especially those in leadership and guidance positions. With this is an impatience and tunnel vision for outcomes through education shrouded as choices. However, my analysis marked a shift that has taken place in the responsibility for learning – the idea of “every student has the right to fail” has morphed into an institutional ownership of helping students to succeed. Always the optimist, I viewed this as a glimmer of hope, that this proprietorship for learning will become part of informing the school community about the available choices for advanced coursework to establish a choice-clarity.

Research Contribution

My research contributes to the burgeoning field of access to college readiness the as it relates to International Baccalaureate Diploma Program through contributing insights on the dimensions of access: (1) access as it has evolved within the landscape of IBDP over recent years; (2) access as it is implemented through school policy, leadership and support at each site (3) access as a socio-cultural construct between people and the ways school is performed at each site. And this research informs educators and policy makers about the implementation of the IB Diploma Program within contexts of choice and equity at each school site. South Carolina public high schools may be demonstrating a new equitable path to college readiness through the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program through courses offered. The IBDP is an expensive program for SC state-supported schools to adopt, maintain, and to serve as an inclusive and exclusive vehicle for college readiness. As state funding for education in South Carolina is re-allocated, I hope that my work may inform those who are responsible for making fiscal decisions that enhance and expand equitable access to the IBDP in high schools. Future state and district funding for the IB may be linked with viable plans to maximize participation or access to the IBDP. Finally, my research informs on the ways the IBDP can be offered to students within South Carolina. High Schools and potentially create opportunities through equitable access to college readiness curricula.

May 31, 2016

Dear SC IB Diploma Coordinators,

I am developing a research project that I am confident will interest you...but I need your help. My research is on the topic “access” to the IB within our state.

The shift in the use of the IBDP in high schools is a hot topic right now in academic research and I’d like to let people know what is happening in South Carolina! Do we define our Diploma Program as meant for the “Crème de la crème”, “IB for All” or somewhere in between? As I have grown in my role as IB Coordinator at Irmo High School, I have grappled with this idea and I’m guessing you may be similarly curious. Johnathan Bradley, Marie Mulholland, and The University of SC, are enthusiastic about my research study.

Here’s where I need your help and what I can offer in return. I ask your participation in my study as it includes *all* SC IB Diploma Schools, which requires three action items from you:

1. Print & sign on the line below and return this to me digitally as your consent to participate.

(your name & school name)

2. Take the 10-minute questionnaire that I have embedded in this link:

[Click for Questionnaire Link here](#)

3. If called upon via email, indicate your willingness to interview with me regarding your school’s IB program for approximately one hour over the summer.

In return for your time and interest investment, I intend on sharing all the results with you at our SCIBS Conference in the Fall. I am willing to meet with you individually, as interest based focused groups and/or with the group at large.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

Congrats, as another school year is behind us!

Diane Padula

Figure 2.1: Initial Email to SC IB Coordinators

Table 2.1: Level I Data - Initial Online Questionnaire

1. How long has your school been an IB World School? (short answer)
2. How long have you been the IB Coordinator at your school? (short answer)
3. How many IB Coordinators has the school had since it became an IB World School? (short answer)
4. To become part of the IB Diploma program at your school, students must (check all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> fill out application <input type="checkbox"/> be recommended by teachers <input type="checkbox"/> have a certain grade point average <input type="checkbox"/> none of the above, we have open enrollment <input type="checkbox"/> other
5. With regard to your answer in #4 above, has the process for a student to be part of the IB Diploma program at your school changed since the program has been authorized? Please explain (paragraph):
6. Does your school have magnet affiliation? (choose the best option) <input type="checkbox"/> yes, in the past <input type="checkbox"/> yes, currently <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/> not yet, but we have applied for a grant <input type="checkbox"/> not sure <input type="checkbox"/> other
7. Your IB Budget is handled at the (choose the best option) <input type="checkbox"/> school level <input type="checkbox"/> district level <input type="checkbox"/> both school and district <input type="checkbox"/> combination school, district and federal grant
8. Does your school/district offer any other IB program (choose all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> IB MYP <input type="checkbox"/> IB Career Program <input type="checkbox"/> IB DP only <input type="checkbox"/> other
9. Indicate all Group 1 Coursework that students are presently enrolled -this includes Jrs. and Srs. who have just tested (mark all that apply). <input type="checkbox"/> A1 English Literature HL <input type="checkbox"/> A1 English Literature SL
10. Indicate Group 2 Coursework that students are presently enrolled (mark all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> B Spanish SL <input type="checkbox"/> B Spanish Abinitio SL <input type="checkbox"/> B Spanish HL <input type="checkbox"/> B German SL <input type="checkbox"/> B German Abinitio SL <input type="checkbox"/> B German HL

<p>Table 2.1: Level I Data - Initial Online Questionnaire continued from pg. 71</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> B French SL <input type="checkbox"/> B French Abinitio SL <input type="checkbox"/> B French HL <input type="checkbox"/> other
<p>11. Indicate Group 3 Coursework that students are presently enrolled (mark all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> History of America HL <input type="checkbox"/> History of America SL <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Marketing HL <input type="checkbox"/> Business and Marketing SL <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy HL <input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy SL <input type="checkbox"/> ITGS HL <input type="checkbox"/> ITGS SL <input type="checkbox"/> Economics HL <input type="checkbox"/> Economics SL <input type="checkbox"/> Other
<p>12. Indicate Group 4 Coursework that students are presently enrolled (mark all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Biology HL <input type="checkbox"/> Biology SL <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry HL <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry SL <input type="checkbox"/> Physics HL <input type="checkbox"/> Physics SL <input type="checkbox"/> Environment and Societies SL <input type="checkbox"/> other
<p>13. Indicate Group 5 coursework that students are presently enrolled (mark all that apply).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Further Mathematics <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics HL <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics SL <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematical Studies SL
<p>14. Indicate Group 6 coursework that students are presently enrolled (mark all that apply).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts HL <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Arts SL <input type="checkbox"/> Music HL <input type="checkbox"/> Music SL <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre HL <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre SL <input type="checkbox"/> Dance HL <input type="checkbox"/> Dance SL <input type="checkbox"/> Film HL

<p>_ Table 2.1: Level I Data - Initial Online Questionnaire continued from pg. 72</p> <p>Film SL</p>
<p>15. Is your school Diploma only or do you offer IB courses for participation (mark all that apply).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diploma only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diploma and course participation</p>
<p>16. How many students tested this May 2016 session, indicate # of candidates, # of anticipated and # of course participants (write your answer below, an estimation is fine). (short answer)</p>
<p>17. Does your program schedule time allocated for a designated CAS Coordinator?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> other</p>
<p>18. Do your IBDP student CAS projects reach out to the whole school? (write your answer below, if yes, include example).</p>
<p>19. Does your IBDP require Extended Essay research and writing over the junior/senior summer?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> no</p>
<p>20. Do non-IB teachers supervise your IBDP Extended Essays?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> no</p>
<p>21. Does the idea of writing the Extended Essay deter 10th grade students from committing to be IB Diploma Candidates for their 11th and 12th grade years?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> no</p>
<p>22. Please add any additional comments regarding access to the IB Program at your school that you find important (write your answer below).</p>
<p>23. Please provide your name, your School's name and the best way to contact you over the summer. (write your answer below),</p>

Table 2.2: Level I Responses

<p>Level I 17 of 22 schools responded, or 77% Change in Access based on questionnaire responses</p>

No Change (59%)		Change (41%)	
Always open enrollment	Always selective enrollment	From open enrollment to selective	From selective Enrollment to open
<p>AC Flora High School* Greer High School Hilton Head High School* Lexington High School Socastee High School South Point High School Woodmont High School*</p> <p>(70% of schools that show no change)</p>	<p>Aynor High School Hartsville High School* Lake Marion High School</p> <p>(30% of schools that show no change)</p>	<p>Latta High School*</p> <p>(14% of schools with change)</p>	<p>Lower Richland High School Northwestern HS Richland Northeast H.S* Rock Hill HS* Sumter High School Wilson High School</p> <p>(86% of schools with change)</p>

Current type of enrollment for IB Diploma Programs in South Carolina High Schools:

<p>Open enrollment 76 %</p>	<p>Selective enrollment 24 %</p>
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Table 2.3: Level II Data Collection

(Interview prompts)

1. Describe your school's IB program.
2. Discuss your school's leadership and policies in support of the IBDP.
3. Does your school offer extra support for potential and current IBDP students?
4. Has the implementation of the IBDP at your site changed since your school has been authorized?
5. Discuss community outreach about IBDP at your site.
6. Discuss CAS as a program, is it individual or community based – give examples.

Table 2.4: Level II One-on-One Interview Dates

July 16, 2016 – Coordinator, Hartsville High School

July 20, 2016 - Coordinator, AC Flora High School

July 22, 2016 – Coordinator of Rockhill High School


July 25, 2016 – Coordinator of Richland Northeast High School

August 8, 2016 – Coordinator of Latta High School

August 9, 2016 – Coordinator of Woodmont High School

October 7, 2016 - Coordinator of Hilton Head High School (cancelled due to inclement weather – email sufficed)

Table 2.5: Level III Focus Group Sessions

<p>Focus Group 1:</p> <p>IBO, New Southeast Region – Leader Former Coordinator Richland NE HS</p> <p>Principal, Southside High School</p> <p>Coordinator, Southside High School</p> <p>MYP Coordinator, Woodmont High School</p> <p>New Coordinator, Richland Northeast H.S. Moved from Chicago Public Schools</p>	<p>Focus Group 2:</p> <p>Coordinator, AC Flora HS - Leader</p> <p>Coordinator, Northwestern High School</p> <p>Coordinator, South Point High School</p> <p>Teacher, Rock Hill High School</p>
<p>Focus Group 3:</p> <p>Coordinator, Sumter High School – Leader</p> <p>Principal, Woodmont High School</p> <p>New Coordinator, Woodmont High School</p> <p>Coordinator, Lower Richland High School</p> <p>Coordinator, Wilson High School</p> <p>Coordinator, Hartsville High School</p>	<p>Focus Group 4:</p> <p>Assist. Principal of Instruction, Irmo High School Leader</p> <p>Visual Arts Teacher, Irmo High School</p> <p>Coordinator, Latta High School</p> 

Focus group sessions were conducted with the assistance of SCIBs members, on November 3, 2017. The sessions extended IB coordinator participation. Note, Focus Group 4 transcript was not included as a data set.

Table 2.6: Level III Data Focus Group Prompts

(Fall Conference Nov. 2016)

Participant groups of 3 – 5 IB Diploma Coordinators will discuss one or more of the prompts below:

1. How is coursework being used with your school?
 - a. as an access tool?
 - b. as an access barrier?
2. How are CAS projects being used within your school?
 - a. as an access tool?
 - b. as an access barrier?

Access Themes for consideration:

Theme 1 – Leadership

Theme 2 – Policy

Theme 3 - Support

Table 2.7: Level IV One-on-One Interview Dates

January 25, 2017 – Robert, SC Department of Education

January 25, 2017 – SUZANNE, President of Magnet Schools of America

March 3, 2017 – Nora, Greenville Area School District IB Coordinator

Table 2.8: Level IV Website Exploration

(conducted August 30, 2016)

	Woodmont	AC Flora	Hartsville Magnet	Latta	Richland North East Magnet *	Rock Hill	Southside Magnet
	**	*	***	****		**	***
# Clicks to IB	2	4	2	2	2 + long scroll	6	2
What is IB?	Diploma 1 st Academic challenge	Sent to IBO.org link	Sent to IBO document	Sent to IBO.org link	In IBO wording No link	none Listed w AP comp.	Pre-Univ. w graduate connection
Why IB?	Interna- tional standard	Interna- tional standard	Directly related to HHS Experience	Video from alumnus	Interna- tional standard	none	Whole person
IB Course Info?	12 courses named w emphasis on AP compara- ble	None – Email DP coor. with ?s	14 courses w/syllabi	10 courseswit h syllabi	Generic course informa- tion	12 courses with syllabi	Generic info w Link to IBO.org
How to become IB?	none	none	Application link 50 spots available	Applica- tion link Manda- tory Parent attend- ance	none	none	Magnet school window No link
Dates to sign up?	none	none	Magnet window, no dates	Link to Applica- tion	none	none	Link to magnet application Nov. date

Website access friendliness: * - not informative, call the DP Coordinator instead

** - not informative about IB in particular

*** - informative but not friendly

**** - informative, access friendly

Table 2.9: Access Grid

	Chapter 4 Analysis	Chapter 3 Findings by opposing themes tools versus barriers to access via equity modes of leadership, policy and support					
Level	Construct Themes: 1. Business of IB 2. Leveling field 3. Educate 4. Evolution of IB	Tools to Access A. Commitment to resources B. Choice C. Pathways generated D. Social momentum			Barriers to Access A. Gatekeepers B. Attrition & IB Coordinator C. Choice D. Social momentum		
		Leader-ship	Policy	Support	Leader-ship	Policy	Support
School	In practice	A	B	C	A*	B*	C*
	Prevailing culture	D	E	F	D*	E*	F*
District	In practice	G	H	I	G*	H*	I*
	Prevailing culture	J	K	L	J*	K*	L*
State	In practice	M	N	O	M*	N*	O*
	Prevailing culture	P	Q	R	P*	Q*	R*

CHAPTER 3

The local perspective of equitable access pathways in SC

Access--a multi-dimensional idea—is presented in this chapter as opposing themes: tools to access and barriers to access. Each of these themes is categorized into subthemes related to three overarching modes of equity: support, policy, and leadership. Findings demonstrate a shift towards greater access both within South Carolina’s IB classrooms as well as on a larger scale within magnet schools across the United States. View the Table 3.1 (on page 121) for an outline of the main multidimensional ideas shared as tools and barriers to access. Each of these themes and subthemes are explored in depth in the subsequent pages.

Tools to Access

Four central themes have surfaced throughout my findings as tools to access, these are multifaceted and contain subthemes within. The first central theme focuses on commitment to monetary and ideological recourses. The second central theme is about choice; the policy momentum and the shift to IB for All. The third central theme focuses on the pathways generated by leadership, though message, innovative pathways, prerequisites and support, reconsideration of admission requirements and expanded IB coursework. The fourth central theme is social momentum and the prevailing culture which creates a value of expanded access.

Commitment to resources

Monetary. The SC state government is hands-off in creating policy and leadership avenues for access to the IBDP. In this decentralized decision-making environment, districts and schools have a great deal of autonomy and responsibility to craft IB policies. One SC Department of Education official in reflecting on state leadership and policy (interviewed, January 25, 2017) ROBERT remarked, “We don’t have an official policy here, so it is kind of left up to the districts to decide...I mean, we are a local-control state and, even on the national scale, we are always about local rights.” The state does control GPA weighting and includes IB in this uniform state system. During the same interview, ROBERT reported,

It [IB], it’s under the ‘high-achieving’ umbrella: so, you have AP, which is nine through twelve [grades], IB-- nine through twelve, and then Gifted and Talented (GT)—three through twelve and that includes academic and artistic; all can receive that extra weighting [on the GPA]. If the student is identified as GT, the district puts forth that’s how they [the district] are serving the student - through AP or IB.

This GPA weighting is attractive to students who are college bound. The state’s inclusion and approval of IB in grade weighting is an access tool.

In addition to including IB in the state-governed grade weighting process, the state will begin to allocate some funding for the Program. The expense of the International Baccalaureate program is accrued to Districts/Schools in three main parts: testing, teacher training, and the annual fee to IB (as noted in Chapter 2 – Table 2.3). Testing can become quite expensive since schools are charged per test per student; so, as

access for students increases, so does the testing bill. Potential state-level funding specified for the IBDP would facilitate increased access for students in SC. Through a member-check email (July 5, 2017), ROBERT revealed good news for access within the latest state budget; the funding cap was removed from the proviso in section 1A.26., “(SDE-EIA: Assessments-Gifted & Talented, Advanced Placement, & International Baccalaureate Exams) Funds appropriated and/or authorized for assessment shall be used for assessments to determine eligibility of students for gifted and talented programs and for the cost of Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate exams.” This funding to include individual IB exams is new and does not yet have a secure place as a line item in future state budgets. If the provision by the state of South Carolina holds, the May 2018 testing session will be the first IB tests partially funded by the state.

Ideology: Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. The state’s ideological commitment mirroring the IB Diploma Profile is the Profile of the SC Graduate (see next page and to be discussed more in chapter 4). This document, made by the SC Superintendents Roundtable (2015) reflects the prevailing culture in South Carolina regarding the expectations of outcome for graduating high school. In discussing the Profile of the SC Graduate (Figure 1.1) and access to the IBDP (interview with ROBERT, January 25, 2017), one state-official commented:

On the high school level, we [the state of SC] offer on global perspective...More emphasis or more desire for foreign languages and other cultures [is] communicated. I mean, if you look at a lot of what is out there, as far as ‘the high school graduate transforming SC movement’...I mean it’s [the profile of the SC graduate] a complicated thing; it’s really blending the lines - the traditional lines

of college and high school or career and high school (confirmed by member-check email July 5, 2017).

The Profile of the SC Graduate (Figure 1.1) acknowledges in general terms ‘world-class knowledge and world-class skills’ with the globe at its center. The commitment to access for the IBDP at the state level is through GPA and potentially through funding for testing. The convergence in philosophy of the SC high school graduate ideology the IB Learner Profile will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Choice

Choice - a policy momentum. South Carolina’s Greenville Area School District thirty years ago set into motion a district-wide choice policy that continues throughout the state today. Choice has opened access for the IBDP, as noted in the finding below. A historical perspective on the first authorized program in the state was provided by NORA (interview March 2, 2017):

It was ’87... And for 10 years we were the only one... The superintendent at the time wanted to look at programs that might attract students and their families back into the downtown area so the IB was a program that came under discussion and in fact was *the* selective program. So, it became a magnet school. It was originally designed as I would tell you as a school as a within a school model. So, that’s not the thinking today but that was the thinking at the time.

This historical reflection provides insight to the original establishment of IB within South Carolina thirty years ago, when the first program opened in Greenville County. Notably it was the selective magnet at the time and meant to operate as a school-within-a-school. Being both selective and adopting a school-within-a-school model raises doubts that the

intention was to integrate within classrooms. Perhaps this was overly ambitious at the time, however it speaks to the criticism that followed about magnet schools imposing segregation under one roof. As stated by the participant, a different thinking existed then, which implies a change and a shift compared to the thinking of today.

The choice momentum at the district-level is evident in their continued funding and policies that help to facilitate access to IB programs throughout the state of SC. Optimistic about the district funding, SHERRY assured, “The principal and the superintendent have been good about making sure that we have what we need for IB so hopefully that continues.” IBDP coordinator TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) commented, “We’re promoted widely in the district, you know. All the kids in the district that want to do IB, come to our school. They’re all bused to our school, which is paid for.” Another policy, which facilitates access to IB, is this district’s response to the growing sphere of choice and competition. IB is implemented in keeping with the district’s own choice mechanism, DANIEL (interview, July 26, 2016) noted,

[name of high school] got authorized as an IB Diploma Program school in 2008 to compete and to keep these top kids from going to [other high school in district] because what happens with this magnet school is that if our top 10%, 15%, 20% leaves ... then the whole school just bottoms out on test scores.... And you know, having a Diploma Program and keeping these honors kids there pays off.

Here, the coordinator speculated what would happen if choice was not implemented at his district. According to him, it would be detrimental.

A shift to IB for All. I found that 76% of the IBDP schools within this case study are more open to the ‘IB for all’ concept while 24% remain more selective. By more open, I mean the school policies and or practices are inclusive to more students than they were within the recent history of the program since 2007. The President of Magnet Schools of America, who is a native South Carolinian, asserted that IB is part of opening opportunity for all students:

... it [IB] was perceived as for the elite... ‘for all’ (IB)...that has been a major shift... But the whole point is that you would try to increase opportunity for more kids to be able to qualify for it... but there should be an effort of getting them there. Not just relying on that gifted kid that you know is going to be on that track.

So, when the district provides funding and buys into the magnet philosophy they are positioning themselves through their own policies to provide access to IB.

The district level support towards IBDP access varies from school to school. In the findings below, coordinators describe the varied support that they receive from their districts. IBDP coordinator PAT (interviewed, July 22, 2016) emphasized, “The district started the philosophy that ‘everybody needed to be invested’. The district needed an investment but parents need some investment too. So, parents pay \$95 (Half of the registration fee). So, everyone has stake in it.” In these cases, the district sets the precedent for buy-in is the mode of operation to access for the IBDP, here the district hopes that this ‘buy-in’ factor will promote access through sense of proprietorship by the student/family as well as a partnership with the district. At a different district, the ESL

(English as a Second Language) person is housed within the IBDP high school. This provides easy access to the school's Spanish speaking population as described by TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016):

I tell you one thing that worked this year is our district ESL (English as a Second Language) person. And he's housed at our school and he did a Latina family night. They had a good Hispanic outreach and I had materials in Spanish on hand and like trying to explain IB courses with my MYP coordinator. I think we finally had an outlet where there were 20 or 30 families that wouldn't have ever heard, 'as your kid moves up, your kid's taking a couple of honors courses, they really need to be taking these IB courses very seriously in the last couple of years, but they [the Hispanic families] also knew that they [Hispanic students] could do it.'

TIMOTHY was excited to deliver this information about outreach to this school's Hispanic community; the idea was new to their implementation and more importantly, it proved effective.

Pathways generated through leadership

Leadership for IBDP policy and support is the first crucial tool for access at the school level, however, for this to be executed, district-level support must be in place. Principals are key to generating clear and positive messages to parents, teachers, staff, and students about expectations for access to advanced coursework and how students matriculate to this coursework. Throughout my interviews, IBDP coordinators identified the school principal as a crucial policy actor for access. The principal's outreach to

various stakeholders in the school community helps to establish a social context about access to the IBDP among parents, student groups, guidance counselors, teachers, and community members. Principals enhance access through their messaging about the ways to implement programs that specifically serve the needs of their student population. While access requires teachers to be on the frontline helping students find their way to advanced coursework, school principals shape how the program is perceived, what the program looks like through the array of coursework offerings, and how the school community is to support this effort.

In this first example of leadership for access, the school principal is directly involved in establishing a foundational understanding about the rigor of IBDP program within the school sending a message to *all* parents rather than only IB-specific parents. These supportive principals set a positive, inclusive tone and set clear standards of excellence. MARYLIN (interview July 20, 2016) stated:

Our principal just doesn't want it [the IB Diploma Program] to seem like an elite thing and only have certain parents do stuff for us...Our principal wants us to get everybody that we can. He'd love us to have 100 kids a year. He talks about it. He makes it very clear that IB is our most rigorous academic program. I've been in programs with him when the AP (Advanced Placement) person spoke and then I spoke, and I guess he didn't feel like it was made clear enough...that IB was the superior program. And, he would stand up and say, "I want to make it clear, our most rigorous program is the IB." That [the clear acknowledgement of IB rigor] to me takes real strength on the part of my school leader because that made some people mad [the AP teachers]. But he is clear about it and I think that is one

reason why we have kids attempting the IB who might not have attempted [IB] at other schools because they want to be in that setting that is the best in our school.

At a different school, the IBDP coordinator reflected upon the community outreach that his principal has established over the years, DANIEL (interview July 26, 2016) reported, “My principal, every time we do these meetings and the parents come in, he always says the same thing. We got our speeches down-pat right, but he always calls it [IB] the gold standard.” In the above examples, the coordinators spoke of their principals who publicly acknowledge the excellence of an IBDP education and they speak of it with high regard to parent volunteers and to parents, students and teachers who attend at-large meetings. This establishes a foundational understanding about the rigor of the IBDP for the school community.

A shift in message. Consistent leadership that delivers the message of the shift towards equity to the school community is a necessary ingredient to convey the shift in thinking about the IBDP. IB rolled out their ‘IB for All’ initiative in 2007 and presented it at the IB America’s Conference soon after. My research was fortunate to include the voices of some coordinators who experienced the change in the leadership message since 2007.⁴ One coordinator, who has been in her role for nine years (the program has been at her school for 19 years), experienced the shift in leadership message and identified a change that took place in her school. She noted “Everybody can sign up for this but you have the right to fail which I think is morphed into everybody should try – we should try IB for all. Let’s try and make them all succeed.” (PAT interviewed on July 22, 2016)

⁴ All the IBDP coordinator participants for this case study work in high schools whose Diploma Programs have been in place prior to 2007,

This coordinator has recognized the responsibility of success to be on both the students and the adults at school rather than only on the students. PAT identified when the shift in message occurred in her school and explained the change, “It was probably, I guess, around 2009 or ‘10 that we really kind of expanded out and I started seeing others [students] that could probably do this... We’ve been more open since then.” A focus group (SCIBS, November 4, 2016) also addressed this expanded notion of inclusiveness:

Traditionally it's been honors students only who have been allowed to sign up, okay. And now we're beginning to recruit who we think are promising students who may not have advanced in that same way...and targeting them to perhaps be potential IB students and that's just beginning.

The above quotes acknowledge that this shift in message from two angles: from the perception of leadership for IB for All and in the way the coordinator describes her/his students as ‘promising’ which means they show potential to do advanced coursework.

Innovative pathways. Leadership for IB also embraces and implements new initiatives, support programs, and innovative pathways for success for students who show potential and promise. Principals, in coordination with supportive teachers and counselors, craft policies to create avenues for access specific to the underserved students. When the principle of IB for All shapes policy, programs are put into place for students who enter high school not traditionally on track for IB. Though considered “outstanding enough” for advanced classes, but not for IB, the findings below point to intentional ways to integrate students into IB who apparently have been previously separated by their coursework. Coordinator MARYLIN reflected on support pathways in her school:

Our principal just started this program [Falcons in Flight] about five or six years ago that tracks the lowest 10% of our kids and puts them in these tiny remediated classes alone in the ninth grade and they do English, Algebra 1, Hawk 1 and Biology together and the classes were like 10-12 kids--really, really strong. Two [students] came out of that and moved up to the IB...and passed AP U.S. history this year. It's a good success story, so we're hoping to have more kids like that. Some teachers see the glimmer in their eye and pull them up.

This success story speaks to the extra effort by individuals and programs to being effective towards broadening access. Another support initiative developed to prepare students for IB is described by IBDP coordinator PAT(interview, July 22, 2016)

We have a program [called JAG] from a grant, who [sic. that] deals with students who are identified as low socioeconomic, first generation, and all of that...the goal was to get them to college. We had a group that were going through IB. Some of those girls are outstanding African-American girls who were in some advanced classes. They weren't strong [IB Diploma Candidates] because I don't think the philosophy was how to move everybody along before then 2009 [sic. 2007].

This coordinator talks about students by labeling them using different terms and indicates a now and then perspective of her school's philosophy.

Course prerequisites and support. Additional strategies to increase access to advanced coursework include an evaluation and the implementation of appropriate course prerequisites. For example, students may be counseled to double in mathematics courses.

IBDP coordinator MARYLIN (interview, July 20, 2017) explained, “They [the students] do Algebra 1 in 9th grade, and Geometry and Algebra 2 in 10th so they can catch up. And our guidance counselors tell them from the beginning, ‘If you think you might want to do IB one day, this is what you need.’” Additional support programs include AVID⁵ implemented by the school principal for underclassmen and the IBCP (International Baccalaureate Career Program; see chapter 2 for description). TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) reported:

My counselors know about the Diploma. They are always looking for the kids. The teachers who are teaching those courses are always telling me about kids and the courses, right. So, there is a lot of work on the backend and to try and make sure that no one gets missed. Like AVID seems to be a program at RNE that is...it’s capturing another group of students. Probably a similar group of students who, if they were doing a career path, would be IBCP students.

The mention of “another group” of students and referring to AVID suggests formalized programs in place to incorporate underrepresented students into the fold to prepare them for advanced coursework like the IBDP and the IBCP.

A defining aspect of this leadership for access is the school leader’s recognition and acknowledgement that expanding IB is a team-effort within the school. In South Carolina schools, leaders have established an ‘all-hands-on-deck’ orientation to accomplish these goals. The adults who understand IB and work on the front line with

⁵ AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination (<http://www.avid.org>). This program focuses on underrepresented high school students (beginning in 9th grade) in preparation for college and career success. It is a stand-alone program within schools that requires outside training on its philosophy through the AVID organization.

students—particularly teachers and counselors—are creative partners in bringing students to the IB experience in schools. Research participants identified teachers, in particular, as demonstrating an unquestionable work ethic and commitment to each student’s individual success by facilitating access to advanced coursework for students. For example, LUANNE (August 9, 2016) noted, “Those teachers are so dedicated that they will make it (work) with any and every student, every morning, every afternoon, all the kids have to do is show up, no problem.” At another school, the coordinator speaks of the teachers who do whatever is possible to level the playing field, SHERRY (interview, August 8, 2016) explains:

And so, for those kids, we really want to make sure that we can level the playing field for them. If they can succeed in the IB program, then not only might they get out of a poverty here in [school’s name] ... but we may be able to send them on to a level playing field at the university in Columbia or out of state.

This coordinator spoke from her heart about the commitment that she sees in her school’s effort to level the field one student at a time.

Reconsidering admission requirements. Avenues of access have developed across SC through a shift in the application process and new pathways to the IBDP. First, the IB application process has become more transparent or, even in some schools, a formality. The IBDP coordinator MARYLIN emphasized the openness and transparency of the application process, “If you want to, we’re telling you [the student] what you have to do to get to IB from the first day you walk in [as a 9th grader]. We have no guards for honors or AP or any of these pre-requisites needed to get into IB.” At this school, there is no application process, just preliminary coursework. Note, this school offers course

participation only through the arts, otherwise, the IB Diploma Program is only offered in its entirety. In other cases, the application process is infused with a new rationale. One IBDP coordinator SHERRY (interview August 8, 2016) explained why they began to implement an application after years of no application:

We did not have an application for the first several years. Really what the application is for us, [is] a kind of a gateway just to see if a student won't complete the application then they are not probably going to complete their assignments in the IB course. So, that's part of it... The other thing about the application is that it gives us an idea of the writing skills because we make them [students] complete an essay and it must be hand written, so we get an idea of their true writing skills and later, if I have a teacher who is concerned about plagiarism or something, I can give [them the] initial essay and so they can kind of compare the styles of the two papers. It's very simple.

Though an application remains part of the process it is in place to establish a baseline to get to know the student who is applying rather than filtering out students who apply. At the same time, the program expectations are revealed to the student through the application process. At this IB school, everyone who applies is accepted; the process is meant to foster inclusion rather than exclusion.

The second way admission is reconsidered is through reshaping prerequisites. In some cases, the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) is a prerequisite that establishes a pathway for admission. In my research, 58% of the participant schools provide access to students through feeder MYP programs. However, access to the IBDP is not exclusive to

students who are on this pathway. As TIMOTHY emphasizes, “The hope is that by being in the MYP, whether they’re in honors or not, by the time they’re juniors and seniors, they choose at least two or more IB courses that are easily doable.” At this school, the IB for All initiative is completely open on a course-by-course basis with no application requirement. Here the pathway introduces students to the idea of the full IBDP.

Expanding the range of IB coursework⁶. The strategy that casts the furthest net to appeal to more students is an expansion of IB coursework. Data from my focus groups (SCIBS interview, November 4, 2016) supports that expanded IB coursework, especially more classes in the arts, are understood to attract more students: “We put IB theater back into the mix and it’s going to be an experiment to see how things go this year, but that’s one of the things that we did is kind of try to tap into *that section* of student body.” By “that section,” the coordinator was referring to the performing arts students (i.e., music and theatre) who typically claim to be too busy performing to pursue IB coursework, whereas visual arts students (and teachers) tend to be less over-scheduled by performing for school events.

Another finding related to coursework as a tool for access pertains to world languages. Within IB, the Abinitio Standard Level (SL) course intends to allow students from any language background to pursue a new language during their 11th and 12th grade year. The Abinitio SL course, which is not unique to SC, can be taken with little or no prerequisites of prior world language. Abinitio, derived from Latin, meaning ‘from the

⁶ Recall from chapter 2 that IBDP full Diploma coursework is defined by IB (IBO.org) as the completion of six required IB courses: Standard Level (SL) courses may be taken in one year or two, and Higher Level (HL) must be over two years. A full Diploma Candidate, is a student who participates in the IB Core (CAS, Theory of Knowledge, extended essay) and chooses six total IB courses: three HLs and three SLs or four HLs and two SLs.

beginning’, is an IB Language Acquisition option that intends to make available a language other than the language spoken by the school (IBO.org). All the IBDP schools in the SC offer a world language at the SL which is the culmination of four to five years of a consistent world language. And, in addition, 18% of the IBDP schools offer world language at Higher Level (HL) as well; this is for students who are near fluency and can read literature in the acquired language. Pertinent to these findings, there are two levels of SL world language: the standard SL and the Abinitio SL. The Abinitio course is traditionally used by IB schools to serve the student whose world language background may be different from the school he/she has arrived. It is recommended by IB that students take two years of world language during their junior and senior years of high school. However, students may take only one year if they choose. Findings suggest a notable diversification across the state of the *starter kit*, which is the original base pallet of courses from all content areas, or a broadening of course offerings within the world languages through level--meaning HL, SL, Abinitio SL--and/or the type of language other than Spanish i.e., French, German, Chinese or Latin. In confirmation of these findings, NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) asserted, “I think that the Abinitio course meets the needs of specific group of students - those that have two years or less of study (in a world language). I think it has been used as a tool to open access.”

The broadening of coursework as a tool for access also extends to courses concerning the IB “Individuals and Society” requirement. For example, questionnaire responses, (May – August 2016) suggest that the course History of Americas HL, offered in all the participant SC schools, is prevalent most likely because US History is a South Carolina state standard. This offering makes it indigenous to the SC starter kit as

described in Chapter 2. Diversification beyond the History of Americas HL/SL course expands to the Integrated Technology in a Global Society (ITGS) HL/SL, Business Marketing and Management HL/SL, Economics HL/SL, Psychology HL/SL and Geography HL/SL. Schools that offer this array of courses based on Individuals and Societies are making a financial commitment to the IBDP because they require individual teacher trainings specific to each course. In comparison to the world language HL/SL offerings of Spanish, German, French, and Chinese, teachers can be trained generically on the IB requirements before they apply their specific language. Just like the performing arts such as music, the IB requirements are the same for orchestra, band or chorus but the instruments may vary, such as strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, or the human voice. Thus, the diversification coursework for Individuals and Societies, beyond the Arts and world languages, is connected with both a financial and personnel commitment by the IBDP schools in SC.

Social momentum and the prevailing culture

This case study reveals the importance of a momentum built by people who have positive orientations and experiences with IB to serve as an essential tool to access. Understandings of IB can be set before a student begins the IBDP, during the experience, and/or as a result of the IB experience. The school's efforts to organize in-school, whole school, and even middle school activities that garner support and understanding about the IBDP play a pivotal role. Collectively, these efforts foster a prevalent IB culture that may encompass, for example, out-of-school recruitment sessions that become an expectation by the community. Findings also reveal individual teachers' outreach efforts to level the playing field have a positive impact on the community and, in-turn, reap social support

for the IB program. In reflecting on an international event hosted at her IBDP school, MARYLIN (interviewed, July 20, 2016) noted,

I think it's very much a part of our school and that comes from the IB culture that's been here for a long time now. We have two international days, we have one that's festival at school that have a big pep rally with it and they perform and all this stuff. Then we have food around the school... and then we have children's international day where we bring in kids from the local elementary school and we teach them about different countries in each room, it's really fun.

As my research suggests, positive IB outcomes become contagious to members of the community. This social momentum reaches a wide range of communities, as noted above, these international days slated as part of the school calendar creates a prevalent culture of access within the school. Evidenced next is an example of the breadth of connection across the surrounding community spanning from millworkers to country-club elites. LUANNE (interviewed, August 9, 2016) reflected on the community interest in IB, "They're mill workers, but they value education. And, these people that didn't get chance to go [to college]. I've had parents coming in saying, Ms. So-and-So, my cousin, my neighbor, whatever, they got that International IB, how can I get my children in it?"

In other communities, the IB pathway has become a social expectation. An IBDP coordinator (DANIEL) shared her reflections on these dynamics, "I usually always go and ended up talking to like the Anchor Club [a local country club] and I do recruiting... our students' parents usually worked for Sonoco or are somewhat more affluent and so they just understand the process that goes on." At a different IB school, the social aspect

of IB has made its way to community members who attend private schools. IB coordinator MARYLIN describes a new phenomenon - “the return to public school”:

People want their kids to come to [school name] so that they can do IB. The interesting kind of mindset as of late is that it is really permeating into the private school people. So, we have a lot of kids that are zoned for our school that go to [names of two local private schools] and so many of them are coming back to us, and they’re hearing they know kids at the private schools who have not gotten into Carolina and they’re saying, ‘Why are we paying \$20,000 a year for our kid not to get into Carolina? We hear you have this IB so your kids get in Carolina.’ This is the conversation I have. That is interesting. That’s really permeating into the community now.

In the finding above, private school students are returning to the public school because of the social perceptions of the IB Diploma Program as a preferred gateway to higher education. IB gets the results that these parents want. Another example of social interaction that supports access to the IB program comes from IBDP coordinator SHERRY (interview, August 8, 2016) who asserts:

I was born here in this town, grew up here and married a local boy, but several of our staff and faculty are alumni and have come back and are very involved in the program [IBDP] too. We really do try. Lots of our teachers here are graduates of the program, they are keen to the people in the community. So, if you are having problems with a kid in a classroom, you call grandma or mama because you could probably go to church with them or you might be kin to them. Those sorts of things are some of the benefits...you either know mama and daddy or your

teacher next to you knows mama and daddy and so it's really easy for us to be able to get in touch with a parent or a guardian and say 'hey, this is going on' whether it is a positive or whether it's a negative thing and work with them to get things straightened out.

At this school, the IBDP student success is connected to interaction between teachers and community members and it is this built-in support, or momentum generated through community ties, that the program has built its success upon. As with the examples above, ideas about IB, the perceptions about the bridge to college and individual student support are socially constructed and serve as a tool to access.

Barriers to Access

Four central themes have surfaced throughout my findings as barriers to access; these themes are multifaceted and contain subthemes within. The first central theme focuses on gatekeeping with subthemes of bureaucracy of the school system and dissent among various internal stakeholders from leadership to teachers. The second central theme concerns attrition and the role of the IBDP coordinator who becomes overloaded with responsibility. The third central theme centers on the idea of choice--both the understanding of choice and the limited information flow about available choices, which stunt access to the IBDP. Further findings show competition for resources and support mark the saturation of choice. The fourth central theme is social momentum as perceived by the case participants. Such momentum identifies with shifting populations and racism, perceptions of the IBDP workload and confusion about choice.

Gatekeepers

Bureaucracy. Gatekeeping can be intentional, or unintentional; meaning with knowledge and awareness about the IBDP, gatekeeping creates intentional barriers, while lack of awareness and knowledge creates inadvertent barriers to the IBDP. On a large scale, the first barrier to access is educational bureaucracy as presented by a representative of the Magnet Schools of America, SUZANNE, (interviewed, January 25, 2017)

One of the biggest enemies [to magnet schools] right now, is they [the states] tell us how we should be addressing kids as the whole student, and working with them...But then we are assessing the same way and being judged on what our standardized test scores are.

Similar barriers to IBDP access, but from the IB coordinator's perspective, exist at the state level regarding other ingrained policies such as end of course tests and graduation requirements. Per this point, one participant identifies obstacles, including state requirements. TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) shared, "...and graduation requirements are further barriers to some extent." He is referring to the state required US History end-of-course test and US Government and Economics courses that students must take during their junior/senior years. IB students across the state of SC are obliged to take the History of America's course as part of the starter kit to augment these requirements in addition to learning the US History End-of-Course Test content material and scheduling both the US Government and Economics courses as graduation requirements. The state mandates this standardized testing and graduation requirement as district/school accountability. However, this expectation by the state for the district to

comply, dilutes the equity effort and in this case, does not help the IB for All initiative at the school level.

Another broad perspective on bureaucracy and its interference with access to the IBDP was provided by NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) who explained her opinion of the full IB diploma in regard to the SC Department of Education,

South Carolina sometimes has not done us a favor either. And neither has the Commission of Higher Education. When we tried to move to get them to recognize the whole diploma and they were only willing to look at individual courses, higher level courses with a four are better [referring to IB scores]. So, when you look at the partner – I mean, I think in states where the IB [diploma] is a viable option you have a pipeline, you have a K-16 pipeline. You also have other supports whether it's from the Governor's office or other places. Here [SC] we've kind of done it little bits at a time. I don't think it has served us well. Not that IB kids aren't successful and don't have great scholarship opportunities...but I don't think we helped schools to build their full diploma programs for people to see the benefits of full participation.

By “full participation,” the IB coordinator is referring to students who would benefit from being full IB Diploma Candidates. This means they have committed to six IB courses and the IB core of TOK, CAS, and the extended essay. South Carolina has made the motion to credit students via GPA for their participation in the IBDP through coursework alone; the IB core components only count towards an IB Diploma.

Dissent among stakeholders. The second barrier to access within the central theme of gatekeeping is dissent among central policy actors. In reflecting on the resistance and dissent of leadership, one IBDP coordinator, LUANNE (interview, August 9, 2016), shared “IB, I think it's so worth it. But you get a Principal who's against it or you get a new superintendent who's against it. And you know, you're gonna get dragged down.” District coordinator NORA (interviewed, March 3, 2017) discussed her struggle with the breakdown of communication,

You're just never a prophet in your own land. You could say the same thing over...yet, at the district level people seem shocked and I'm thinking...well the reason you're shocked and amazed because you never ask the question. So, what is going on in the school or and when you do volunteer information sometimes they [district level leaders] just say ‘thanks, but no thanks’.

The lack of district awareness, or evident disinterest, is a key issue in restricting access to the IBDP within South Carolina schools. Apparent in the above quote, at the district level, either decision makers are not probing deep enough to ask the questions to provide a better understanding or the talk that does occur is superficial. By this, I mean a different agenda guides decision, in lieu of any information concerning IB.

Within the school level adults interact who might have a different perspective than the principal (regardless of whether the principal is on-board with the idea of IB) thus creating a barrier to access. And the attitudes of leadership who are not on board with the IB trickle to practices that create barriers to access within the school. A poignant comment reflecting this dynamic dissent among stakeholders was expressed during a focus session (SCIBS, November 4, 2016), “I'm the brand-new coordinator at

my school...We have, what I believe has been, a neglected program that is currently very small. But why is involvement in IB so small? Right now, we think it's largely a lack of awareness in our program." In affirming the above insight, NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) notes:

We do talk about the idea of (IB) for All but, I will tell you, that paradigm, you can say those things, [but] it doesn't mean they necessarily happen...A lot of those barriers aren't necessarily policies that are written. They may just be tacit agreements internally among [people] ... practices.

The above implies a resistance orientation that shapes practice. Practices generated by social interaction rather than formal policy exist as the student progresses toward IB DP matriculation. NORA reveals that barriers are caused by practices due to social interaction, and ROBERT (interview, January 25, 2017) points directly to whom he believes needs training:

I really feel like counselors and IGP counselors could use a lot more training or knowledge and just that what to look for a lot of times. Sometimes they are just gate-keepers on their own. But, sometimes the teachers, well, you know, eighth grade teachers, say, "I am not going to recommend him for honors biology he is going to make me look bad" ... So, I think there are gatekeepers all around and tearing those down to a certain degree would be great.

Adults who work directly with students may transfer their own, sometimes uninformed or misinformed, perceptions about IB. Non-IB teachers--including teachers of underclassmen and/or teachers of competing courses such as honors, AP and dual

credit—can be a particular concern. This mix of adult perspectives on IB influences students’ decisions on coursework pathways as they matriculate from year to year. Findings reveal that counselors, with their front-line role in scheduling coursework, can also unwittingly work as barriers to IB enrollment. IBDP coordinator LUANNE (interview, August 9, 2016) claimed, “Some of our faculty [non-IB teacher] and some of our school counselors do not fully understand the value of the DP.” Another IBDP coordinator (TIMOTHY, July 25, 2016) discussed the challenge of working with teachers who are resistant to change, “I still have to deal with, teachers that are very comfortable in their ways, who are very good at what they do. Being perfectly honest and having to shift that and move to something else is a barrier, it’s a hurdle.”

When the principal does not provide the leadership for policy and support within the school and its community a barrier to access is created. When the message to parents, teachers, staff and students is unclear about the expectations for all students to matriculate to advanced coursework, the IB Diploma Program goes unestablished, delayed, or dislodged. An IB district coordinator, NORA (March 3, 2017), attested to the importance of leadership investment in IB for program stability, “As programs evolved when you didn’t have school leaders who...really want the programs....when principals aren’t on board it’s hard to get anybody else on board. So, we have struggled a lot with that over the years.”

When the voice of the principal is absent and the IBDP Coordinator role is not recognized in the school as a leader, the levels of expectation are missing and the lines of support for the IBDP can become blurry or invisible within the school. For example, as discussed in the “tools to access” section earlier of this chapter, strategies like the

diversification of coursework intended to open access, when implemented erroneously by people intentionally or unintentionally, can backfire and serve as a barrier to access instead. Though IB put the Abinitio course in place as a tool to access, it creates a barrier when used improperly. This dynamic is addressed by NORA (interview, March 3, 2017):

I also think it [the Abinitio course] is a tool to mitigate poor quality teaching or a lack of structure in the school where they haven't been able to offer a foreign language to everybody. Even though they should have recruited or whatever they did, they used allocations in a different way... But I would say it's [the Abinitio course] probably being used for the wrong purposes. You know IB does layout who belongs in this course [students whose language acquisition differs from where they have arrived]. I don't think they [the rules] are totally followed ... In a way, a system that's designed for one purpose, that institution is using it for another, whether it is a lofty purpose or not, well intentioned or not it usually gets abused over time and I think that's where we are with Abinitio.

This finding marks frustration with the use of the Abinitio course within her district as for the wrong purposes, though perhaps not intentional overtime creates a barrier to access.

Another coordinator from a different school described a similar issue of using the Abinitio course incorrectly. PAT contended:

We tell the eighth-grade counselors, if they're [the students] taking advanced English, history, math, science they should be taking advanced foreign language as incoming ninth-graders. They [the counselors] tell the kids, 'if you want this other course, just go ahead, you can catch up.' They [the counselors] don't understand the implications of that.

In this case, the students are steered away from the world language requirements knowing that the Abinitio course is available; it is being misused as a crutch to full diploma access. Furthermore, when Abinitio is used incorrectly, it creates a two-fold barrier. First, homegrown students' language acquisition is stunted because students are not taking an uninterrupted sequence of world-language studies that should result in four to five years of consistent instruction. Instead they are taking no world language up to 11th grade with the idea of the Abinitio course serving as their only option. This dilutes the world language program for the school, contradicts the original purpose for the course, and could become a serious matter for the school to address by the IB. Secondly, for students who have arrived at the school from a different language acquisition background, the Abinitio course should open access to them, however, due to the Abinitio misuse, some schools are no longer offering the course, thus a barrier is created for newcomers to participate as an IB Diploma candidates.

Course sequencing. The last gatekeeping barrier to access is course-sequencing. Like, world language delays, math sequencing also proves to be particularly problematic for expanding access to IB. The proposed matriculation to advanced mathematics in South Carolina beginning in 8th grade is as follows: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, Pre-Calculus, Calculus and/or Statistics (ed.sc.gov, 2017). MARYLIN (July 20, 2016) addressed the math component, "The one kind of difficult thing is the math. If they [the students] haven't had...Algebra 2, then they can't come in [to IB] and that's just simply because they can't do IB Math Studies (SL). Other than that, if they've had Algebra 2, we can figure it out." This is echoed throughout other IB Coordinator interviews as well. Math matriculation presents a common barrier to IB math coursework. In more general

terms regarding coursework, TIMOTHY (July 25, 2016) eloquently explained the situation,

Sometimes, you'll find that a school might not offer the right set of courses that allow access to the most students. And sometimes that's because of the way the program was originally engineered as a program for another set of students who had a different set of needs ... It's almost like a base pallet – a lot of course outlines, trained teachers and a lot of times, when schools are making their first decisions, that decision that they're making early on, really sets their program off for the next, you know 4, 5 years into this kind of locked position.

Thus, course sequencing that is set in place upon authorization of the IBDP is of itself a gatekeeper to access because the pallet of course offerings becomes locked until a wider range of coursework begins. Findings suggest how laborious it is to make more IB course offerings available. TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) comments:

And one of the biggest barriers you know, it's like once you make this decision [to open a course offering], instituting the change is very difficult given the size of the school. You know, we used to [be a] comprehensive high school in a small town or either suburban school with a lot of offerings to a lot of magnet programs and a lot of stake holders you know...but district meetings, academics - chiefs of academics... it's a three-year deal, it really is, heavily supported by one person.

That one person could be the school's principal or the IBDP coordinator, who is the designated teacher within a school to run the program. Regardless of who that person is, when it comes to the district policy decisions, that person is up against (or encounters)

larger, influential powers. Thus, course sequencing and making changes to the array of established coursework is indeed complex within the school/district, thus creating a gatekeeping barrier.

Attrition and the IBDP coordinator overload

A second major barrier to access is attrition and the over demanding role of the IBDP Coordinator which is essential to the school's leadership network for the IBDP. The Diploma Coordinator stability/turnover emerges as a key issue. In more established programs in South Carolina (i.e., those five years or older), the Diploma Program coordinator turnover rate is 3.6 years. Whereas in newer programs (i.e., those five years or less), the turnover rate for DP coordinators is 2.0 years. IB programs older than five years are 90% more stable in coordinator leadership than programs less than five years old. These findings from my questionnaire are mirrored by interview data; LUANNE(August 9, 2016) explained, "I was in that community for 30 something years...TR and Greer [two other district IBDPs] have had a DP-coordinator every year or two years, that hurts the program. I mean the program struggles and it [the Diploma Program] just goes away." In both cases, when joint leadership of the school's principal and IBDP coordinator is not in place, a barrier to access is created at the school level and the program sputters.

The attrition of other IB trained teachers, counselors, and administrators who collectively further the understanding of the IB within the school community constitutes another barrier. The impact of attrition was reflected in the experiences of one IBDP Coordinator who has been in her role for one year. SHERRY laughs as she described the many hats she wears (interview, August 8, 2016), "I am the IB Coordinator, Extended

Essay Coordinator and, I am the only librarian here. I don't have a part time helper or anything, and I am on the Technology committee for the district and I also am the Yearbook Advisor.” This coordinator is expected to carry out multiple roles within her building while absorbing the demands of the IB as well. This evidence points to a potential reason behind the high turnover rate of new IBDP coordinators--missing support within the building and the added overload of responsibility to the coordinator position.

Choice

The third major barrier to access is related to the theme of choice in particular the saturation of choice resulting from severe competition of resources and the understanding of choice options. Limited information flow about choices also contributes to this barrier to access to the IBDP.

Saturation. Coordinators describe this challenge of choice as “war” and the opposition as coming from different directions. This battle metaphor is captured in this reflection, “In our district, we are in a magnet arms race with a dual credit high school that has jumped head first into it and then another magnet high school [AP], which serves a very small population and then there's us [the IBDP school].” (SCIBS, November 4, 2016, focus group). NORA (interviewed, March 3, 2017) made the following observation about the severe competition created by choice:

I would like to see us do some things very well that we have had in place and that we have funded because, of course, with that expansion of opportunities in terms

of choice programs comes a diluting of funding. It goes along with it. So, you can't sustain high quality IB programs on a bare bones' budget.

The wisdom presented through this finding suggested a prudent solution to sustain the IBDP opportunity. Yet the support depends on the commitment from district leadership, in other words this district IB coordinator seeks a nurturing of what has already been planted. Furthermore, building momentum for the program is building support within the school to create, execute, and maintain policy. This IB District Coordinator responsible for 12 IB World Schools, four of which offer the IBDP, summarized her experience with building capacity in programs for over 30 plus years:

I would say that [building capacity within IB programs] is an additional challenge and of course years after that you're still trying to garner support... You don't build capacity in programs... by offering so many other options [such as AP and dual credit] You can't build capacity that way... when our leadership changes so much... it's the people. This came out in January and it will take effect for '17-'18. We are no longer going to continue with our MYP programs. So, the resources that were going into those MYPs (Middle Years Program) including personnel whatever it may be... you know if that's being redirected to some other initiatives. That doesn't help the IB for All [effort]. (NORA, interview, March 3, 2017)

In this case, the district policy has changed and as they move forward the question remains concerning where the financial support from the original program will shift to within the district. The MYP was the established pathway in terms of IB towards access

to the IBDP in four of the county's high schools. Clearly, access to the IBDP will be affected at these schools.

Competition. Resources, particularly funding for IB teacher training, become limited due to choice, as explained by LUANNE (interview, August 9, 2016), "There is a lack of funding for IB teacher training. The state department provides Summer AP training...So keeping trained AP teachers has not been a problem, but IB training ...has been a struggle due to lack of funding...not due to teacher desire or interest." Another coordinator compared the responsibility for garnering support by the state to how AP training is handled (interviewed, July 22, 2016) PAT shared, "AP is doing a better job at this point--to push all that and to connect with the states--than IB. IB is piggybacking on AP." This suggests that the IB organization should approach the state and propose an agreement similar to the state-AP arrangement.

School districts cultivate competition by offering alternative opportunities for students within choice; this is most compelling and representative of South Carolina IBDP schools from the coastal region through the Upstate. The momentum to support dual credit in combination with AP presents competition for access to the IBDP. In response to this study's questionnaire that asked IB coordinators to write anything that they feel important regarding access to IBDP at their school, one IB coordinator NEAL responded,

The Scholars Academy is held on the campus of Coastal Carolina University (CCU) where the students take a combination of AP and CCU classes (Dual Credit). Tuition is paid and transportation is provided. The district built a state-

of-the-art facility for this program. The STEM Program is based at the Academy for Arts, Sciences, and Technology (AAST) [these are AP courses]. The students study a combination of AP and honors classes. Transportation is provided. The PACE program is available for our Juniors and Seniors to take college-level courses at both Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) and CCU. Tuition is paid.

In the finding above, access has widened towards individual course participation, while full diploma enrollment has been stunted due to the saturation of choices. NEAL's district has set a challenging course for this coordinator to compete when recruiting students to the IBDP. The Focus Group (SCIBS, November 4, 2016) commented similarly, "Yeah, there was, like, some of the School Board doesn't always seem to support [IB] because I feel like, this idea [of choice], that it's too many options." Competition is the problem with a broad spectrum of course offerings within the school, and initiated by the district, such as Advanced Placement (AP) and dual credit coursework, it is in direct competition with IB. PAT (July 22, 2016) remarked on change, "I mean we didn't have many AP classes honestly when IB first started. And so, we're kind of gone back to offering many more AP classes. So, it's [AP] a pull and it's difficult to try and get kids to figure out what's best for them." Yet another example of the choice as a dilemma in helping students understand the best fit for their needs.

Understanding the options. One of the main challenges within choice is to understand the range of choices. The choices of advanced coursework--AP, dual credit and IB—present many questions: How are they similar? How are they different? All three versions of upper level coursework are in direct competition with one another at the

school level, however, per the coordinators interviewed, the school community simply doesn't understand the differences between the offerings. IB coordinator, NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) describes the debacle within her own district office, "We have people in this building who see dual credit as a viable alternative to the IB. I, fundamentally, do not. But where they see it, of course, is in with parents they'll say 'Yeah, well, you can get the same weighting on the GPA [by choosing dual credit]'. " Notably, the Grade Point Average (GPA) issue surfaces when families have to make their choice between AP, IB or Dual Credit. Equal points are earned on the GPA--established by the state--on a course-by-course basis (Table 3.2). There are no GPA points earned for the core components of the IB Diploma (extended essay and CAS) and TOK is weighted as an honors level course (Table 3.3). Another finding reflects parental confusion about the dual credit coursework, (interview, August 9, 2016) LUANNE explained,

I've got a lot of parents whose kids took the Greenville Tech or dual credit not realizing that...that was not the same as IB or AP because those kids who took those classes, dual credit is only used within the state of South Carolina... I even had a Dad ask me one day, if I get paid on commission, I said "No, I'm not trying to sell you anything, I'm trying to help you make the best choice."

This finding about dual credit acknowledgement emphasizes the confusion throughout SC among parents about the options and value of the options. An additional finding to support this is from the Greenville Tech website, that reads:

Transferable Courses. If a course is marked with an asterisk (*), the course appears on the Commission of Higher Education's Statewide Articulation List of

Universally Transferable Courses from all technical colleges. Credits for these courses do not automatically transfer to a four-year college or university. Students are responsible for checking with the specific college or university to which they plan to transfer to determine the transferability of any course taken at Greenville Technical College. (<http://www.gvltec.edu>)

These findings suggest part of the onus put upon the IB coordinators to become knowledgeable and to educate the parents and students about the newest choice option-- dual credit. In addition, it further amplifies the perceived position of the coordinator as 'salesman' by the parents.

Coordinators are concerned because the recent dual credit development within districts across the state presents new choice offerings and with this comes new information (at times misinformation) that complicates understandings. One IB coordinator explained the debacle over the misunderstanding that AP and/or IB scores will earn college credit. TIMOTHY (interviewed, July 25, 2016) noted, "The district really has to do their homework [regarding Dual Credit], despite the 3, 4, 5 on an AP [scores], [this] is not always going to get you college credit. In the same way, a 5, 6, 7 in IB [scores] is not always going to get you college credit." This statement suggests the community doesn't realize that the college determines college credit; this is not guaranteed by taking the high-school level course and scoring certain marks. The schools and districts have nothing to do with the awarding of college credit, and district and schools are charged with providing better informing the community. However, when new courses are made available, now with dual credit, the college credit issue becomes even more cloudy because college credit is not guaranteed by all colleges even though it may

be offered by a particular college within the state. Dual credit courses compound the existing misunderstandings about college credit and the coordinator perceives this as the district being misleading. Thus, recent momentum to develop and expand dual credit as part of the general trend to broaden choice potentially stunts the growth and access to IBDP.

Limited information flow about the IBDP. The last barrier nested within the choice theme is the limited flow of information particularly via websites of schools and the SC Department of Education. Meant to serve as an informational tool, the IBDP websites of participant schools within this study fall short of the providing sufficient information to promote access to the IBDP. This finding was based on an analysis of the website access friendliness of each school's website pertaining to information about the IBDP. Schools' websites present vague descriptions, if any, as to "What is IB?" or "Why IB?" Most websites provided a link directly to the generic/standard IBO.org website, but left users without direction on what or where to click. Only one third of the school websites listed town/city-specific dates on IB information events or details on how to become an IB student; this small percentage also provided links to applications. Though websites are a school's way in keeping up with today's technology demands, IBDP schools are falling short in providing valuable information about the IB Diploma Program and how to access it. Additionally, a limited amount of information about the IBDP is listed on the SC Department of Education website. In fact, three 'click-pathways' exist to obtain IB information on the state website: clicking on 'schools', then to districts, which re-route to each school; clicking on 'data', then to report cards, then to each school; or finally clicking on 'test scores', then IB. Only this final route presents information other

than what individual schools provide. One finds the IB score reports are based on total numbers of students, tests taken, and IB Diplomas awarded. The display of reports aligns with full diploma attainment rather than with how the state credits IB through individual coursework. This current report doesn't provide information to students who consider taking individual courses, thus hindering access.

Social Momentum

The fourth centralized barrier to access is the theme of social momentum, or the prevailing, multifaceted culture among stakeholders. In this section, findings are shared (1) concerning the challenge of racism and shifting populations due to increased IBDP access; (2) the school-community members' perception of the IB Diploma workload; and (3) the confusion generated by choice.

Shifting population and racism. Findings point to shifts in the school-community as a result of increased access to IB. My research points to the trend of students changing their minds about choosing the full IBDP by the time they get to 11th grade compared to when they entered high school on track for the IBDP. This shift away from the full IB appears to be linked to social interaction as a barrier. IBDP coordinator Ray, "We have large numbers of students who apply and come to our school under the pretense of IB, yet many of them have no intention of participating in the IB program by the time they are juniors." Notably this opening of access is evident as students enter high school, however, the follow through of students to pursue the full IBDP has shifted in a way that shows students drop off in continuity. Another IBDP coordinator reflects on demographics, MARGIE wrote, "We have shifted from white male dominated enrollment to black female dominated enrollment over the past four years." This observation points

to the positive development in the demographic shift of IB to include black females. However, it also presents the question of why did the white male participation drop off? Regardless of who is coming or going, findings indicate a socially driven movement.

South Carolina is home to many international corporations that have established a work base and provided employment for the local community. In doing so, a global culture carried by the international companies becomes intermixed with the immobility of those who are born, raised and die in one place. The description of this mingling below points to racism, here NORA (interview March 3, 2016) observed,

...with BMW, Michelin, Hitachi we do have very much an international community, but we still have the more provincial, entrenched people in the Woodmont area. It's like you are born, raised, and die there. I mean that's just the way they see it... People can have reasons for not choosing a program [IB related PYP, MYP or DP] and I would hear things like I'm not sure my child is ready for all that diversity. That's code for I don't want them to be with all those African-American children. I said "Well, this is the population of the school, so it's not likely to change. If you are concerned about being in the minority in terms of race and ethnicity, then this may not be the best fit." But I would literally say that to people a lot. I just always wondered for every person who would say something like that there are others that thought the same and never said anything.

This finding speaks to the push back to integration efforts that the IB district coordinator experiences from the community. Here, a prevailing culture against "all that diversity" presents a social barrier to access to the International Baccalaureate programs created by an individual's racism rather than the schools in this district. At a different school, the

muddled school-community member's understanding about who represents the 'minority' surfaces, TIMOTHY (interviewed July 25, 2016) explains, "it was about increasing minority access, but the minority were Caucasian students. So, the term 'minority' is a...It's a cognitive flip." When the interviewer asked the participant if this understanding of minority as being Caucasian was clear in his school, the participant responded, "Oh no, not at all." Again, access to IB becomes challenged by socially constructed ideas that are perceptions and/or misconceptions related to integrating diversity within a school population.

Perception of the IBDP workload. The second barrier nested within social momentum is the perception of the IBDP workload. This connects with the earlier "competition" section in that the IBDP workload competes with that of AP and dual credit. The focus group discussed IB course participation (SCIBS, November 4, 2016):

The parents believe they [the students] can get the easier 'A' and put them in the dual enrollment [courses]. And so, then the conversations must change from not so much about the college credit but to those other things like the South Carolina graduate profile. And to those kinds of things like what the students are going to take on the college campus that they're not going to get anywhere else but in IB.

So, according to the is focus group session they collectively nodded their heads on the idea that students get much more from IB rather than grades. Another IBDP coordinator ANNEMARIE wrote:

The combination of open access to the full IBDP along with open enrollment in individual IB classes is both a blessing and a curse. It's great to have almost half

the junior and senior classes trying IB classes. However, it's difficult to sell the full IBDP to some groups who think, "Why would I do all that extra work when I can take just the IB classes I want without doing the Extended Essay or CAS?"

The idea of IB as being perceived as a more difficult route for students and the allure of other easier course options like AP and dual credit being available to students within the same school creates barriers to access for IBDP coursework and full IB Diploma Candidacy. It's the IB coordinator's burden to keep the momentum towards educating students and their families about IB coursework versus other options.

Persistent and socially created competition exists among the stakeholders for understanding the concepts of AP, dual credit, and IB coursework. A district IB coordinator NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) determined, "So why would I take advantage of the IB when I have this over here [dual credit, or AP] that gets me for the most part what I want [GPA]. So, the intrinsic part of the IB gets lost sometimes with some parents." In this example, the coordinator describes the tension due to the reasoning by parents who place more importance on GPA points--perceived as easier via other options--over the intrinsic benefits (e.g., all that goes with the student who reaches to find their potential, develop their work ethic, challenge their time management, and incorporate new ways of thinking) of IB participation. Another coordinator describing the dual credit issue, DANIEL (interview, July 26, 2016), reflected:

That's the problem with Dual Credit... You know, to teach a Dual Credit class, you have to have a master's degree in your subject and that's about it. And you know, you teach their [college] syllabus but then... the high school teacher awards

the credit...It's very slick...They don't have to send this essay... They don't have to send their commentary...They don't have to send anything off [to IB] to be externally assessed. They just pass... right here, down the hallway, looks good, right, and I win that argument all the time... the international standard is just not there [with dual credit].

The perception of the IB workload is being addressed by these coordinators to counter the social momentum of this perception of workload that creates a barrier to access. In doing so, the coordinators are pointing to the benefits of the IBDP participation --intrinsic values and the international standard.

Confusion of understanding choices. At the state level, an understanding about the choices adds to the barrier of access to the IBDP, ROBERT (interview, January 25, 2017) explained:

But you see kids with multi potentially... I don't think there is enough time to explore the arts or anything really. I feel like we force kids from the end of middle school to high school... They want to take the more rigorous academic classes, but what are they not taking? You know, they are not taking exploratory art or something...but they are not taking it. 'Hey, I am kind of interested in pottery...When are my chances to explore that?'

The freedom for a high school student to explore and satisfy their multiple potentials was presented by this participant. Later in the interview, ROBERT (regarding IB in SC) unveiled his deeper understanding, "It's more the district and the IB organization internationally and you all conforming to what they (IB) put out." Here, the participant indicates that the people within the IBDP schools are conforming to the IB. However,

what is missing is the knowledge of what the IB offers within the breadth of the arts curriculum – where the freedom to explore pottery or anything of the student’s interest is encouraged. Further, in contrast to conforming to the international, this participant pointed to the international standard as perceived as favorable, ROBERT commented, “International folks look on us as very favorably too, so...by having some of these experts at national conferences and international conferences share the research coming out of South Carolina ‘hey these are great things that are going on’.” So, the message is mixed from this participant who works at the state level, appealing to the international is positive, while conforming to the international is a negative when it comes to exploration of interests. This finding for me has introduced the idea of a lack of sustained support for access that adds to the barrier of understanding choices.

Research coming out of South Carolina opens access to gifted programs, however, here lies the disconnect that creates a barrier to access – the state’s lack of sustained commitment. In a follow-up email, as part of the member checking process, ROBERT provided information about the research that he spoke of during the interview. South Carolina’s Project Star, created a “value added” (J. Van Tassel-Baska et al, 2002, p 111) equity-driven dimension to identifying gifted and talented youth in South Carolina. Because of this research, underrepresented student populations have been granted opportunities (i.e., access) to gifted programs. In delving into further research about Van Tassel-Baska’s Integrated Curriculum Model (ICM), early research shows that curriculum designed for gifted students will benefit a wider selection of students as long as teachers differentiate in their approach to teaching (Van Tassel-Baska, 1992). Interesting here is this earlier work supported by SC opened access to advanced course

programs, like the IBDP, however, this equitable effort does not follow through to encourage the student to pursue the IB Diploma in its entirety. The sustained commitment to excellence is disillusioned by the SC's piecemeal approach to the IBDP coursework rather than the full Diploma effort.

In summary, the barriers to access presented in this second half of Chapter 3 are based on four centralized multifaceted themes: gatekeepers – bureaucracy, dissent among stakeholders and course sequencing; attrition and the IBDP coordinator overload; choice – saturation through competition of resources, understanding and limited information flow; social momentum due to shifting populations and racism, perception of workload and confusion of choice. These barriers were presented following the themes of tools to access which are also complex and include the following: commitment to resources through the Profile of the SC Graduate and funding; the choice momentum by districts and the shift to IB for All; pathways generated by leadership message, innovative pathways, reconsidering admission requirements, prerequisites & support, and expanded coursework; and lastly through social momentum formed by a prevailing culture for access to the IBDP.

The Portrait of a Newly Accessible IB

The mechanics of access through the of tools and barriers described thus far paint a portrait of the IBDP that is newly accessible within SC magnet high schools. One IBDP coordinator, (interview, July 25, 2016) TIMOTHY, aptly captures the demographic aspect of this shift across the state:

...if you set foot in our academic magnet program in a ninth or tenth grade classroom right now, they would look completely different than the way that

program looked 4 years ago...The kids in the seats are more culturally, ethnically...they're more – they come from more diverse backgrounds, they are more second generation and first generation...there's a group of students that is kind of shifted into the mix that hasn't been there before. And I'm more excited about it.

This phenomenon is relatively new and represents a change in social class and racial/ethnic diversity within single classrooms and across schools. With this transformation, new dilemmas surface. First, the IB students have varying degrees of educational support at home. A participant in a focus group (SCIBS, November 4, 2016) reported:

One of the big challenges I have is at home. I have my kids who are above their parents in education level. And I have a great number of them that drop out between 10th and a 11th grade because they say I can't handle the math...So, we've really tried to go reach out to the community where we have doctors and lawyers and we have a huge alumni association to try to get those kids the support because my program (IB) runs the game. I have got kids from the poorest of the poor and I've got Country Club South Carolina on the other side and so we're pooling from all over. I've got to find the way that is equitable for the kid that sits in class – who drove the brand-new Mercedes to school this morning and the one who's got the same clothes on that they wore all week.

The second dilemma related to the new diversity of IB learning environments is that teachers', counselors', and school directors' pedagogies and attitudes have not changed as swiftly as the profile of the average IB student. National-level policy

conversations likewise focus on the challenges of an integrated IB classroom, The President of Magnet Schools of America, SUZANNE captures the national picture of demographic shifts (interview, January 25, 2017):

Because now you've got the haves and have-nots [together in the IB classrooms].

...So, the whole idea is that kids work together from as early on as possible.

That's where the cultural competence...really has kicked in and I think [has] made a difference in who is sitting in those ninth grade Math classes...And where did that class come from? From the eighth grade and you know, you really have to dig in deep...You do, and you know what? It's such a paradigm shift.

Indeed, diverse students are seizing the opportunity for advanced coursework as classrooms are populated with students from underrepresented populations. The challenge due to this shift in opening access now becomes training the teachers to successfully facilitate learning in a classroom that may differ from their past experiences and notions of who deserves to be in the classroom. In response to this need, Magnet Schools of America has organized professional development in culturally responsive teaching and learning within magnet schools across the country.

The Value of Expanded Access & Conclusion

With the portrait of the newly accessible IB classroom, comes consideration of the connection between opposing themes to access. Findings suggest that the value generated by expanded access is immeasurable especially for underrepresented students. IBDP coordinator PAT (interviewed, July 22, 2016) summarizes, "Sometimes the accomplishment is just the journey... but once they get into college I think they realize that...it's like, 'maybe I was the weakest in my class, but now I'm not.' They can read

independently... They can do all those kinds of things.” The IB alumni this coordinator described completed the program and experienced the heartfelt sense of accomplishment. These students did not necessarily earn the IB Diploma, however they worked hard and then shared their IB reflections with their former high school mentor. Equitable access allows for students to sense their full potential; this is one of the major values of expanded access. My analysis of these tools and barriers related to equitable access will be presented in Chapter 4 within the context of change and related internal/external forces.

Table 3.1: Opposing themes to equitable access

Tools to Access	Barriers to Access
<p>A. Commitment to resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monetary 2. Ideology: Profile of the SC Graduate <p>B. Choice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Policy momentum 2. Shift to IB for all <p>C. Pathways generated through leadership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shift in message 2. Innovative pathways 3. Course prerequisites & support 4. Reconsidering admission requirements 5. Expanding the range of IB coursework <p>D. Social momentum and the prevailing culture</p>	<p>A. Gatekeepers</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bureaucracy 2. Dissent among stakeholders 3. Misunderstanding about IB 4. Course sequencing <p>B. Attrition and the role of the IBDP coordinator</p> <p>C. Choice</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Saturation 2. Competition 3. Understanding the options 4. Limited information flow about IB <p>D. Social momentum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shifting population and racism 2. Perception of workload 3. Confusion of choice

Table 3.2: South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy [GPA]

[South Carolina State Board of Education April 11, 2017 (pp 2-4)]

Note: This Grade Point Conversion Chart is for REFERENCE ONLY as counselors and registrars transcribe grades for courses taken prior to 2016.

South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale Conversions				
Numerical Average	Letter Grade	College Prep	Honors	AP/IB/Dual Credit
100	A	4.875	5.375	5.875
99	A	4.750	5.250	5.750
98	A	4.625	5.125	5.625
97	A	4.500	5.000	5.500
96	A	4.375	4.875	5.375
95	A	4.250	4.750	5.250
94	A	4.125	4.625	5.125
93	A	4.000	4.500	5.000
92	B	3.875	4.375	4.875
91	B	3.750	4.250	4.750
90	B	3.625	4.125	4.625
89	B	3.500	4.000	4.500
88	B	3.375	3.875	4.375
87	B	3.250	3.750	4.250
86	B	3.125	3.625	4.125
85	B	3.000	3.500	4.000
84	C	2.875	3.375	3.875
83	C	2.750	3.250	3.750
82	C	2.625	3.125	3.625
81	C	2.500	3.000	3.500
80	C	2.375	2.875	3.375
79	C	2.250	2.750	3.250
78	C	2.125	2.625	3.125
77	C	2.000	2.500	3.000
76	D	1.875	2.375	2.875
75	D	1.750	2.250	2.750
74	D	1.625	2.125	2.625
73	D	1.500	2.000	2.500
72	D	1.375	1.875	2.375
71	D	1.250	1.750	2.250
70	D	1.125	1.625	2.125
69	F	1.000	1.500	2.000
68	F	0.875	1.375	1.875
67	F	0.750	1.250	1.750
66	F	0.625	1.125	1.625
65	F	0.500	1.000	1.500

Table 3.3: - South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy

[South Carolina State Board of Education April 11, 2017 (pp 6 – 8)]

Dual Credit Courses

Dual credit courses—whether they are taken at the school where the student is enrolled or at a postsecondary institution—are those courses for which the student has been granted permission by his or her home school to earn both high school units of credit and college credit. One quality point may be added to the CP weighting for dual credit courses that are applicable to baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, or certification programs that lead to an industry credential offered by accredited institutions per established district articulation agreements (see SBE Regulation 43•234, Defined Program, Grades 9–12, and Regulation 43•259, Graduation Requirements).

Earning Dual Credit

Permission must be granted by the student’s home high school prior to the student’s taking the dual credit course to earn both a unit for high school credit and college credit. Students taking dual credit courses are building two transcripts: the institution of higher education (IHE) transcript and the high school transcript. For example, if a student receives a final numeric grade of 92 in a dual credit course, the final numerical average should be transcribed on the high school transcript and correlated to the high school GPA quality points associated with that numerical average. The IHE GPA quality points for the college transcript may be different for the same numerical grade in the course when the IHE rules regarding quality points on the college transcript differ.

Dual Credit Articulation Agreements

To award dual credit, districts must develop detailed articulation agreements with partner IHEs, whether two-year or four-year colleges or technical colleges, that clearly outline the specific courses that will be allowed for dual credit. Students may not take college courses on their own time at an institution of higher education with the expectations that the course would be transcribed back to the high school transcript without first consulting the district to determine if the course is a part of the articulated agreement between the high school and IHE.

Dual credit articulation agreements between the home high school and the partner institution of higher education shall provide a transcript to document a final grade. When possible, a numerical average of zero to 100 should be provided to the high school for the purpose of recording a final grade for the high school transcript. If the numeric grade is not possible, the UGP conversion rule for other grades will be applied.

College remediation and orientation courses may not be awarded the additional quality point above CP weighting (i.e., dual credit weight). Districts also have authority in their articulation agreements to define other courses offered by a college that may not

Table 3.3 - South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy continued from page 127

be articulated back to the high school transcript above CP weighting.

Transferring dual credit courses

Dual credit courses taken in South Carolina may earn 1.0 quality point weighting above CP pending the district's articulation agreement with the institution of higher education. All dual credit courses earned in South Carolina should be transcribed with the 1.0 quality point weight when the student transfers to a new school. Dual credit courses earned out of state may or may not carry quality point weightings. When a student transfers, the weight applied at the sending institution according to that state's regulations will be applied on the transcript in the receiving South Carolina high school. A high school should NOT change the weight of a dual credit course to match South Carolina's process when they transcribe the course.

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Courses

The following criteria apply to the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) courses and to high school International Baccalaureate (IB) courses—including those offered online and in other nontraditional settings and those recorded on a transcript from an out-of-state school that is accredited under the regulations of the board of education of that state or the appropriate regional accrediting agency: the New England Association of Colleges and Schools, the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Western Association of Colleges and Schools, or the Northwest Association of Colleges and School (as specified in SBE Regulation 43•273, Transfers and Withdrawals).

- Only AP or IB courses can be awarded a full quality point above the CP weighting. Seminar or support courses for AP or IB may be weighted as honors but not as AP or IB courses.
- An AP course can carry only one credit with the additional quality point above CP.
- A standard level (SL) IB course can carry only one quality point weighting per course. A higher-level (HL) IB course requires a minimum of 240 hours of instruction (or two courses) and may also receive one quality point weighting per course (i.e., two weighted credits).

Chapter 4

Analysis of access to equitable pathways for all students in SC

This chapter presents the analysis of the tools and barriers to access through the three modes of equity: support, policy and leadership. From the findings presented in Chapter Three, four central themes have surfaced using the access grid: the business of education, the evolution of IB in SC, the leveling the field for equity, and informing the prevalent culture about IB in SC. In this chapter, I explore these four themes to address the internal and external forces of structure and culture that affect access within the school system. Access is a dynamic, socio-cultural construct informing the accepted mode of education year after year in schools. Each theme is revealed through a layered view of the school system: the school, the district, and the state. The International Baccalaureate, a seedling with global lineage, has taken root in SC; the stronghold of this root will be analyzed through this holistic view of the SC school system. I will begin the analysis with findings at the state level and then zoom-in to the school level. I will repeatedly adjust the zoom lens for each theme as the construct of access is exposed through the voice of case study participants.

Theoretically, at the statewide level, I find a general global convergence towards greater access. This is evident in the borrowing of ideology and policy (Samoff, 2008; Anderson-Levitt, 2006) as the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate aligns with the International Baccalaureate's Diploma Model and IB Learner Profile. Further

institutional isomorphism is evident in the Uniform Grading Policy and the Grade Point Average system that is in place throughout SC. The way school is performed throughout the IB Diploma Programs state-wide is also isomorphic relating to choice either within schools or districts; this is, in part, indicative of neoliberal economic approach to satisfying market demands. However, in neoliberal terms, the state becomes deregulated, and private sectors increase. Notably IB is a private organization, however, it is non-profit and in the state of SC, though decentralized in how schools are managed, is quite regulated in terms of grading policy.

Access across the sites particularly at the district and school level are shaped significantly by the actors and the social interaction of these actors within each network (Fenwick & Edwards, 2010) at each site. Access to the IBDP within SC high schools has evolved to being more open since the implementation of IB for All initiative. However, the way access is understood, the manner it is implemented, and the degree to which it is carried out, varies pointedly, at each site. It is not that the sites show evidence of divergence towards access, however, they are convergent in their differences (Anderson-Levitt, 2006). Access to the global International Baccalaureate DP within South Carolina public schools has local meaning, defined by the social interaction of actors on a site-by-site basis.

The business of education in SC

The common thread throughout the findings were business-related themes: selling, marketing, competition, targeting, recruiting, publicizing, and investing/investment. These words--all verbs--demonstrate the ways business and market concepts have penetrated education systemically and specifically at every level pertaining

to access in the IBDP. Nested within the business-approach to conceptualizing the IBDP are two re-occurring sub-themes: global ideology and the nature of choice. These sub-themes will be explored based on their relationship to the IBDP as a tool or barrier. Global ideology, as expressed through globalization, is the external influence of the business community on schooling prevalent in South Carolina. Notably as the name reflects, the International Baccalaureate is a global education entity that is presented as a choice for advanced coursework throughout all the South Carolina IBDP public high schools. These two sub-themes of global ideology and the nature of choice are intertwined within the structure of school and the understanding of choice displayed throughout my findings.

Throughout my research, IB was referred to as the “gold standard” partly because it is international, which implies, to many, a higher caliber. The initial decisions to implement IB in SC schools over 30 years ago were shaped by a culture striving to attract the “elite,” “country club” folk who held positions of power and influence throughout the community. DANIEL (interview, July 26, 2016) describes how his program still targets this population: “I usually always go and ended up talking to like the Anchor Club [a local country club] and I do recruiting...”. Evidence from a focus group (SCIBS, November 4, 2016) likewise points to the prevalence of this population: “I’ve got Country Club South Carolina on the other side and so we’re pooling from all over.” The very idea of public schools offering an international/gold standard education made South Carolina more attractive for international companies to consider setting down roots, as evidenced in my findings; NORA (interview March 3, 2016) observed, “...with BMW, Michelin, Hitachi we do have very much an international community.” And DANIEL

(interview, July 26, 2016) reflected, “our students' parents usually worked for Sonoco or are somewhat more affluent and so they just understand the process that goes on.” Recall that the original purpose of the IBDP education was to offer a world-wide gold standard for the benefit of the children of cosmopolitan, mobile families to earn a consistent, unquestionable, and transferable secondary school diploma in preparation for university level studies anywhere in the world.

Convergence. The goals set in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate (Figure 1.1) reflect SC’s commitment to prepare its youth to compete in a global economy through college and career readiness. However, the commitment by the education officials of SC to IB remains at arms-length; clearly the education models [i.e., the state’s profile of a graduate (Figure 1.1) and IB’s learner profile (Figure 1.2) and Diploma Program model (Figure 1.3)] converge as noted above, yet there is no obligation specifically to follow the IBDP pathway. The IBDP is nested as an option, within the menu of choice of advanced coursework offered by districts at the high school level; IB, AP, dual credit are all considered viable options. Notably, competition across these pathways creates a barrier to access to the IBDP due to the state’s commitment to choice. As noted by an interviewee, NORA (March 3, 2017), “So if you’re trying to build an IB program, but you’re also offering dual credit, you’re offering AP, you’re offering honors in those same subject areas, that’s a lot of choice...you begin to in some ways limit the pool of candidates that you’re seeking.” IB coordinator NEAL echoed this array of choice through his/her description of available options, in addition to the IBDP, at their school,

The Scholars Academy is held on the campus of Coastal Carolina University (CCU) where the students take a combination of AP and CCU classes (dual

credit). Tuition is paid and transportation is provided. The district built a state-of-the-art facility for this program. The STEM Program is based at the Academy for Arts, Sciences, and Technology (AAST) [these are AP courses]. The students study a combination of AP and honors classes. Transportation is provided. The PACE program is available for our Juniors and Seniors to take college-level courses at both Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) and CCU. Tuition is paid.

This rivalry between these pathways results from the choice mechanism, and is a byproduct of the business-based strategy in place within districts and schools. Choice is presented through the magnet themes within schools or through whole schools designated as magnets to attract students from outside of their zone. At the school district level, structure and support has been put into place to promote choice; albeit the structure marks the need for IB as it originally was intended within the district, before the shift to IB for All, IB was marketed as the gold star, exclusive pathway (i.e., this will be further analyzed later in this chapter through the lens of evolution of the IBDP).

The nature of choice, the structures that support them, and choice parity. SC high schools support access to IB, AP, and dual credit through weighted points earned for coursework on a student's cumulative grade point average (GPA) (Table 3.2). A higher student GPA makes for a more attractive, or marketable, transcript for application to post-secondary institutions. At the school level, when it comes time to help students decide which pathway suits their needs, often the importance of the GPA and scores can cloud their decision about courses and emerge as the sole motivating factor for choice. The confusion regarding the value of scores is explained by TIMOTHY (interviewed,

July 25, 2016), “The district really has to do their homework [regarding dual credit]. Despite the 3, 4, 5 on an AP [scores] [this] is not always going to get you college credit. In the same way, a 5, 6, 7 in IB [scores] is not always going to get you college credit.” The understanding of college credit earned through dual credit courses is obscure and must appear on the prescribed list made by the Commission of Higher Education's Statewide Articulation of Universally Transferable Courses from all technical colleges in South Carolina (www.sctrac.org). The confusion generated from this saturation of choices is also evidenced by the interview on August 9, 2016; LUANNE explained,

I've got a lot of parents whose kids took the Greenville Tech or dual credit not realizing that - that was not the same as IB or AP because those kids who took those classes, dual credit is only used within the state of South Carolina... I even had a Dad ask me one day, if I get paid on commission, I said no. I'm not trying to sell you anything, I'm trying to help you make the best choice.

This confusion certainly detracts from access to the IBDP full diploma and puts the onus on the school-related actors--teachers, counselors, administrators, IBDP coordinators, and community members--to help students understand their choices when their GPA seems to count the most. I refer to this as choice-parity, because all the choices appear to be the same. IB coordinator NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) reflected on the students' choice, “So why would I take advantage of the IB when I have this over here [dual credit, or AP] that gets me for the most part what I want [GPA]. Note, the IBDP in its entirety includes two components, CAS and Extended Essay, which are not acknowledged (IB weighting) by the state in the GPA. These components are not offered by the AP or dual credit options, and are, therefore, viewed as ‘extra work’ by some. Thus, the state level

support for access flips into a barrier on the ground at the school level because the nature of choice becomes a matter of competing options and priorities.

The choice-parity is apparent at the district level, among district personnel and leadership who are responsible for budgets and district policies about choice. Since all the choices appear equivalent, confusion about the value of the IBDP in comparison to the other choices is detrimental to funding. The ramifications of this saturation of choice whereby sustaining high quality IB programs is threatened on a “bare-bones budget” because of “diluting of funding” due to the expansion of choice programs was revealed through the findings of this study (interview, NORA, March 3, 2017). The above finding rings true throughout all the participant IBDP schools in SC and point to a saturation to IBDP access that districts have created within themselves by offering too many choices. This confusion apparent at the district level for IBDP schools in SC, the nature of choice has become a burden to the SC IBDP coordinators.

Lastly, at the state level, increased state funding to support the IB choice is apparent in the 2017-2018 school year and marks the first time IB tests will be funded by the state the same way as AP tests. And pertaining to state-level funding for IB teacher training (interviewed, July 22, 2016) PAT posited, “AP is doing a better job at this point--to push all that and to connect with the states--than IB. IB is piggybacking on AP.” This suggests that the IB organization should approach the state and propose an agreement. Perhaps IB may emerge as a privileged pathway alongside of AP. Also, confirmed by my findings are that there are no official state policies in place for the IBDP due to the state’s promotion of the local, district-level control of IB. With that, it is up to the districts and IBDP schools to jump onto the choice bandwagon and entice the student-

customer with offering an array of IB courses with which AP or dual credit options cannot compete. My findings demonstrate school-level tools for access and the smoothing of the pathway particularly coursework unique to IB, for example Spanish Abinitio, or different world languages besides Spanish (e.g., German, French and Chinese), business, film, theatre, dance, and ITGS (Information Technology in a Global Society). In addition, IB coursework in mathematics can be offered in three different levels spanning from calculus based to non-calculus based: Mathematics Higher Level, Mathematics Standard Level and Mathematical Studies Standard Level. The coursework identified by these findings goes beyond the starter kit and appeals to a broader base of students or customers within the nature of choices for advanced coursework offered by IBDP schools and serves as a tool to access.

The evolution of IB in SC

The second theme apparent from my research is the range of forms and the scope of 'IB for all' in schools across South Carolina, most of which have become authorized IBDP schools prior to 2007 when the IB for All initiative began. IBDP coordinators participating in this research attested to the change that has taken place across the state of SC: 76% of participants claimed their programs were more open now than when programs were initially established. Per findings, the main policies that generate access include the application process and the selection of course offerings. However, more than half the IBDP schools have direct-line feeder programs called Middle Years Program (MYP), which suggests that these schools have established the matriculation pathway as early as the 6th grade that will feed into the DP at 11th grade. Irrespective of how the original pathway to the IBDP was organized within districts and schools, the removal of

applications and widening of course options marks a change in support of enhanced access to the IBDP beyond the MYP pathway. Notably in schools where the MYP pathway for matriculation is established, support that creates momentum related to the IBDP run deep into the middle-school community and contribute to my finding that “prevalent culture” is a tool or barrier to access. The idea of prevailing culture as a force to be reckoned with aligns with the equity purpose for stakeholders to establish a ‘can do’ mindset for creating opportunities for students (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Childress, et al., 2009; Sahlberg, 2015; Anderson, 2014; Brooks, et al., 2007). The idea of a prevalent culture within a school community as internal forces towards and/or against equity has surfaced throughout this research and will be analyzed below in the next centralized theme – informing the prevalent culture in SC.

The access continuum. The application process plays out differently in participant schools in this project, which marks IB Program diversity throughout the state. I noted in Chapter Three the ways the coordinators differently categorize their school’s IBDP program as: ‘crème de la crème’, ‘school within a school’ or ‘IB for all’ (Resnik, 2009). Since some coordinators chose a combination of these categories, this implies a continuum or range of change (Figure 4.1) towards the ‘IB for all’ at one end, then ‘school within a school’ is in the middle and ‘crème de la crème’ at one end (related to the original established IB Diploma Programs prior to 2007). Among the schools that require an application, one school accepts all applicants; in that case, the application serves as a way for educators to ‘get to know’ the student. Coordinator SHERRY (interview August 8, 2016) explained why her school began to implement an application after years of no application, “a kind of a gateway just to see if a student won’t complete

the application then they are not probably going to complete their assignments in the IB course so that's part of it..." Only one participant school continues to have a conventionally selective process for admittance into the IBDP based on an application including prior grades and teacher recommendations.

My research strongly suggests a dynamic shift within SC IBDP schools to greater accessibility. Participants have witnessed this shift from the historic, more exclusive orientation to the greater accessibility of the program. As one IBDP coordinator noted: "if you set foot in our academic magnet program in a ninth or tenth grade classroom right now, they would look completely different than the way that program looked 4 years ago...", (TIMOTHY interviewed, July 25, 2016). It is notable that participants similarly noted the genesis and timing of this shift—the 2007 institution of 'IB for all'." As one coordinator explained "...I don't think the philosophy was how to move everybody along before then [2007]." (PAT interviewed July 22, 2016). These coordinators expressed the 'then' and the 'now' as a default practice of following historical policy approaches.

With access comes new barriers. Despite this shift to greater accessibility, barriers continue to be constituted by people working within the schools, like teachers, guidance counselors, leaders, etc., who maintain practices throughout the years; they uphold the status quo and resist change (Childress, et al., 2009; Carter et al., 2009). Unspoken policies serve as a gatekeeping mechanism to influence access. People associated with the school—superintendents, principals, counselors, and teachers constrict access--be it intentional, or non-intentional, out of habit, or not--through their everyday decisions and leadership. The influences and practices of school leaders (e.g., principals), counselors, and teachers guide perspective IBDP students towards or away

from the IBDP pathway. As NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) reminded me in an interview:

We do talk about the idea of (IB) for all but I will tell you that paradigm, you can say those things, [but] it doesn't mean they necessarily happen...A lot of those barriers aren't necessarily policies that are written. They may just be tacit agreements internally among [people] ... practices.

Particularly problematic is the advice and decision making based on a lack of information or training. This sentiment was captured in an interview with ROBERT (interview, January 25, 2017):

I really feel like counselors and IGP counselors could use a lot more training or knowledge ... Sometimes they are just gate-keepers on their own, but sometimes the teachers, well, you know eighth grade teachers, say, "I am not going to recommend him for honors biology; he is going to make me look bad..." So, I think there are gatekeepers all around and tearing those [barriers] down to a certain degree would be great.

The limited information flow related to IBDP serves as an additional, stubborn barrier to access. Noteworthy in my findings are the inadequate IB webpages. IBDP access relates to the access of locally relevant information about the Diploma Program opportunities and structure. An exploration of the participant schools' websites revealed incomplete information pertaining to the IB; it would be challenging for the general public to learn about the IB Diploma program given the current state of the school IBDP webpages. The wanting conditions of the schools' websites pertaining to IBDP gave me

pause about the changes within education over 30 years since IB began in SC. This is an example of how the demand to incorporate technology within schools and about schools is moving faster than the schools can keep up. The external forces of globalization of technology impose another responsibility upon schools, that being website maintenance and the flow of virtual information.

The leadership dyads. As noted above, leadership plays a key role in student's access to and progression through the IBDP over time. My findings point to two dyads of steady leadership, first between the principal and the IBDP coordinator within the school and second between the principal and the superintendent. From the coordinators' perspective, commitment to improved access from the district, extends directly from the superintendent to the principal, with no mention of people in between, like district level content coordinators, assistant superintendents or directors of secondary schools. And when a leader, like the principal, is on board and explicitly supports the IBDP platform, this drives momentum to open access to the IBDP throughout the school. However, leadership can also present a major barrier to access, if they are not supporters of the program; this will affect the overall support within the school as well especially since the IBDP adoption and implementation process is so decentralized.

Based on my experience as an IBDP coordinator in my own school (which is purposely not included in this study, I must note the absence of mentioning the assistant principal of instruction (API) by the participants. Consistent across all findings was that the API was never referenced as a key point in IB leadership. This is informative especially when the parameters of the access continuum (Figure 4.1) are noted: application requirement, bell schedule, underclassmen pathways, and the array of

coursework offerings. The API is the lead in the school implementing these access parameters and not the principal. Noteworthy, is the chain of command as viewed by the International Baccalaureate within the school; the IB Coordinator reports to the head of school, or principal with matters relating to the IBDP. Again, no mention of the API by the IB, this calls for a delicate understanding between the API, the IBDP coordinator (who in most cases is a teacher) and the principal. An understanding to support this forced in-school dyad between the principal and the IB coordinator requires a maturity of the actors within an established setting.

Additionally, the absence of steady leadership, due to attrition, can thwart the development of IBDP within the school. One participant noted the problems presented in ever-changing school leaders in this finding:

I would say that [building capacity within IB programs] is an additional challenge and, of course, years after that you're still trying to garner support... You don't build capacity in programs that way by offering so many other options [such as AP and dual credit]. You can't build capacity that way... when our leadership changes so much... it's the people. (NORA, interview, March 3, 2017)

The lack of consistent leadership also extends to IBDP coordinators. Findings from my research show the turnover rate of the coordinator position within a new program is two years. As the sole communicator between the IB and the school, IBDP coordinator turnover jeopardizes stable vision and program development. It is particularly challenging to establish a program in a school where the principal is not completely on board and the coordinator is new; this situation may result in program not taking root at all. LUANNE (August 9, 2016) captures this dynamic well, "I was in that community for

30 something years... they've had a DP-coordinator every year or two years; that hurts the program. I mean the program struggles and it [the Diploma Program] just goes away.” Thus, this attrition rate of DP coordinators creates a barrier for students to access the IBDP. In combination with principal turnover, this leadership dyad can make or break a Diploma Program and considerably affect opportunities for students to participate and have access to the IBDP. If an IBDP program has experienced a strong leadership dyad that is suddenly challenged due to the attrition of either actor, the principal or the DP coordinator, the social momentum that was established resulting from the former dyad will carry the program to the next established dyad, or the program will fade.

Shifts towards equity. Besides changes in leadership and school policies--both explicit and implicit--and technology challenges, also significant for IBDP access is the school leader’s vision and support to implement the IBDP equitably. This shift towards greater accessibility also reflects and cultivates a sense that it’s the institution’s responsibility for inclusivity and to believe, teach, and encourage students and to go beyond the idea that it is only the students’ responsibility to make the cut (or not) (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Diette, 2012). Key coordinators note the change towards equity and recognize the responsibility of success to depend on the adults at school and the students rather than just the students alone. PAT identified when the shift in message occurred in her school and explained the change, “It was around 2009 or 10 that we've really kind of expanded out and I started seeing others (students) that could probably do this... We’ve been more open since then.”

Essential to the responsibility of the school to take ownership of this shift towards equity is the awareness of the power of labeling students especially by the adults who are

doing the labeling. Throughout my findings are the labels used to describe students such as: elite, non-elite, IB, non-IB, advanced, gifted, non-gifted, on-track, AP, non-AP, college level, honors, CP (college prep), others, gold star, those students, these students, underserved, minority, majority, underrepresented, etc. Such labels frame the change and are indicative of our past and present ways of identifying students. Perhaps symptomatic of the business of education, these labels mark a superficial and standardization of viewing the adolescents served by the education system. To a fault, this effort to customize in preparation for college readiness undermines the very people that the system serves. This practice of labeling students, evidenced throughout my findings, marks that how adults talk about students is has become an institutionalized practice (Carter, et al., 2009, Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016) and an important ingredient to warrant attention as schools move towards equitable access.

The schools that have shifted to an equity plan offer the full span of IB Math courses, the Abinitio World language course, and IB Arts specific courses to suit the needs of the non-elite student or those who are not traditionally considered for the IB pathway prior to the shift towards equity; this is a markedly different typology that has developed around students and their relationship to IB. As a school progresses within the IBDP, their course offerings must be in place first before students can even consider taking the IBDP pathway. IBDP coordinator TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) addressed the idea of a broad spectrum of classes, particularly through the Arts, Math and Individuals & Societies course offerings, “What I hear from other schools are more options...they’re having courses like Math Studies (SL), like Psychology (HL/SL), like Economics (HL/SL), Business and Management (HL/SL), Integrated Technology in a

Global Society ITGS (HL/SL) ...and Film (HL/SL) ...” The cost, however, of training a teacher in a new course and the bureaucracy involved in adding new IB courses can slow the process of change to the point where it inhibits access. As noted in Chapter 3, the starter-kit, originally designed for a different group of students, may “lock” an IBDP in place for several years. Coordinator TIMOTHY (July 25, 2016) eloquently explained the situation,

...a school might not offer the right set of courses that allow access to the most students. And sometimes that’s because of the way the program was originally engineered as a program for another set of students who had a different set of needs... It’s a base pallet [of courses] that decision made early on, sets the program...4-5 years in locked position.

The addition of courses mentioned above are ways that schools differentiate their offerings and create a pathway to access the IBDP for a wider scope of students. This curricular shift, which broadens course offerings, is a benchmark in the evolution of the IBDP in SC. The IB for All initiative that began exactly a decade ago is apparent in varying degrees throughout the IBDP schools in the state of SC. School policies, course offerings, leadership towards equity, and the absence of leadership play a major role in shaping access to the IBDP.

Leveling the field for equity

My research points to the importance of a stable, dynamic in school leadership dyads. When the superintendent and the principal align toward access, the resources to support the program are committed. And when the principal is supportive of the IBDP and the coordinator role is securely established, equity-building programs are put into

place that help to level the field for all students to succeed through the IBDP. This takes vision, commitment and hard work on the part of all stakeholders, similar to de-tracking efforts (Blankenstein & Noguera, 2016; Burris, 2014), because at some point the students from the remedial programs have to merge with students who were not in remediation. In the words of an IBDP coordinator, “we can level the playing field.” This quote reflects the social momentum of efficacy and ambition that she and her school’s community members personally works to achieve: SHERRY (interview, August 8, 2016) explains:

And so, for those kids, we really want to make sure that we can level the playing field for them. If they can succeed in the IB program, then not only might they get out of a poverty situation here in [name of town], but we may be able to send them on to a level playing field at the university in Columbia or out of state.

These words echo other IBDP coordinators throughout the state who establish an equity plan to suit their students’ needs. The implementation of the IBDP equity plan is an ‘all hands-on deck’ mentality grounded in clear communication within the school including the coordinator, teachers, counselors, and leaders who have created pathways of communication between the school and the families of students (Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013; Henfield, et al., 2014). For example, at small county schools with fewer than 500 students, teachers and parents are tightly knitted outside of school and the community works together. At large county schools, with more than 1,000 students, information programs are designed specifically for outreach to the Hispanic community to introduce families to the IB program. This particular attentiveness to the minority communities is imperative and aligns with current research (Wiggan & Watson, 2016; Frankenberg, Hawley & Orfield, 2017). Findings point also to the importance of an English as a

Second Language (ESL) teacher-coordinator housed within the IBDP high school who facilitates access to the school's Spanish speaking population. TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016) described how a new communication flow was established with the Hispanic population, who is growing and underserved in his district.

An example of a shift towards leveling the field was revealed by a coordinator who represented an established IB school. She has been in her position for 19 years and is supported by the principal. She identified a change that is taking place in her school, "Everybody can sign up for this but *you have the right to fail*, which I think is morphed into *everybody should try* – we should try IB for All. Let's try and make them all succeed" (PAT, July 22, 2016) (Emphasis DP). The emphasis on the collective captures both the change in action and more importantly the reach towards an equitable plan to do what it takes for student access and success (Villavicencio, A., et al., 2013; Henfield, Washington & Byrd, 2014; Olszewski-Kubilius, P. & Clarenbach, J. 2014).

Holistic value "beyond grades". Coordinators feel it necessary to clearly communicate the holistic value of the IBDP with parents. During a focus group session coordinators were brainstorming on how to level the field towards opening access to the IBDP suggest that conversations need to change with families about what students get from an IB education besides grades. Because parents believe their students can get an easy "A" in a dual credit course, the coordinators conclude that conversations need to focus on the holistic value of IB rather than grades. This insight points to the need to establish a better understanding about the IBDP by discussing with parents the intrinsic value and skills learned that are important and recognized characteristics of the SC Graduate and the IB Learner. Findings reveal as students reach through participation in IBDP full candidacy,

they discover their potential, whether they earn an IB Diploma or not. This experience builds confidence for the same student to reach similar achievements again in college. While the enthusiasm for this success is shared with the DP community, it proves inspiring for more students, thus building access through a positive social momentum for achievement. Emphasizing the value of IB “beyond grades” and helping all students succeed from where they stand reveals some key mechanisms at work to level the field for access to the IBDP.

On a broader scale, shifts to equity are evident in emerging philosophical alignment around equity. The philosophy of IBDP schools in SC align with the philosophy of Magnet Schools of America. The magnet school ideology is built on a foundation of five pillars (figure 1.1) including diversity, professional development/innovative curriculum, academic excellence, high quality instruction, and partnership with community and families all of which correspond with the equity plan for leveling the field for access to the IBDP in SC schools. The magnet programs’ approach to integrate students by closing the opportunity gap within schools of diverse populations corresponds with the magnet programs’ support for equity to take the responsibility to provide students with what they need to participate and flourish in advanced coursework and programs like the IBDP. This explicit equity effort serves as a tool for access. When a school district adopts the magnet philosophy, they are positioning themselves through their own policies to provide access to the IB. Findings reveal that all participant IBDP schools are housed in schools that are either themed magnets (i.e., different programs under one roof) or established magnets within magnet districts (i.e., programs under different roofs which are federally funded). Of all the

IBDP schools in the state, only four are currently in district magnet districts that are held to the level of accountability necessary for federal funding.

Findings reveal that when the district is committed to the magnet approach, the effort for IB for All aims to increase the opportunity for underrepresented students to qualify for IB coursework and not to rely on the program being only for gifted students. Therefore, equity efforts are partly centered around a school's efforts to create a customized plan for their students' needs for access to advanced coursework like the IBDP. Such equity plans may be geared specifically for underclassmen or may be informational programs for Hispanic families, and conversations to support trying IB; these are ways of establishing a cultural shift of support needed for all students to have access the IBDP. These equity plans, in addition to offering a base pallet of courses that broadly attracts students, are steps towards implementing a fair pathway to access the IBDP.

Informing the prevailing culture in SC

The prevailing culture is a social construct of how school is performed through habits that could serve as tools or barriers to access. The prevailing culture can act as a tailwind when serving as a tool, or can act as a headwind when serving as a barrier. I call this the prevailing culture because it is apparent as part of the evolution of IBDP schools in SC. As a tool to access, the prevailing culture forms a momentum of social forces that acts in support of access to move the program forward. As a barrier to access, a lack of knowledge for correct IB implementation morphs into habits through unspoken practices or "tactical agreements between people" (NORA interview, March 3, 2017).

Particularly detrimental/damaging are the ‘zones of mediation’ or the complex set of social interactions that include racial, social, economic and cultural phenomenon practiced within schools that undermine equitable policies in place for integration efforts (Carter, et al., 2009 p 351). All findings included labeling of students and implementation of the IB Diploma Programs connected to race, culture and ability groupings. However, the socio-economic parameter specifically surfaced in three instances; within the smallest IBDP school setting, in focus group conversations and in one-on-one interviews with the three participants who serves the at large levels of district, state and magnet schools. Socio-economics is at the root of the challenge that presents a headwind so strong that practices of habit easily thwart integrative efforts. The mission for access works to redirect/challenge this prevalent culture that creates barriers to access through the formation of institutionalized practices (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Childress, et al., 2009; Sahlberg, 2015; Anderson, 2014; Brooks, et al., 2007).

Ignorance. Based on findings, from the perspective of the DP coordinators, there is a need to inform teachers, guidance counselors, administrators who work specifically with students in IBDP schools on the way the IBDP should be offered within their school. An example that points to a misunderstanding of school policy, pertaining to the scheduling of world language where a course meant to be a tool, was misused and ultimately creates a barrier for access. NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) asserted, “Abinitio [coursework] is there to meet the needs of a specific group of students ... I think it has been used as a tool to open access...[alternatively] it is a tool to mitigate poor quality teaching or a lack of structure in the school ... it [Abinitio] is being used for the wrong purposes.” The problem here is two-fold, the Abinitio course--meant for transfer

IBDP students who do not come prepared with the same world language than the receiving school--when used incorrectly, weakens the upper-level world language program for the school. Evidenced in the following example, PAT described her perception of matriculation of world languages for students and misinformation about the Abinitio course, “They [the counselors] tell the kids, ‘if you want this other course [besides world language], just go ahead, you can catch up [with the Abinitio course].’ They [the counselors] don’t understand the implications of that.” This undermines the idea of language acquisition where students are meant to take 4 to 5 consecutive years of a world language. The second part of the Abinitio problem is students will gain extra GPA points by earning a very high grade in a course that doesn’t challenge their learning and undermines the state-developed GPA system in addition to weakening the integrity of the IB Diploma.

Unspoken practices. In addition to the misunderstanding of IB related procedures, the prevailing culture within the IBDP school functions to create barriers to access. Accepted and unspoken practices affect the pipeline, as early as middle school for students (MYP or not) matriculating to the IBDP. The people behind these practices include an eighth-grade teacher doesn’t want to “look bad” and the “counselors who could use a lot more training and knowledge.” ROBERT (interview, January 25, 2017). These political or convenience based practices are maintained through a sort of social momentum. TIMOTHY (interview, July 25, 2016), “I still have to deal with, teachers that are very comfortable in their ways... it’s a hurdle.” And NORA (interview, March 3, 2017) spoke about the “unwritten policies as tactical agreements among people”.

Guidance counselors and teachers of underclassmen need training to understand the value of the IBDP, so their institutionalized practices of gatekeeping can be changed.

Building inclusive practices. Findings suggest that to reverse exclusive habits and to establish avenues of access, certain schools are providing information sessions to their school community about the value of the full IBDP and its courses. An example of building inclusive practices is one IBDP school that is providing access through written materials in Spanish to the Hispanic community (as described by TIMOTHY, interview July 25, 2016). Creating a nurturing a climate of meaningful access within the school is key. Coordinator, TIMOTHY also explained an equity effort on part of the counselors and teachers at his school as “a lot of work on the backend and to try and make sure that no one gets missed.” This aligns with efforts that foster the participation of underrepresented student populations for readiness, and encourages teacher advocates to promote access to advanced coursework (Rowland and Shircliffe, 2016; Martinez and Klopott, 2005; AVID.org, 2016). More specifically, for the DP programs housed within schools of populations over 1,400 students, my findings indicate remediation support programs like JAG, AVID (Bertrand, Roberts, and Buchanan, 2006, p 1) and Falcons in Flight are geared towards small learning environments that prepare students for advanced coursework. At a smaller IBDP school with a population of 500 students, SHERRY (interview, August 8, 2016) describes the closely knitted community equity effort by her school, “it’s really easy for us to be able to get in touch with a parent or a guardian and say ‘hey, this is going on.’”

Understanding value. The need to promote a better understanding of value and meaning of the full diploma and DP coursework has reoccurred through the findings. The

idea of ‘others don’t understand’ has surfaced as a theme because the role of the IBDP coordinator is to guide an understanding for the value of the IB Diploma and to lead program implementation. IBDP coordinator LUANNE (interview, August 9, 2016) claimed, “Some of our faculty [non-IB teacher] and some of our school counselors do not fully understand the value of the DP.”

Findings demonstrate the most compelling tool to access is the socially constructed and understanding of its value, which ignites the idea of the IBDP within the school community. This idea builds a social momentum creating support for success and operates in IBDP schools that are explicit about their school’s social culture of doing what is best for their kids from fighting poverty, celebrating the international, or establishing a social norm. By norm, I am referring to, people outside the immediate school system such as alumni, families, and other community members play an influential role in understanding the worth of the IBDP and aid in a student’s decision to pursue IB. This community momentum is reflected in one IB coordinator’s comment about the shifting norms and values in those supporting IB around his/her school, “They’re mill workers but they value education. And these people that didn't get chance to go (to college). I've had parents coming in saying, ‘my cousin, my neighbor, whatever, they got that International IB, how can I get my children in it?’” (LUANNE, interviewed, August 9, 2016). These coordinators emphasized the effort they make in helping the school community understand the value in the IBDP journey. This connection with the community about the value of IB is contagious and forms a momentum towards the community expectation of access.

Understanding diversity. While gains in generating increased access are evident, new challenges about understanding diversity create barriers. Findings demonstrate that some members of the community are reluctant to fight poverty (through schooling) and choose not to send their children to a school that values diversity. Exemplified by NORA (interview March 3, 2016) who paraphrased a discussion with a parent about the IBDP “‘I’m not sure my child is ready for all that diversity.’ That’s was code for ‘I don’t want them to be with all those African-American children’.” This bias points to a socially prevalent culture within SC and a reminder that school integration is ongoing and happens one family at a time. At a different school, the demographic flip was noted through a finding, “from white male dominated enrollment to black female dominated enrollment over the past four years.” (MARGIE on June 8, 2016). This could be indicative of a social momentum within one school community that teeters between functioning as a tool and barrier to access; in other words, social forces have created a push to and a pull from the IBDP. As the demographics change and this one IBDP program shifts from predominant enrollment of white males to black females, the coordinator notes the change but wonders why. The white males could be attracted to another choice, while the black females are drawn to the IBDP.

Teacher and leadership readiness. With IBDP participant coordinators are experiencing the weight of educating the school community about choices, my findings point to new challenges and opportunities with IB particularly around enhancing teachers’ and leaders’ cultural competence. Engaging in courageous conversations that address diversity, biases, and racism is key to moving forward (Agosto, Dias, Kaiza, McHatton, and Elam, 2013). Now that classrooms are increasingly ethnically and

socioeconomically diverse, IBDP coordinators from a SCIBS focus group reflected on what they bring to the classroom implicitly, and how their frame of mind influences how they view kids and learning. Since the “the haves and have-nots” are integrated in most IBDP classrooms, the reach in “serving all students equitably” is through the teachers (SUZANNE). From the Magnet Schools of America perspective, teacher pre-service and in-service is a necessity ingredient in tackling implicit bias. The challenge for teachers is to be able to teach students to whom they relate differently compared to how teachers were raised, and to how teachers were trained to be teachers. The magnet philosophy espoused by IBDP school districts demands a paradigm shift to level the field through the idea of cultural responsiveness through addressing “the poverty of culture” (Ladson-Billings, 2006a as cited by Wiggan & Watson, 2016, p770; Hoard, 2015, p 6) and specifically relating to students who participate in advance coursework (AP and IB). Hertberg-Davis and Callahan (2008, p 206) address creating classroom environments that equitably support for college readiness.

Sustained support. The last major issue regarding the prevalent culture is the misalignment within the state concerning support for the piecemeal approach to the IBDP. The state supports the IBDP course-by-course through Grade Point Average (GPA) points. In terms of GPA, per the state, an IB course is equal to an AP course, and equal to a dual credit course. With GPA in mind, the IB core, which is part of the full IBDP [six IB courses and the IB core (extended essay, CAS and TOK)], is not acknowledged equally as other IB coursework. Yet, on the SC Department of Education website, IB score reports read as if the state supports the full IB Diploma as it was originally implemented based on Diplomas earned. I find this in-conflict with South

Carolina's Project Star, which was an equity-driven dimension to identifying gifted and talented youth in SC (J. Van Tassle-Baska et al, 2002, p 111). Due to this research, underrepresented student populations have been granted opportunities (i.e., access) to gifted programs. However, the state supports, again at arms-length, access to the IBDP coursework, but it falls short of following through to fund and grant GPA credit for the full IB Diploma participation. Based on Project Star testing, students identified as gifted, and opportunity for advanced coursework becomes more accessible, however by the state not sustaining this support, access becomes questionable. By this, I mean the state does not acknowledge the IB core (TOK, CAS and extended essay) in the same GPA terms. Nor does the state give credit to students who earn an IB Diploma. As findings demonstrate, IB is rooted in South Carolina, however, at thirty years old, it is still a seedling.

This analysis ends where it began, at the state level, from findings that suggest informing the prevalent culture in South Carolina and circles back to findings that demonstrate the business of education. Throughout this journey, I have identified four central themes that have surfaced from my findings: the business of education, the evolution of IB in SC, the leveling the field for equity, and informing the prevalent culture about IB in SC. I have woven together the story voiced by IBDP coordinators emblematic to the IBDP throughout the state of South Carolina. I have addressed the internal and external forces of structure and socially prevalent culture that affect access within the school system. The concept of access, as related to how school is performed, is historically, structurally, and socially multidimensional. I have zoomed into the access at the school level and zoomed out to capture the state, national, and global levels. The next

chapter discusses the contributions of this case study in laying the foundation for future research related to the IBDP in South Carolina public high schools and further exploration within the field of college readiness.

Access continuum for IB Diploma Program Schools in SC

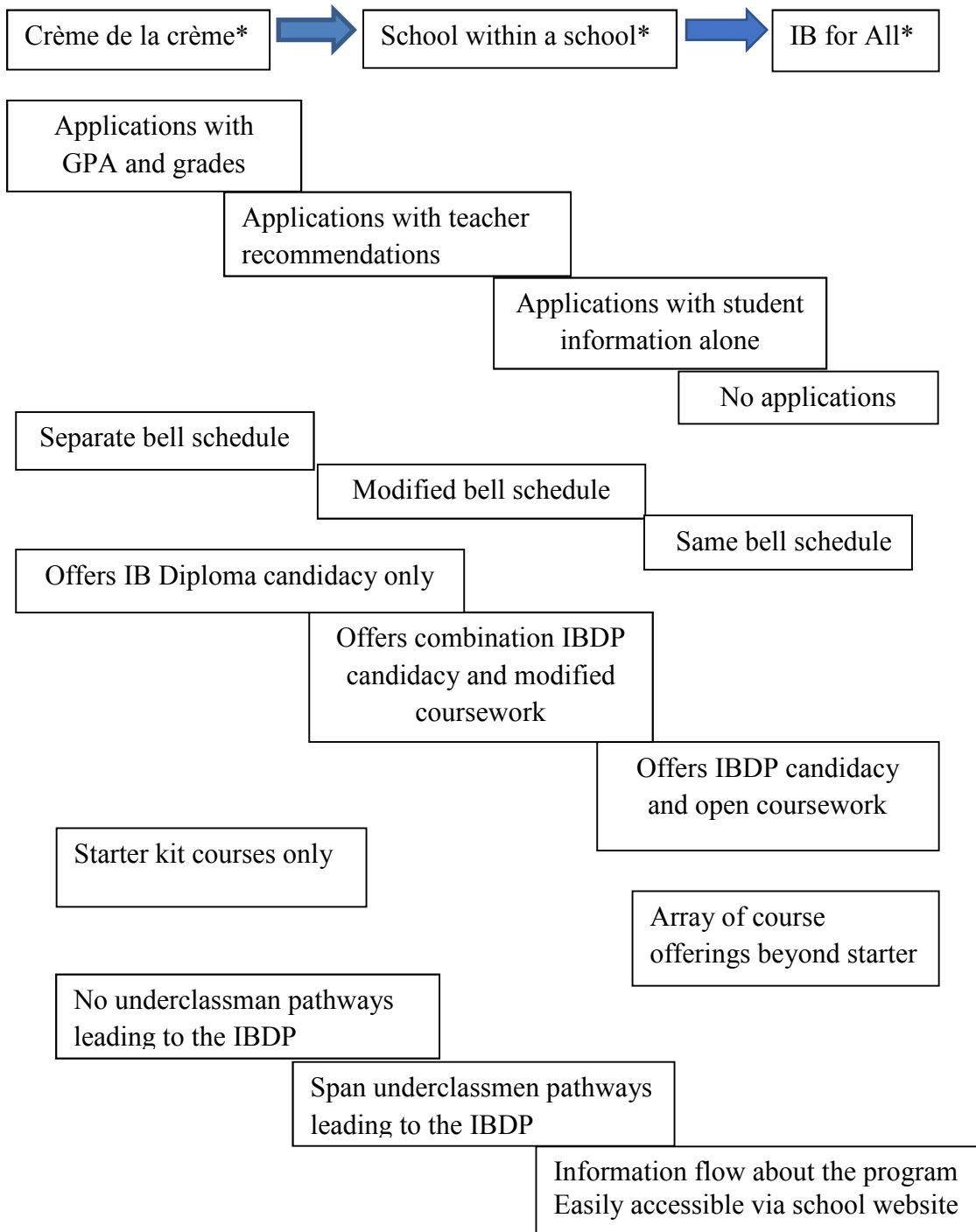


Figure 4.1: Access Continuum

*Categories (Resnik, 2015)

Chapter 5

The IBDP for all students in SC

My research contributes to the expanding field of access to college readiness. Students who have access to advanced coursework like IB during high school reap the benefits of college readiness and retention. On a larger scale, my research adds insight to school reform and integration efforts. My research contributes to the understanding of access to the IB Diploma Program as a choice in magnet schools across the United States. And specific to South Carolina, this case study informs the idea of sustained support for gifted education and the implementation of the IBDP in SC public high schools. My research clearly demonstrates the balance between equity efforts and excellence as SC IB Diploma Schools are evolving towards IB for All students. This multidimensional study of access informs choice implementation by leveling the field for equitable opportunities for SC students to choose the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program as an option for college readiness. This case study adds to the limited research about the IBDP initiated outside of that commissioned by the International Baccalaureate organization.

Through the lens of access and equity, this case study explores pathways to the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program across South Carolina. It provides insight to access as a multidimensional concept: (1) access as it has changed within the choice landscape of IBDP over recent years; (2) access as it is implemented through school policy, leadership and support at each site; and (3) access as a socio-cultural construct between people and the ways school is performed at each site.

This research informs educators and policy makers about the implementation of the IB Diploma Program within contexts of choice and equity at each school site. It offers an understanding for future fiscal decisions related to the IBDP at the school, district, and state levels. I will focus on the dimensions of access presented at the school level and then zoom out to access within choice and equity parameters. My recommendations extend to school reform through equity-based education, state level policy reconsideration, choice clarity and IB specific access-continuum education. I will then address the assumptions and limitations of this case study within the school system as related to the IB Diploma Program.

Access as it has changed within the landscape of IBDP over recent years

This case study contributes to the field of research about the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program as it relates to public high schools in United States, particularly in South Carolina. This is the first research of its kind as it relates to access to advanced coursework in South Carolina, IB in South Carolina, and access to the IBDP specifically. This research demonstrates that access to the IBDP has changed over the years since IBDP schools began in SC nearly thirty years ago. Within schools, the structure of access has changed in two ways: (1) the application process has become more open; and (2) the array of coursework has become diversified from the original starter kit of courses. These findings specifically link to research about Diploma Program access to underrepresented population (Bland and Woodworth, 2009; Hertberg-Davis and Callahan, 2008) whereby equity is a priority within the implementation of the IB Diploma Program.

One of the key findings concerns the application process—a stage where school IBDP coordinators claim to be more open, yet the process varies from school to school. In most schools where an application is not used, students sign up for IB coursework through their guidance counselors. In schools where the application process is still in place, the application can serve either as a formality to get to know students who have self-selected for IB or it can serve as a formal filtering method geared towards selecting the top students based on GPA and teacher recommendation. The latter is the least common form of application and reflects current practice based on original, unchanged policy. As the idea of selectivity (i.e., IB for only the elite) is fading, IBDP coordinators expressed an eagerness to help every student find their ‘*I can*’ potential. Along with a more open-entry policy, coursework offerings have diversified to stimulate different interests and to attract a wider range of students (Caspar, et al., 2015). Courses in film, visual arts, performing arts (e.g., band, orchestra, chorus, dance), world language (e.g., German, French, Chinese) and Individuals & Society courses (e.g., philosophy, information technology in global society, psychology, business, economics) have also been added. Diversifying coursework is another key to access – casting the net far and wide. Evidence from my study points to 76% of the IB Diploma Programs being more open due to the combination of shifts in entry policy and the array of course offerings that create pathways of access for broader scope of students to the IBDP within of South Carolina schools.

Evidence points to the vast variation of IB Diploma Programs in S.C. where the local context of leadership, policy, and support shape each program differently at every site. My research has developed an access continuum, building on Resnik’s work (2015),

of three possible variations of IB Diploma Programs: Crème de la crème, School with a school, and IB for All. In doing so, key dimensions of access are defined each site: application to the IBDP, bell schedule, variation in coursework offerings, pathways leading to the IBDP, and information flow about the IBDP. Who benefits from IBDP at each school is based on where schools fall on this continuum. The most equitable programs that offer access to the broadest group of students are implemented as IB for All with no application, no coursework limitations, and access friendly information flow.

This research is unique in that it contributes to what IB for All looks like and how it is interpreted in different ways by IBDP coordinators within the context of their individual school. The diversity of structures and perceptions of the IBDP influence how the IB is conceptualized and implemented at each school site within South Carolina. The IB for All equity-based concept proposed in 2006 by the global International Baccalaureate (IBO.org, 2006) has resulted in a morphing of the SC IB Diploma schools. Most of these IBDP schools (92%)-- established prior to 2006—had existing policies for inclusion (and exclusion). Yet, the allure of the exclusive, international “gold” standard persists in various forms even though the IBDP has evolved to the newer more equitable version. Convergence of ideologies setting these standards align, all three -the Profile of the SC Graduate and the IB Diploma Model and the IB Learner Profile. Though these align ideologically, the differences on the ground between schools vary tremendously as IBDPs across the state evolve towards equity. The variations between schools are apparent due to leadership, policy, practices, and the prevalent social culture at each school.

The expanding scope of IB participation over time points to the evolution of access to the IBDP within South Carolina. This study has clearly established that a change is underway in IBDP schools over the most recent decade. It can be assumed that change will continue regardless of intervention. To be cognizant of the change is one thing, while deliberately working to contribute to the change is another. A necessary ingredient for continued momentum towards more access for students is understanding the mindsets of people who work with students at school; the premise of growth mindset (Dweck, 2006) therefore contributes to this strand of my research. I hope this work adds to the momentum towards the equity effort that is in progress in IBDP schools in SC with the knowledge that mindsets of people can grow and change. People shape the prevalent social culture at each school, which directly influences the choices students make for advanced coursework and college readiness.

Access as it is implemented through school leadership, policy, and support at each site

The nature of leadership is foundational to the modes of equity (Sahlberg, 2015), that being--leadership, policy, and support--at play within the SC IBDP schools. Findings from this case study echo literature concerning the role of the principal's leadership in setting the foundation for understanding the ways the program is viewed, implemented, and supported by others (Blankenstein and Noguera, 2016; Childress, et al., 2009; Sahlberg, 2015; Anderson, 2014; Brooks, et al., 2007). This research reveals that in South Carolina the people who manage the money and have the power to set state-wide and district-wide policy do not have the depth of knowledge about the IBDP. The people in South Carolina who have the most knowledge about the IBDP are the IBDP

coordinators—they, however, have the least amount of influence over decisions about program implementation and access to the IBDP. Within each IBDP school there exists the potential to cultivate the school level IBDP leadership dyad--consisting of a principal who supports the IBDP and an IBDP coordinator who has the knowledge of the IBDP. However, the district level dyad between the superintendent and principle remains up to chance because the IBDP coordinators have no influence on this connection.

Equitable policy is an essential component for access to advanced programs for college readiness (Bragg, et al. 2006; Bragg et al, 2005) and my research suggests that state level officials do not have a clear understanding of these high school offerings. Programs and policies responsive to the needs of the school's population are critical for the achievement of underrepresented students (Childress 2016; Hoard, 2015). Findings are also consistent with literature on the policy of the IBDP offered as a choice program within magnet schools; this policy expands exposure to underrepresented populations more through the array of course offerings than via programs restricted by residence (Bland and Woodworth, 2009). This research informs policy specific to access to the IBDP through building on the categories set by Resnik (2015) by creating an access continuum based on school policies. Such an access continuum spans Resnik's categories from the least accessible Crème de la crème to School within a School and finally the most accessible is IB for All.

IB schools must find a balance of support by fitting in with the district-wide policies and being IB, which sets them apart from the other high schools in the district. To date, there is only one district-level IB coordinator in the entire state whose role is to support IB coordinators at 12 different schools within one district. Other than that, the IB

is housed under the umbrella of gifted and talented education and is managed by a single coordinator who is stretched throughout all K-12 schools throughout each district.

Because of how IB has been situated in the South Carolina as a gifted program, teachers who have been accustomed to teaching only non-minority gifted students contribute to the idea of cultural deficit that surrounds gifted, diverse populations (Ford, Grantham & Whiting, 2008; Ford et al., 2001; Townsend, 2002). However, as findings show that gifted and talented IB classes have become more diverse, in part because access has broadened, the needs of these learners must be met by traditional teachers of gifted and talented students (Van Tassel-Baska, Feng, and deBrux, 2007); this study supports the urgent need for further training of teachers for diverse student groups.

Access as a socio-cultural construct and the ways school is performed at each site

This research builds on the continued equity-informed efforts to overcome the barriers of accepted modes of practice within school. From an at-large perspective on integration efforts, findings show that racism persists and disrupts the equitable effort to encourage diversity in schools (Carter et al., 2009). However, the analysis of this IBDP case points to leveling the field for equity through an informed awareness of the patterns of practice within the school that are governed by fixed mindsets and micro-politics at work (Dweck, 2006; Brooks, et al., 2007; Childress, et al., 2009). Such socially constructed practices within the school by teachers, guidance counselors, leaders, and the members of the school community present a culture that influences student decisions on advanced coursework paths and impacts access to the IBDP.

Findings from this research identify choice-related practices that open access for underrepresented populations over the past decade. Researchers find that equitable

schooling improves slowly (Roderick et al., 2008; Ravitch, 2010; Schneider, 2011). My findings support research that has identified a culture among parents of IB students who possess the economic and social capital to encourage, and at times overwhelm, students about participation in the IBDP coursework (DiGiorgio, 2010). In addition, specific to underrepresented students, the prevalent culture within a school can intimidate participation in IBDP coursework (Caspary et al., 2015). Evidence of school-based cultural change, especially related to underrepresented populations, are the ways a culture of “college knowledge” is being created by the school community. My research informs this leveling of the field for equity within IBDP school of South Carolina that helps to close the opportunity gap addressed in literature (Conley, 2007; Roderick, et al., 2009; Villavicencio et al., 2013; Henfield, et al., 2014).

Now that SC IB classrooms are more diverse, new challenges to teachers and school leaders have surfaced. Existing research points to the need for culturally responsive leadership and teacher training (Agosto, et al, 2013; Hoard, 2015; Hertberg-Davis and Callahan, 2008); my research on IBDP further makes clear the need for this training. Within IBDP in SC, some schools show evidence of this training; in other schools, this remains to be done. This equity-related work takes courage; the school needs to reflect on the ways school is performed as socially accepted practices and be willing to have those conversations that reveal implicit biases. Once the biases are acknowledged and the socio-cultural perspectives begin to be understood, the equity modes of leadership, policy, and support can begin to be put into place.

Recommendations for policy, reform, choice and fiscal decisions related to the IBDP:

State policy recommendation. South Carolina at the state level appears to move carefully in terms of matters related to the IBDP. Perhaps with cautious optimism the state supports the schools, however, 24 of the 26 IBDP programs have been in place for over a decade. This slow pace enables to some extent the state to determine what district-level initiatives persist and merit necessary support. The IBDP is rooted in SC; it has evolved and endured its own change, yet it is still a seedling. Due to the organization of education where the state holds the strings on funding and controls GPA acknowledgement; the role of the GPA weighting alone influences school- and district-level decisions. The state equally recognizes AP, IB and Dual Credit course work in GPA weighting; this idea certainly percolates to the students and families as they make their choices. From the perspective of coordinators who understand the potential of the full IBDP, the state's equal granting credit per coursework and unwillingness to acknowledge the value of the IB core undermines the purpose of the full IB Diploma.

The inconsistency in message from the state is evident in how the SC.edu website displays scores per full IB diplomas earned compared to what the state credits (per course). This discrepancy can be solved in two ways, either update the website to align with the state policy on coursework or become informed to what the full diploma means and consider policy re-evaluation to differently weight necessary IB components. However, and noteworthy, is the prior equity-based, gifted and talented research contribution of Project Star in South Carolina, (Van Tassel-Baska, et.al, 2002). This initiative legislated another parameter to identify students as gifted and talented, thus creating access for more students to be afforded the opportunity to learn, excel, and tap into their potential. Apparently, the state's interests in equity and gifted/talented

education has made SC a model for other states. The puzzle as revealed by this research remains, though South Carolina will give gifted GPA weighting to students who are not identified as gifted who take IB, AP and Dual credit courses, no acknowledgement is given by the state to the extra work by full IB Diploma Candidates who are identified as gifted and talented. So, the IBDP is cut short in value as it is viewed equally via coursework rather than what it fully offers as a specialized program. Thus, for SC the implications of equity and access are out of balance; whereas Project Star encourages access to advanced coursework, the full IB Diploma Candidacy is not equitably acknowledged. This research suggests a reconsideration of policy by the state for full IB Diploma recipients. Further research is needed to determine if former IBDP candidates would have approached their senior year IB exams differently with an added incentive of greater GPA ranking or recognition. Nevertheless, this effort to change the policy would first entail becoming more knowledgeable at the state and district levels about the IBDP.

From choice-parity to choice-clarity. For the IBDP schools remaining within the choice-parity dilemma (i.e., All choices for advanced coursework appear the same, however they are not. The value of the IB is undermined and becomes threatened by diluted funding), they should annually evaluate the costs to maintain the IBDP as a choice option. Schools must find their place within the parameters of the district budget and decide what it looks like for them ‘to be an IB school.’ Districts can move forward with informed implementation of how the state of S.C. aligns and supports equitable access to advanced coursework within the IB Diploma Program. With a solid alignment of state, district, and school parameters of choice, outreach to the community (kindergarten through 12th grade) for a better understanding of how choice works within

schools and districts will set a new foundation for choice-clarity. Education for all stakeholders – students, parents, guidance counselors, teachers, administrators and board members will be beneficial for a better understanding of all choices.

IB-specific education. One of the key findings in this case study points to informing the prevalent culture in South Carolina about the IBDP. This research brings to light the disconnect between the IBDP coordinators and the district level personnel and calls for district level personnel to update themselves (or for many, to learn for the first time) on what the IB effort means in particular its philosophy, coursework, and the full Diploma commitment. District personnel need to understand what the IB core offers and the impact it can have in the lives of students. If more people at the district level understand the IB concepts, decisions on implementation would be more informed. With a better understanding of the IBDP comes an appreciation of the holistic value for students pursuing it besides their desire to accrue GPA credits.

Ideally, education about IB must be two-way initiated because most personnel within a school and district are not focused on the IBDP as much as the IB coordinators. Both the district- and school-level effort to become knowledgeable in the Diploma Program, should be an intentionally planned and carried out annually. With a concerted effort by more stakeholders to understanding the access continuum for the IBDP, decisions about new coursework implementation and consideration of pathways and application to the Diploma Program can be more inclusive. The IBDP coordinators need to invite the district and school level personnel to a better understanding; district and school level personnel should be inclusive to IB coordinator and attentive to the Diploma Program details. However, this communication between the coordinator and the district

office must be first supported by the school's principal—my dissertation findings support this recommendation, but only with established IB programs with strong leadership dyads. The district/school level personnel and the IBDP coordinators are underutilized resources for each other and can better serve to work together as valuable tools for access to college readiness.

Equity education reform. Transformation within the school system for equity must include the education of preservice teachers and administrators as well as the professional development of those who currently work within schools and districts. For IBDP programs to continue to evolve equitably, this direction and momentum of continued growth in mindset is necessary for furthering access. Execution of these equity plans involves the leadership vision and commitment on part of all stakeholders. For schools with established programs and equity-driven cultures, they can progress with IB equitably in full throttle towards IB for All, however, these programs are few. Preservice education means adding equity based coursework to education programs at the university level so future K-16 educators learn how to promote and manage a classroom environment that invites diversity. Education that includes understanding of equity motivated leadership, policy, and practices is necessary for continued evolution towards equity. However, and even more painstaking, is the professional development of current leaders and teachers who work in IBDP schools. Here equity reform entails teachers and leaders learning to be more culturally responsive by having conversations that require courage and building an awareness of current practices that are inequitable. Once an awareness is in place that shows room for improvement and the necessity for change, school personnel will take ownership of their equity effort. Such proprietary measures

include the transformation of how educators talk to and about students related to their choices of coursework, college readiness, and expectations for success.

Assumptions and Limitations

It is my assumption as an educator and a scholar that I study the education system to inform my understanding and in turn the understanding of others. With this knowledge, it is my responsibility to encourage change for improvement. Within this assumption lies the belief that order can be made from this chaos and forces of entropy can be tamed through education because as educators, we should work to create a better world for our children.

The findings of this dissertation are limited to the perceptions of its participants: IBDP coordinators, a state level official, and one national level official whose work extends to IB schools. This research is also bound to the limits of my insights and understandings of their experiences. Research based on IBDP coordinators is limited in the field and limiting because IBDP coordinators are teachers, who have limited impact within the system. Though this research represents only 90% of the IBDP public schools in South Carolina, they are a collective force and represent themselves through South Carolina IB Schools (SCIBS). My involvement with SCIBS has been minimal; and to its members, I am the researcher, who is a fellow coordinator trying to make sense of the IBDP within the system. This research does not speak for the 10% of the IBDP coordinators who did not participate.

I have attempted to dissect the complex idea of access into digestible pieces as a beginning to understand it in its entirety. This case study does represent 18 months of

research, where along the way I have made decisions that impacted the direction and definition of this research. For instance, my exposure to the poverty index has been limited, and further energy and time to unpack it leads me to the accountability avenue. And, my encounters with the participants' frustrations with standardized testing lead me further down another avenue of accountability and assessment. These avenues stray far from the direct role of my case participants because assessment and accountability are business-related pieces of the access puzzle that span beyond their control. Also, I intended to learn more about CAS as a tool or barrier to access, but I kept the focus on access leading to the IBDP because that is what the participants needed to discuss. I have chosen to limit this case study to the access pieces that are most closely tied to the IBDP coordinators' efforts related to access for students to the IBDP at each site. Yet, in each school, the IBDP cannot be administered without an understanding of how the school, district, and state interplay because each layer through its structure and prevalent culture does impact access for the students.

Closing Thoughts

The historic context of the IBDP--rooted in SC as a gifted education program--is significant in terms of integration efforts and how SC IBDP schools will progress with equity plans moving forward. Since the state decentralizes the operation of the IBDP, integration efforts connected to this quality of education that the Diploma Program offers is tied to attitudes about diversity within and around each school setting. As the expansion of the IBDP has unfolded, over its thirty years in South Carolina, the integration of schools and ways of tracking students towards this advanced program has substantially influenced the foundation of how IB has developed. As noted by Baker

(2006), for over fifty years, claims by educational leaders that tracking and testing for promoting excellence within SC and other southern states have worn thin (pg. 180). Quite ironic, as previously noted, SC was the last state to officially desegregate in 1963 (Baker, 2006); this research highlights the wheels of desegregation turning, ever so slowly to identify SC as having students not separated by race and socioeconomic status within SC IBDP classrooms. South Carolina is poised to be leading southern states in garnering a snapshot of the complex and sticky integrative efforts of equitable access. This research presents new challenges to address culturally and socioeconomically diverse students in single classroom settings.

During the time of this research on access to the IBDP events outside of the school system marked the sign of the times that closely align with South Carolina's haunted past immersed in poverty and discrimination. In 2015, South Carolina made the spotlight of national news with the alarming treatment of an African American high school girl when she was pulled from her desk by a male (White) police officer in a public-school. In June 2015, a hate crime involving the killing of nine African American people in a Charleston church was committed by a White recent graduate of a SC public high school. The Confederate flag's removal from the South Carolina state house grounds sparked more issues. For some, this flag represented the lives lost during the Civil War; for others, it represented South Carolina's racist past. This research has been influenced in part by these times, with the hope that it can inform and in some way, have a positive impact on how we improve the socio-cultural context of schooling in SC. IB has existed in SC for nearly thirty years, it entered the SC landscape twenty years after desegregation efforts began. This research reminds me that integration happens one family at a time and

efforts to integrate are addressed regularly by IBDP schools across the state of SC.

Equity efforts, through modes of leadership, policy, and support are in progress to create opportunities for all students. It is my hope that this insight to access serves as a useful tool in keeping the momentum of integration going.

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