The Sustainability Compass and ISIS Pyramid in GIN Conference, Manila 2012!

The EARCOS Global Issues Network Conference (GIN) will be held in Manila, Philippines from 16th -19th February, 2012, and the AtKisson Sustainability Compass and ISIS Pyramid will feature prominently. The aim of the conference is to support the Global Issues Network (GIN) by providing an engaging platform for empowering students to work together in bridging the gap between ideas and actions around important global sustainability issues, and between the various regional GIN conferences.

At this workshop, Alan Atkisson will be a keynote speaker as well as performing a closing concert ... and doing four other talks over the 3 days. The Compass and ISIS Pyramid will provide structure to the whole conference, with participating students building 20 parallel Pyramid workshops to develop Action Plans for particular issues.

For more info on the GIN Conference go to: http://earcos-global-issues-network.org/

Upcoming Events:

1-Day ‘Compass for Teaching and Learning Training Workshop’, 1st October 2011 hosted by International School Bangkok (ISB)

We are organising a 1-day “Compass for Teaching & Learning” training workshop especially geared for classroom teachers on October 1st at ISB in Bangkok. This workshop focuses on the use of the Compass for lesson and project application as well as a tool for building effective interdisciplinary curriculums with a team of teachers. You can download full flyer at http://www.atkisson.com/resources/2011/09/05/get-compasse/ or contact us at nonglala@gmail.com

Welcome to Pyramid 2012!

We’re organizing a weekend workshop on a global scale: groups of people, all over the world, spending a day or two thinking about SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, using a workshop tool called “Pyramid.” For background on Pyramid, on the Pyramid 2012 event, and on the organizers behind this event go to: http://pyramid2012.wordpress.com/
Currently we have an increasing number of schools using and adopting the Compass in their teaching and learning as well as in the school administration/decision-making process. Let’s learn from their stories, get new ideas and try it out ourselves!

**KIS International School, Bangkok, Thailand**

In November 2010, four members from different working sections of KIS attended a 3-day training about the "Compass" tool, in addition to other strategies to help make sustainable decisions. As a result of that training, some impromptu work with students happened as the four members of KIS began to share their understanding of the Compass for use in the classroom. It proved to be a beneficial method to help students think critically, while still remaining open-minded. Later in the academic year, KIS hosted a two-hour workshop for approximately half of the teaching staff focusing on how to use the Compass in the Classroom. Currently, teachers are using it in accordance to their own comfort levels; some teachers have used it for an activity or two and others have used it to help frame larger aspects of their units and/or assessments.

This academic year, as part of our Five Year Strategic Plan and our Self-Study for CIS and IB re-accreditation, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has used strategies learned from the three-day training to identify the number one priority for KIS in terms of our environmental sustainability focus. The SLT has been careful to pick only one main focus area, but recognizes and encourages all other "grass roots" initiatives that come from the students and the curriculum.

The Environment Committee is almost ready to use the Compass tool for planning action related to our main environmental focus. Before we begin to plan action, we have opened an invitation to all KIS Staff to be part of the Environment Committee. As the committee continues to work, we will look for student and parent/family volunteers as well.

From those interested committee members, we plan to train a handful of KIS Staff in regards to "Compass in the Classroom". Soon upon the completion of that training, the Environment Committee will be meeting to "Compass" the focus area selected by the SLT. During this process, we will look at both positive and negative effects of our chosen focus area on all points of the "Compass".

After coming to a consensus on the major positive and negative effects to be aware of, we will begin to plan and take action. Through this process, we believe we will be planning and taking action that will be sustainable beyond this one academic year.

*By Dan Magie*
International School of Tianjin
China

We have now Compassed issues at hand (in curriculum, extra-curricular clubs and some committees) and have had students Compass to find issues from presented materials in units being taught. We have a Compass form for creating goals/ action plans in our basic faculty committees and Community and Service groups for all students in grades 6 to 10. Grades 3 to 11 used compass on Earth Day in April to explore issues related to “better connections needing to be made within our surrounding community”.

At the moment I’m working on mapping out at least 1 unit per grade level, K to 12, using the Compass in a unit being taught at any time in the school year. For UN Day, grades 6 to 11 are using the compass for all of their UN issues being discussed. We are using Compass for events planning in secondary student council. Finally, it looks like I’ll get to incorporate the Compass into an action planning form for all Faculty Committees and a steering committee for school operation.

By Chris Watson

Magic Eyes Barge Program, Thailand

On the barge we have recently trialed different ways of using Compass as a tool to maximize river observation from the boat. The river observation is carried out with each compass point observing through their particular lens. This is followed by identifying assets and concerns and selecting one issue to focus on. In debrief, each person then has a laminated card that they write an aspect of the chosen issue on. We then use coloured rafia string to show the links between each Compass point and comment if it is a positive or negative link, and finally consider where in the system that starts to emerge we might make a change. We like it because it is tactile and empowers each student to share rather than being teacher directed.

By Lynda Rolph

PTIS International School, Chiang Mai, Thailand

At PTIS, Grade 1 students use the compass to look at building materials weather it’s sustainable or not. Grade 3 students use the compass to look at their food, exercise, medical care etc. and for grade 7 students, reading The Giver, to create their own ‘Utopia’ using the Compass. The kids love it!

By Sarah Handley
British International School Phuket, Thailand

Last school year, I used the compass very loosely to get the Year 7-9 students to consider how to help the environment from different stakeholder perspectives. Rather than using the compass points we had student split into stakeholder groups, after presentations from a local environmentalist (Mr. John Gray) and a professor from the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Eco System Project (Mr. O’Brien’s job is trying to balance all of the stakeholder positions for the entire Bay of Bengal so that is where we were coming from), students looked at environmental issues from different perspectives such as tourists, beach vendors, fishermen, shrimp farmers, local environment, conservation groups etc., using pictures and prompts all very similar to what we did in the Becoming a compass school workshop. This was only a few days after the workshop but was very much inspired by it.

Also, one of the presentations to come out of this (the Fisherman Friend’s Song) was chosen by Project Earth as a Regional Winner of Asia for outstanding work in environmental education.

We are now a member of FOBISSEA Eco Schools which has links to Keep Britain Tidy etc. I was wondering how we could get Compass connected with that?

By Kathy Manthei Coulson

Compass University Programme Gaining Momentum … Auburn University, USA

On 11th – 13th May, 2011 AtKisson Group/Compass Education partnered with the Auburn University Office of Sustainability to deliver a 3-day ISIS Accelerator training workshop that was attended by 24 university stakeholders including undergraduate and graduate students, lecturers and campus administrators, among others. The primary aim of the training was to get first hand-experience and coaching in the use of the ISIS Accelerator toolkit (Compass, ISIS method, Pyramid and Amoeba). A secondary objective was to provide a gathering event and process to inspire and galvanize these key university stakeholders to begin seriously thinking about what are the priority areas to focus on in transforming Auburn into a national leader in sustainability.

The Compass in supporting Training workshop on Education for Sustainable Development for Teacher Educators organized by Nepal National Commission for UNESCO, Nepal

This is a six days training workshop aimed at providing opportunity and empower teacher educators in discussion and sharing various aspects of sustainable development both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills as well as integrating sustainability into school curricular and teacher training programme. The Compass assisted them in identifying issues, understanding the holistic view, organizing their thoughts and discussion also using as a framework to vision their sustainable school in Nepal context as well.
A Compass School is a school which actively incorporates the Sustainability Compass and ISIS into any and/or all aspects of school life in order to reorient “education as sustainability” in the school and assist students and teachers in transforming their mental model of how the world works, i.e., the way we think or our “habit of mind”.

The starting point for a Compass School is the metaphor of the compass itself: a tool for assessing our present situation and for setting direction towards living and learning more sustainably.

The Compass of Sustainability uses the four directions of the Compass (N, E, S, W) to reflect four fully interdependent dimensions of life:

- **(N = Nature)** The natural systems on which all life depends.
- **(E = Economy)** The economic systems that provide humanity with goods, services, and meaningful work.
- **(S = Society)** The social and cultural systems that provide cohesion, identity, security and freedom.
- **(W = Wellbeing)** The health, happiness, and quality of life for individual people and their families.

These "Four Compass Points," provide a simple, clear, integrated, and comprehensive structure for sustainability learning. It is also a platform for the sustainable management of schools as institutions that actively model the behaviour that they seek to develop.

The Compass can be used as holistic lens or mental model in classroom lessons, or used to help frame the entire curricula for alignment with education for sustainable development (ESD). The Compass can also be a frame and guide for setting school policy in line with sustainability principles, help manage school operations for more effective embodiment of the sustainability ideal and help develop measurable indicators of progress. It also easily provides a common symbol, a metaphorical “centre of gravity,” around which everyone in the school community can gather and feel part of this great civilisational journey toward a sustainable society.

The Compass Schools approach and methodology translates these general dimensions into the more specific working areas of school life, which we call Compass School Portals. They are five key areas that new ideas and action can be done within and outside of the school and they encompass the following areas:

1. School Governance;
2. Teaching and Learning;
3. Management, Operations and Support;
4. Buildings and Grounds and
Compass Schools Network

Let Us Know How You Are Using Compass

Please let us know how you are using the Compass and ISIS Accelerator tools in your classroom, in other areas of teaching and learning and in your school’s management and strategic planning as you integrate and incorporate sustainable development into education. Send your stories and ideas to us at: watkana@atkisson.com

Compass School Network is Growing!

As of now, we have successfully introduced the Compass concept, tools and methods to over 60 teachers administrators and educator-practitioners from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Laos, and currently have 10 schools actively using the Compass in their classrooms, and some having started to integrated the Compass into their governance and management structure.

Schools and Universities currently using the Compass in the classroom or as a management tool include the following:

- PTIS International School – Chiang Mai, Thailand
- New International School of Thailand (NIST) – Bangkok, Thailand
- KIS International School, Bangkok, Thailand
- International School Bangkok (ISB), Bangkok, Thailand
- Concordia International School, Shanghai, China
- Western Academy Beijing (WAB), Beijing, China
- Phuket International Academy Day School, Phuket, Thailand
- UN International School, Hanoi, Vietnam
- Ban Wa School, Khon Kaen, Thailand
- Dara Wittiyalai School, Chiang Mai, Thailand
- Xavier University, Mindanao, Philippines
- Auburn University, Alabama, USA
- International School of Tianjin (IST)
- International School Bangkok (ISB), Thailand
- British International School, Phuket, Thailand

To find out more about the Compass Schools Network please find us at our Facebook page: Compass Education Network at: https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Compass-Education-Network/179765712043665