Compass Education Multiplies!

Celebrating a sixth successful ‘Becoming A Compass School’ workshop

A diverse group of sixteen educators from Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines participated in our most recent ‘Becoming a Compass School’ workshop hosted by Traidhos Three Generation Community for Learning and Prem Tinsulanonda International School (PTIS) in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This workshop was significant in several ways; one being that our very first Compass Schools workshop was conducted at PTIS back in 2009. It has been interesting to see how much Compass Education has grown and evolved, and to see the amazing

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Update from IB Global Center, The Hague

Compass and systems thinking in IB curriculum support materials

Malcom Nicolson, Head of MYP Development and Head of DP Development at the IB Global Center, The Hague, shared the following updates:

IB has made some use of Compass tools and developing the concept of sustainability. The Compass is featured in the new Approaches To Learning (ATL) text, which can be found in the IB Store. We have also featured Compass in the context of learning experiences in a teacher support material to be published in August 2013. Ms. Teresa Tung has been very helpful in preparing the materials that will be published.

The shape of the MYP framework is changing. One development is that all subjects will have prescribed key and related concepts (overarching and subject-specific). Systems is a recurring key concept across subjects. Our new approaches to learning skills concentrate on developing systems thinking in addition to a new focus on social and emotional learning and mindfulness. New MYP commercial publications to be developed, both interdisciplinary and disciplinary, are expected to cover global challenges such as sustainability.

(Traidhos workshop – continued from page 1)

application of the Compass model in all aspects of school life at PTIS.

Our continually maturing and evolving training team for this sixth workshop consisted of Robert Steele and Ms. Watkana Thongreung of Sustainability Asia, Teresa Tung of New International School of Thailand (NIST), Rick Hannah of Sinarmas World Academy (SWA), Lynda Rolph of Traidhos, Kathryn O’Connell and Sarah Handley of PTIS, with a special guest appearance to present his case study of student-led school transformation using the Compass, Pyramid and AMOEBa tools by Tom McLean of International School Manila (ISM).

Since the first workshop in 2009, we have continued to learn, experiment and develop our tools and methods for training others. We are constantly learning from our participants’ own engagement with and adaptations of the tools when they go back and apply them in their classrooms.

Classroom observations

One of the most successful new methods in this latest workshop was giving our workshop participants an opportunity to observe simple ways that teachers are using the Compass to engage students within their unit syllabus to achieve more in-depth and broader thinking. This was possible thanks to the good will of PTIS in allowing us to run our workshop during school hours, and for the kind invitation of two of PTIS’s most experienced Compass practitioner teachers, Sarah Handley and Kate O’Connell, who offered to let our workshop participants visit their classes. Participants chose to either observe a primary level class or interact with students from a junior high / middle school level history class.

Librarian Sarah Handley’s grade 7 humanities class displayed their work from an eight-week unit using the Compass to explore the life of medieval Europe. Students had previously investigated and

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reported on the life of different types of people living during medieval times, such as a knight, priest, blacksmith, King, peasant, etc. To do this in a more comprehensive way, Sarah had them use the Compass as the primary lens for their investigation, analysis and reporting. Students who had studied the same character came together to display features of that lifestyle related to different Compass domains in a variety of ways, such as work tools or clothes students had created, examples of food, houses, etc. The highlight for our workshop participants was the opportunity to sit down and talk with the students about their work. All of the students interviewed (many of whom were ESL students) indicated that using the Compass made it quite easy and interesting for them to understand their topic and to explain to it others with confidence.

Kate O’Connell’s grade 2 class used the Compass to explore selected pieces of art and try to find their own meaning and the messages the artist was trying to communicate through his/her art. To do this, five stations were set up around the room, each with a piece of art in the center of a large paper marked with the four Compass domains. While music played, students moved around the room and silently brainstormed on the butcher papers, noting their observations, comments or questions from the four Compass perspectives. Students were then grouped with a single piece of art to discover connections between the Compass points. After this, Kate chose one piece of art for the whole class to focus on by making further connections, drawing conclusions about the artists’ message, and exploring how the message might change if an element of the artwork changed. This lesson demonstration showed the ease with which seemingly complex skills such as understanding ‘perspective’ and ‘systems thinking’ could be incorporated into even the earliest learning, such as grade 2.

Experiencing the Sustainability Compass in the context of a real classroom sparked a lot of excitement and appreciation. Participants could see first-hand how the Compass encouraged deeper thinking and seeing things from multiple perspectives, encouraged student conversation and collaboration, provided structure to their inquiry, and promoted self-confidence for students to clearly explain their thoughts through the simplicity of the Compass lens.
Wiki for participant engagement

Another change in this workshop was the introduction of a wiki for participant interaction and note-taking. The training team feels this has potential for development in future workshops, and we are considering other platforms that would serve a similar purpose in a more streamlined way for real-time updates by multiple users.

Whole school emphasis

This workshop placed a stronger emphasis on the whole-school approach to sustainability. The past couple of workshops were geared more toward using Compass and ISIS tools in the classroom and in extracurricular programs, but participants were always excited by the whole school approach and asked for more. While learning the ISIS Pyramid process, participants were able to conduct relevant interviews with PTIS stakeholders in the context of a school already progressing on its sustainability journey. Thus the workshop has come “full circle,” since the very first workshop also had a strong emphasis on a whole school approach.

One afternoon, participants were able to visit Traidhos’ monthly ‘Community Market’, which brings together local vendors, the campus farm, student projects and showcases sustainably produced and organic products.

We extend a huge thanks to Traidhos and PTIS for allowing us to use their facilities and interview their staff for our training.

For more information, inquire at communications.compass@gmail.com or contact Robert Steele at robert@atkisson.com.

Introducing Compass at the EARCOS Teachers’ Conference
Bangkok, Thailand, 27 – 29 March 2014

We are very excited to be offering several Compass sessions at the 12th Annual East Asia Regional Council Of Schools (EARCOS) Teachers’ Conference (ETC) ‘The Science of Service Learning.’

Teresa Tung of New International School of Thailand (NIST) and Robert Steele of Systainability Asia will present one pre-conference session and two breakout sessions during the conference:

Sustainability Compass for Teaching and Learning pre-conference session (1 day): An introduction to the AtKisson Sustainability Compass for teachers from early years to high school. Teachers will learn how to use the Sustainability Compass, see case studies of this robust yet simple tool being used in international classrooms, and consider how to use it in their own classrooms immediately. (Note: This is the day prior to the conference, on 26 March.)

Systems Thinking breakout session: Systems thinking can and should be taught in all grades and subjects to help our students think more holistically about our world. You will be introduced to systems thinking tools to help you and your students find out, ‘Why are things happening?’ and, most important, ‘Where and how can we make the most positive contribution?’

Leading Change - How to Diffuse Innovation breakout session: When transforming a school for sustainability, an idea that may feel like a ‘no-brainer’ for those involved may be met with great deal of resistance. We will explore how to diffuse innovation so that a great idea can come alive and make a positive impact.

Sign Up!

Full details and registration for the conference will be on the EARCOS website: http://www.earcos.org/etc2014/index.php
Pyramid 2030
A Global Workshop Campaign for Sustainable Development!

New name

Last year we announced the ‘Pyramid 2013’ initiative as a follow on from the very successful ‘Pyramid 2012’ campaign. The article on pages 7-9 of this newsletter describes one school’s participation.

The campaign has now been re-launched as Pyramid 2030 – it is still a volunteer-driven, global-scale campaign that encourages local communities, companies, schools, organizations and groups of all kinds to run an engaging and participatory workshop called Pyramid to explore sustainability and create new sustainability goals and initiatives.

Why 2030?

We are closely following the United Nations process of creating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the world, which have 2030 as their timeline for achieving them. Pyramid 2030 supports the development of local SDGs or the refreshment of existing goals by infusing new ideas, energy and commitment.

Be part of it!

See how simple it is to get involved at www.pyramid2030.org. It’s free, simple, fun, and very engaging! And every workshop helps move the world a tiny bit closer to sustainability.

Master Class for Sustainability:
Tools and Skills for Leading Change

Alan AtKisson, Alex Klimek, and Robert Steele – three of the AtKisson Group’s top trainers – will present a five-day master class in Bangkok this January.

The class is geared toward those who are serious about change for sustainability:

*Increase your effectiveness in working with the risks and opportunities associated with business/ organizational sustainability*

You are already committed to making change. You have knowledge and experience. Now you want to learn the tools, techniques, and processes that will empower you to accelerate transformation.

Location: Sasin Graduate Institute for Business Administration, Bangkok, Thailand
Dates: Five days: 18 – 22 January 2014
Full details: http://www.sasinsustainability.org/knowledge/detail/232
Pyramid Day at Dominican International School, Taipei, Taiwan

“Pyramid is a tool one can use with groups of any kind to learn more about sustainability — locally, or globally. One can also use it to create sustainable development ideas and projects. The process is fun, fast-paced, and productive. Pyramid is a workshop tool that has been used around the world, with companies, government agencies, UN training programs, cities and towns, schools and universities.” — the AtKisson Group’s website

On 25 January 2013, the Dominican International School in Taipei, Taiwan, stopped all regular classes at eleven o’clock and the rest of the school day was devoted to a pyramid building activity. The AtKisson Group created Pyramid based on their long experience in bringing groups together, getting them to think collaboratively and systemically about sustainability, and then providing them a pathway for going from thinking to action. This activity was first introduced to students at the Global Issues Network (GIN) Conference in Manila in 2012.

Each year the Dominican International School in Taipei has a Cultural Awareness Day run by the Social Studies Department. A number of the teachers involved in the GIN Club are part of this team. They argued that sustainability issues are often very closely linked to culture and therefore cultural awareness could be easily integrated with the pyramid building activity. A further challenge was added — Pyramids had to be built from recycled materials only. Old milk cartons; old green tea cartons; washed, disposable chop sticks from lunches; empty soda cans; empty cookie tins; empty plastic bottles of all descriptions; old cardboard boxes and recycled paper were some of the materials that were used.

The students who had built Pyramids at the GIN Conference in Manila in February 2012 were asked to become Pyramid Builder Leaders. They were assigned, in the weeks leading up to the Pyramid building event, to brainstorm the issues within their own classes. They had to follow up with initiating the first discussion and to make sure that student did research on the topic they chose. On the day of the actual construction, the students took charge of the complete process from start to finish. The teachers were there merely in a supervisory capacity.

The next twenty years will be of critical importance to our planet, argues World Bank economist Jean-François Rischard. How global problems are resolved over these years will determine the fate of our planet for the next generations. In his book, High Noon, Rischard

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points out the twenty most pressing issues facing the global community.

Because some of Rischard’s twenty issues are rather complex, the organizing team selected four global issues or topics per school level. The organizers felt that these issues or topics were relevant to Taiwan and to the age level of the students:

**Lower School**
- Maritime safety and pollution
- Deforestation
- Global warming
- Natural disaster prevention and mitigation

**Middle School**
- Education for all
- Global infectious diseases
- Biodiversity and ecosystem losses
- Rules for E-commerce

**High School**
- Intellectual property rights
- Massive step-up in the fight against poverty
- Peacekeeping, conflict prevention, combating terrorism
- Illegal drugs

In October and November 2012, the Junior GIN teachers did experiments with the grade one and two children during club meetings, in which they illustrated the effect of oil on seawater. They explained the devastating effect oil has on ocean life. They also took the Junior GIN students on a beach clean-up trip. These little ones chose Maritime safety and pollution as their issue of focus, and decorated their Pyramid with pictures and other decorations, each meaning something, as their writing skills were not advanced enough to express what they wanted to say. The decorations symbolized the issues, for example, the feathers symbolized the sea birds, the seaweed, maritime plant life.

The seniors chose Peace keeping, conflict prevention, combating terrorism as their topic. This is a topic that has been top-of-mind at the school since the beginning of the term, when four of the grade 12 girls and two grade nine boys went to an international peace conference in India, accompanied by one of the teachers. They had much to share with the others when they returned from India, but this activity also gave everyone who did not go to the conference an opportunity to brainstorm these issues.

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The pyramid building activity was a wonderful chance for the students to get into the depth of a topic while having a meaningful discussion about it, even at the very junior level. The physical building of the pyramid was a test for the students’ engineering skills. It was an ideal activity to occupy them mentally and physically, as they had to plan the next layer on two levels each time. Some classes had drawn up plans for building their pyramids before the event and painstakingly stuck to them. Others improvised as they went along. The results were sometimes humorous, sometimes surprising, but in the end, every class had a pyramid that represented their efforts, discussion and commitment.

During the coming weeks, teachers will encourage their students to take their commitments further, as we remind them that the capstone for the pyramid symbolizes their pledge to create change that will make our planet a sustainable environment for the generation after them.

Submitted by Mercia de Souza, 2013, while serving as Professional Development Monitor, AP Instructor, GIN Coordinator at Dominican International School, Taipei, Taiwan.

Prem Tinsulanonda International School
Supporting Units of Inquiry during library sessions

I try to go through Compass with all junior grade levels as often as possible, but at least twice a year. With the younger ages, to review the Compass Points I put four large (A3 size) laminated sheets on the floor with N, E, S, and W. I give each student a picture and have him or her stand on which point they think it belongs to. For the youngest students the pictures are very simplistic, and the pictures are more complex for older students; this invites conversation about those items that could go in more than one point.

Then I choose a book, preferably linked to the class’ current Unit of Inquiry, and we spend several sessions discussing the book, using Compass to help organize, deepen

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Simple Compass images for young students
and connect the discussion.

In EY1-2 students look at the ways we play to learn, and to express our feelings and ideas during the Unit of Inquiry How We Express Ourselves. In EY3-grade 1 we look at our Library Essential Agreement at the end of term 1; through the different Compass lenses students reflect on essential agreement behaviours and how they might be improved (if necessary). In grade 3, during the Unit of Inquiry Sharing the Planet, students use the Compass to look more closely at the challenges and risks children face worldwide.

In grade 2 we have used the book Me, Oliver Bright by Megan De Kantzow and Sally Rippin for three years in a row connected with the Unit of Inquiry Where We Are in Place & Time. The book is about an Australian boy who compares his life to that of his father and grandfather. To facilitate our discussion, I have laminated copies of pictures from the story, which students post on a large board marked with the four Compass Points.

In grade 4 we do a similar exercise using the book Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin by Gene Barretta connected with the Unit of Inquiry Sharing the Planet. We spend at least four weeks on this lesson (including one lesson reviewing Compass), and again, I use laminated copies of pictures from the book to facilitate our discussion.

In grade 5, I do a lesson on Using Energy At School connected with the Unit of Inquiry Sharing the Planet. I have laminated copies of some pages from Save Energy by Claire Llewellyn that show parts of a school and how energy is used in a school setting. We look for places where we could save energy, and then use the Compass to help discuss why we might want to save energy. I write directly on the laminated copy as students identify points of discussion.

*From Sarah Handley, 2012 while serving as Library and Information Services Specialist, PTIS, Chiang Mai, Thailand*
From 31 August – 1 September, Robert Steele, one of our most experienced Compass Education trainers, with the superb assistance of Tom McLean, Sustainability Coordinator for International School Manila (ISM), facilitated a two day Sustainability Education Professional Development (PD) workshop for 26 teachers from all three schools (elementary, middle and high schools) of ISM. The main objectives for this PD training were to introduce to the teachers some effective tools, methods, games and approaches for linking and incorporating sustainability into all levels of ISM’s curriculum in order to support ISM student development and empowerment to be change leaders.

The two day program was broken into four blocks focusing on 1) sustainability concepts and principals; 2) tools and approaches for sustainability teaching and learning, with most emphasis placed on using the Compass; 3) games and tools for systems thinking and sustainability planning including a fast-paced full ISIS Pyramid completed in two hours (with some systems games thrown in); and 4) time for participating teachers to think about how they can best support ISM’s own whole school sustainability journey.

According to participants’ feedback, highlights of the training program were the Common Dilemma Fishing Game, the System Iceberg for deeper analysis, the Compass, the Triangles systems game and the ISIS Pyramid.

Teachers demonstrated their excitement over using the Compass model approach/ framework and ISIS tools in many contexts.

- Wellbeing committee to evaluate proposed changes
- ICare Homerooms
- Freshman High School/ Berdesaco and service committee
- Analyzing pictures in IB classes
- Broaden students’ knowledge of what sustainability actually is
- Enhance further thinking and making connections with terminology and big concepts, such as in units on professions or globalization
- Evaluate art works; compare and contrast work in terms of history, culture, artistic movements and other aspects; this is a great visible thinking tool to help students connect their art work to the wider world
- Curriculum framework in “Changing Our World”
- Lens for analysing problems
- Lens for analysing and assessing service learning projects such as CWW and Sat Service
- Viewing units through the Compass can help to better frame tasks and make them more accessible for students
- Reflection in the middle school CWW program
- Plan a unit on environment for French 4
- Apply some of the games in French classes
- Use the video for a unit on poverty
Redesigning our consulting and training program

Since the first workshop in 2009, our team has experimented and evolved in our own knowledge and use of the AtKisson ISIS Accelerator tools (including the Compass, ISIS Pyramid and Amoeba) for educational application. In each of the past six workshops we have emphasized different uses and focuses of application, including strictly classroom application for teaching and learning, whole school sustainability management, addressing global issues, and service learning that enhances community-school relations.

In reflecting on past workshops and the question of how to embed sustainability in schools, the training team recognizes the diverse needs of participants and the need to package our workshops more dynamically. Going forward, the Compass Education team will be offering several distinctly focused and customized trainings tailored to school teams and specific audiences. These training programs will fall into the following categories:

1. **Compass for Teaching and Learning**
   (1-2 days)

   Primarily designed for teachers and curriculum leaders/developers who want to use Compass in classroom lessons and as a framework for collaborative and interdisciplinary curriculum planning.

2. **Whole School Sustainability with Compass and ISIS Method**
   (1 – 2 days)

   Designed for school administrators and leaders who want to promote and integrate sustainability into most if not all aspects of the school community; in other words, a whole school approach to sustainability.

3. **Accelerating Sustainability in Community Service Learning**
   (1 – 3 days)

   Focuses on how to empower and enable students to identify key community sustainability issues based on what the community needs and wants, then to plan in a holistic and systematic way, innovative service learning projects that are designed with sustainability in mind. This workshop can be conducted for Community Service Coordinators only, for students only, or for a mixture of both groups.

4. **Consulting and Coaching**

   The Compass Education team is also available to any school or group for focused formal and informal consulting and coaching within schools that want to train a large percentage of their staff by building their own sustainability teams and units, as we feel this is a more effective way to catalyze sustainability thinking than the general workshops we have run in the past.
Compass Education and Compass Schools are the initiative of the AtKisson Group, a worldwide network of Associates (individuals) and Affiliates (organizations) who pursue sustainability practices in a wide variety of contexts and are licensed to use the ISIS Accelerator tools. Services offered by the AtKisson Group are marketed under three divisions with the brand names AtKisson Sustainability (consulting), ISIS Academy (professional training and development) and Compass Education (the formal education sector). Compass Education comprises two branches, one focusing on universities and the other, known as Compass Schools, focusing on primary and secondary schools.

The Compass Schools program trains and supports teachers, administrators and other school officials who want to adopt the Sustainability Compass (and ISIS) as their principal platform for pursuing integrated sustainable development.

The Compass Schools program has evolved organically over the past three to four years through collaboration of several passionate individuals. The program is led by Robert Steele of the AtKisson Group.

We Want to Hear From You

How Are You 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 communications.compass@gmail.com.

Website launch

Our website www.CompassSchools.com launched in March with the basic structure and a small amount of content. Aside from the obvious lack of content, what are your impressions?

Refocus

Robert Steele has just completed an incredibly demanding eighteen month long assignment in Indonesia, working for Asian Development Bank (ADB) to formulate Indonesia's National Action Plan for Environmental Education in formal education. With that project wrapped up, he will devote more energy to Compass Schools.

Priorities for the coming months include building up the website, formalizing long-term goals and strategies for Compass Schools, and developing teacher resources.

Support material

We have recently compiled a collection of diverse ‘lesson outlines’ and articles showcasing different ways Compass supports teaching and learning, community service and strategic planning. These are currently available to workshop alumni through our Network Practitioners basecamp website. We will format these into a Handbook, and welcome additional submissions!

What is Compass Education and Compass Schools?

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Group and Sustainability Asia, who has been consulting on environmental education and sustainability for 19 years, and is passionate about the need to create sustainability habits of mind through our educational systems. Robert draws on the broad resources of the AtKisson Group itself, as well as our growing cadre and network of passionate ‘practitioner’ school teachers and administrators who make up the central core of our training and consulting team.

Compass Schools Practitioners Network

The Compass Schools Practitioners Network is a loosely organized group of educators who have been trained in Compass and/or practice Compass to promote sustainability. We have successfully introduced the Compass concept, tools and methods to over eighty-five teachers, administrators and educator-practitioners representing over thirty-five organizations. Compass has also been used or highlighted in venues such as the EARCOS Teachers and Administrator Conferences, as well as the 2012 Global Issues Network (GIN) Manila conference; as a result, the Compass tool is being adopted in schools beyond the reaches of our workshops.

Our Facebook page, Compass Education Network, is intended as a ‘community of practice’ for educators, trainers, consultants and others who are actively using the AtKisson Sustainability Compass and ISIS Accelerator tools to promote sustainability education. Keep sustainability education fresh, share ideas and news, give and receive meaningful support…. If you haven’t already, please ‘Like’ our page, join the conversation, and please share photos of your practice.

http://www.facebook.com/pages/Compass-Education-Network/179765712043665

Like us on Facebook
What is a Compass School?

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 / 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 a 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 ‘center of gravity,’ around which everyone in the school community can gather and feel part of this great civilizational 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 within and outside of the school where new ideas and action can be implemented, and they encompass the following areas:

1) **School Governance**;
2) **Teaching and Learning**;
3) **Management, Operations and Support**;
4) **Buildings and Grounds and**
5) **Networking and Partnerships**.