

## COVER LETTER

I have more than 15 years' experience in education in Europe and the US, including 4 years in a Senior Level Position in Dubai as Academic Director in Dubai and 3 years as a Chief Group Director of Education in Kabul. I have significant experience, training, and certifications both in education and data analysis. I have strong leadership qualities, impeccable work ethic, determination, and dedication. As a self-motivated team player, I work towards upscaling the performance on an organizational level by bring up its individuals. I have spent significant time of my career dedicated to educational research, specifically through the use of large databases and machine learning models. As such, I believe I would make a valuable addition with extensive contributions to any educational team interested in improving the provision for teaching, learning, and assessment for all stakeholders — students, parents, teachers, and administrators. My competence and qualifications are best suited for institutions that are looking to transform the education they are providing and thus improve their overall ratings. My full educational portfolio can be found on [www.pillossof.com/about-me](http://www.pillossof.com/about-me)

My experience includes teaching both Grade 6 (Year 7) to Grade 12 (Year 13) students in Mathematics, General Science, Chemistry, Biology, and Physics. I have teaching experience in the US (for 2 years while doing my BS degree there), Bulgaria (as a full time teacher and Head of Department for Mathematics and Science), Germany, Austria, Denmark, Spain, and Norway (though an EU teacher exchange program for 6 months in each country). I was part of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education school inspection team for 3 years and hold EU certification for that. During my term as an inspector, I participated in over 50 school inspections across the country and was an inspection leader in my last year. Between 2016 and 2020, I worked with GEMS Al Khaleej National School to completely transform it in terms of teaching and learning, assessment, use of technology, and curriculum — when I joined the school, it was rated as barely Acceptable and left it, it was on the verge of becoming Very Good.

I started working with Kardan Schools in 2018, initially online, until I moved there permanently in 2020 to assume my role as a Chief Group Director of Education for Kardan's 3 schools with total strength of 3500 students and 300 staff. I was fully in charge of the IB and NEASC accreditation processes, leading the full academics of all 3 schools, establishing and leading the organization's development team, as well as all international collaborations with partners such as Education Above All, Yalda Hakim Foundation, Georgetown University, USAID, UNICEF, Infrontier, Music in Secondary Schools Trust, and others. Thanks to the efforts of the whole team under my supervision, Kardan was established as the most recognized and high-quality education provider in Afghanistan.

I have significant expertise in:

- School accreditation
- Self-evaluation
- School improvement planning
- Curriculum design and implementation
- Digital transformation in education
- Assessment progress and attainment tracking
- Technological disruption and innovation
- Data-driven instruction and data-based decision making

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please do not hesitate to contact me, should you require further information. Thank you!

Best,  
Eva Pillossof

## PERSONAL SUMMARY

A confident, dynamic and hardworking professional skilled at effectively leading a team of educators, researching education options, and implementing innovations in curriculum, assessment, and teaching practices. Possessing extensive knowledge of assessment and teaching methods under the American and the British National Curricula as well as IB, exploiting technology in the classroom, and using data to inform instruction. Expert in reading and applying the KHDA inspection framework to achieve desired outcomes.

## CAREER HISTORY

**Kardan Schools, Kabul, Afghanistan**

CHIEF GROUP DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

April 2018 – Present

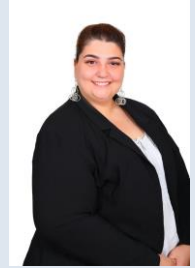
### Achievements:

- Chaired the accreditation committees for all three schools;
- Designed and implemented educational programs in line with US/IB curricula;
- Developed the Head Office and school organizational structure and implemented clear reporting lines, job descriptions, and roles and responsibilities;
- Developed a school staff 360-degree evaluation framework for transparent salary scale determination processes;
- Developed and implemented the organization's K-12 strategic plan;
- Supervised school budgets, staffing, and operations;
- Grew school enrollments and revenue, and lowered staff turnover rates;
- Supervised the writing and quality assurance of over 200 school policies and procedures.

### Measured impact on student outcomes:

- Overall improvement of the provision of teaching and learning across the schools;
- Significant improvement in the delivery of lessons during lockdown periods with no loss of instructional time;
- Improved student access to learning by differentiated instruction and teaching materials;

Educational Leadership  
Assessment and Curriculum  
Digital Transformation  
Big Data Analytics



## KEY SKILLS

### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Data-Driven Instruction
- Technology Adoption
- Professional Development
- Instructional Coaching
- Curriculum Development
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Strategic Planning
- Team Supervision
- Policy Creation and Implementation
- Accreditation
- Resource Management
- Budget Oversight
- Regulatory Compliance
- Project Management

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- Result-oriented with superb leadership and communication skills;
- Cultivating trusting and productive relationships with students, parents, teachers, and staff;
- Dedicated and proactive approach with strong commitment to creating high-quality educational standards;
- Introducing innovations resulting in better student performance, motivated faculty, and a stronger community;
- Tracking academic progress through technology enhancements to improve student achievement;
- Implementing contemporary classroom evaluation methods and strategies for mentoring and improvement;
- Developing teacher and student digital literacy via job-embedded technologies;
- Knowledge of a wide range of effective teaching styles with a student focused-approach to work;
- Researching new topic areas and maintaining up-to-date subject knowledge;
- Fully aware of cultural backgrounds;
- Highly organised with the ability to lead a team of teachers;
- A reflective practitioner, keen to listen to advice and ideas;
- A creative approach to problem solving;
- Ability to work in a team but also as an individual interdependently;
- Comfortable working under pressure in a changing environment;
- A committed and organised professional.

- Improved student outcomes on assessments due to proper alignment to curriculum standards and levels of mastery;
- Improved parental involvement and student ownership of their own learning;
- Improved instruction by continuous teacher professional development.

**GEMS Al Khaleej National School, Dubai, UAE**

**ASSESSMENT DIRECTOR**

*January 2017 – August 2020*

**Achievements:**

- Developed and implemented assessment systems for collecting and analyzing data to allow for classroom, department, and school-wide data-driven decisions;
- Implemented revised high school curriculum for improved course availability, career pathways, and credit system alignment;
- Developed and implemented a 3-year whole-school digital transformation action plan;
- Developed systems for triangulation between various data sources to drive instruction and school decisions;
- Created and implemented systems and processes for data triangulation between internal and external (MAP & CAT4) assessments;

**Measured impact on student outcomes:**

- Overall improvement in student attainment and progress in core subjects as a result of improvement of relevant curriculum as well as teaching and learning;
- Reduced internal-external assessment gap and instilled culture academic honesty;
- Improved inspection evaluation results;
- More effective teacher use of data to support lesson planning and delivery;
- Improved student behavior as a result of higher levels of student engagement and student ownership of learning;

**Bulgarian Ministry of Education, Bulgaria**

**SCHOOL INSPECTOR**

*September 2012 – July 2015*

**EIS International School, Sofia, Bulgaria**

**PYP COORDINATOR, MYP/DP TEACHER**

*December 2011 – December 2015*

**Oakwood High School, Ohio, USA**

**MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHER**

*August 2005 – July 2007*

**PERSONAL SKILLS**

- Observant
- Excellent communicator
- Tactful and articulate
- Problem solving oriented
- Excellent organizational skills
- Patient
- High levels of integrity
- Self-motivated
- Ambitious
- Well presented
- Innovative
- Team player
- Positive attitude
- Always evolving
- Well adapted to change

**AFFILIATIONS**

- Rotary International *Since 2007*
- Mensa International *Since 2004*
- Phi Beta Delta (AUBG Chapter) *Since 2008*

**REFERENCES**

- On [www.pillossof.com](http://www.pillossof.com)

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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- [www.pillossof.com](http://www.pillossof.com)

**AVAILABILITY**

- Immediate

**CAREER STATEMENT**

- “My greatest strength is my ability to provide a stimulating, caring and consistent environment for students via innovative transformational leadership with the objective of assuring the highest educational value.”

**ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS** *Eva Pillossof*

- PhD Education  
University of Stirling, Scotland  
**2020-(2023)**
- M.Sc. and ProfDoc Big Data Science  
University of Stirling, Scotland  
**2019-(2021)**
- M.Sc. Statistics  
Technical University of Sofia, Bulgaria  
**2016-2017**
- Technical University of Sofia  
Teaching Qualification in Natural Science  
**Since 2011**
- BA Mathematics and Economics  
American University in Bulgaria  
**2007-2011**
- BS Biochemistry and Physics  
University of Dayton, OH  
**2002-2005**

## **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY**

Education is my true calling and has been a part of me ever since I taught my little sister how to read when she was four years old. I cannot remember a time when I wasn't involved in education in one form or another. I have taught orphans, children with disabilities, students whose parents could not afford good education. I have taught in public schools, in private schools, in language and education centers. I have taught in a refugee camp in Ethiopia, on a boat in Canada, in a hospital in Nigeria, over Skype in Mongolia and Chile, at my home, in the school's backyard. Because a true calling knows no time zones, pays no attention to locations, and can be done equally well on an interactive multimedia board and with a stick in the sand. All it asks for is desire, dedication, passion, persistence...and a smile!

Unfortunately, under the pressures of holistically being responsible for a school, a lot of educational leaders tend to forget what it felt like being in the classroom. This is why I believe that every school leader should be involved in teaching, regardless of the extent, because it is important for the maintenance of perspective. True leadership facilitates discussion and collaboration, however it is impossible to collaborate if all crossover areas are completely eliminated as it happens more often than not when a teacher moves up the school hierarchy.

Unlike other sectors, education is a field in which leadership is particularly complex – while a company CEO can be directional on many occasions, an education leader has to be inspirational, empowering, passionate, and above all teachable. Therefore, it is critical that an educational leader values transparency in communication, fosters growth, celebrates diversity, embraces differences of opinion, holds themselves to the highest ethical standards, acknowledges their weaknesses, and continually seeks ways to improve their leadership skills.

Additionally, an educational leader has to be the embodiment of equitable resource allocation and access to learning. It is important that funds are adequately distributed to ensure effective distribution between all areas of schooling. The implementation and use of teaching aids should be monitored to assess the extent to which they facilitate learning. Staff should be allocated appropriately based on experience and qualifications. Growth opportunities should be provided to all personnel in order to guarantee retention.

My goal as an educational leader is to create a safe and secure school environment with properly allocated resources where teachers are empowered to realize their true potential; use data to drive instruction, assessment, and student achievement; educate rather than teach; transform education to provide learning, understanding, and applying rather than memorization; implement the true instruments of change for 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

It is only by doing the latter, that, I believe, educational leaders can accomplish the task of providing well-rounded, individualized, quality education to all students, meanwhile creating a positive school climate that is intellectually nurturing, encourages student ownership of learning, and develops a passion for lifelong learning.

I wholeheartedly believe that education is the only viable way societies have of creating sustainable development and change. I am also convinced that most of learning happens in our mistakes, rather than our successes, which is why as a leader it is important for me to create an environment where both students and teachers are free to try new ideas without fear of failure or punitive action. Further to that, I understand the power of leading by example – I practice it every day with students, teachers, and other school leaders. It creates a sense of equality, of shared purpose, of togetherness, and as such it has the power to completely transform schools and the education delivered in them.

## EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP Q&A

### 1. Can you describe your best lesson or an outstanding lesson? Kindly outline what it entailed and why it was such a lesson.

One of the very first actions I took as an acting math HoD in Al Khaleej National School was to develop and administer a survey with the students and parents of Grades 6 to 12 in order to ascertain areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum delivery. The survey consisted of 25 7-point scale statements and was administered online in both English and Arabic, as I did not want language acquisition to affect the results. The aspects of education it measured were:

Teaching – how much use students saw in learning specific mathematics concepts, how much attention teachers were giving them if they were struggling, how often they would get disengaged during lessons or wish they were in a different class, how much difficulty parents were experiencing assisting their child with the content, how parents perceived the teachers' diligence in providing feedback and necessary materials for students to independently study at home, etc.

Personal perceptions – how would students rate themselves as “having a brain for mathematics”, how would parents rate their children on the same, etc.

The end results were eye-opening, both for myself and the department. Over 90% of students thought they were bad in math, because they don't have some special math talent! Therefore, I created an enrichment program for the teachers in my department under which I would plan all lessons together with them (in a 3-person PLC including two teachers and myself) and I would deliver a minimum of 3 lessons together with each teacher throughout the week.

Together we redesigned the lesson plan template completely (it was rolled out to the whole school in the following academic year) and sustainably transformed the department, which resulted in both progress and attainment moving from Acceptable to Good and Very Good in the KHDA inspection that year. Furthermore, out of 19 math lessons observed that year, 11 were rated as Very Good, 4 as Good, and 4 as Outstanding, a significant improvement from the previous year when out of 16 observed lessons, 12 were Acceptable, 2 were Weak, and 2 were Good – 9 out of the 11 teachers in the department were common over both inspections.

An outstanding lesson should have all required elements:

- Lesson objective on the board written in a student-friendly language
- Curriculum standard displayed to be unpacked with and explored by students through open-ended questions
- Lesson vocabulary should be introduced – a particularly important point for ELL students
- Real-life and UAE connections
- Cross-curricular links
- Differentiated instruction, using CAT4 data for student grouping
- Differentiated activities, using MAP data for student grouping
- Student collaboration
- Meaningful use of technology
- Open-ended questions
- Mid-lesson check for understanding
- Data-generating formative assessment at the end of the lesson
- Allotted time for student reflection

But what is more important is that the lesson should be divided into four sections, not necessarily in this order:

- “I do” – a teacher centered more traditional part of the lesson which contains direct instruction and teacher talk; this part of the lesson should not exceed 10 minutes in a 50-minute lesson
- “We do” – the part of the lesson where students and teacher achieve things together or the teacher guides students through independent/group research; activities in this portion of the lesson should use CAT4 data for differentiation
- “You do together” – students collaborate to accomplish tasks and solve problems
- “You do alone” – students work independently towards a goal; typically the majority of this work is done outside the classroom

One of the best lessons I have delivered was the very first lesson part of the math department enrichment program. My main goal was to show the teachers that students can learn mathematics without necessarily being pinned to their desks, facing forward, not making a sound, writing equations neatly in their copybooks. As per the pacing guide students were supposed to learn how to graph linear equations and understand how the  $y$  variable depends on the  $x$  variable. The weather was nice so I took the decision to teach outside. Students were first asked to spend 10 minutes doing independent research on plotting points on a graph – they were allowed to use either books from the library or scholarly research online. They were all expected to take detail the process into steps and provide one example of a linear equation. The second task of 10 minutes involved students exchanging their notes and plotting the given linear equation on the ground using colorful chalk by following the steps their partner listed. After completion, they were given 5 minutes to evaluate each other's work in groups and discuss how well the steps they wrote outlined the graphing process as well as where they could be improved. Students were paired in heterogeneous groups as per their CAT4 aptitudes – a high performing non-verbal student with a low performing non-verbal student. We then had a whole-class discussion for 7 minutes which resulted in us collectively listing the steps for graphing a linear equation by using the students' group work lists. Students' understanding was checked by a simple “thumbs up, thumbs down”. Students who were still struggling with the concept were pulled out in a small group with me for re-teaching before moving on to the final task. For the last task students were divided into groups of 3 and provided with colored chalk, two 10m-pieces of different colored thread, and a linear equation. These groups were homogeneous and based on MAP scores. Each group had to draw a large coordinate system on the ground using the chalk. One student was tied loosely across the waist with each color thread and positioned inside the coordinate system and allowed to move only along the linear equation's graph. The other two students, while still holding on to their ends of the threads were allowed to move only across either the  $x$ -axis or the  $y$ -axis. The thread lines had to always be maintained perpendicular to the axes. The students were then asked to explore how one of them moving would affect the others. At the end of the lesson, students used their devices to take a 3-questions online quiz, the results of which were used to feedback into the lesson on the following day. A video of the lesson can be seen on: [www.pillossof.com/videos](http://www.pillossof.com/videos)

## **2. Can you describe effective Child Protection practices? What challenges might be encountered and how you would respond to such?**

An effective Child Protection Policy is one that adheres to the 5 P's:

- Prevention – an effective policy should be proactive rather than reactive and attempt to create an environment that would, as much as possible, not expose children to risk in the first place
- Paramountcy – child protection policies should serve the needs of children first and foremost
- Partnership – implementing this policy, provided its practices are effective, should not be enforced, but rather done in collaboration with students

- Protection – good practices should protect children against neglect, sexual, emotional, verbal and physical abuse, as well as domestic violence and cyberbullying
- Parental Responsibility – involving parents is critical as they should both be aware of what is happening in school but also have the opportunity to refer to the school in case of abuse off campus

Along with these, the policy should also include principles of child's development, non-discrimination, inclusiveness, and children's participation. Finally, it should always serve to the best interest of children.

Cultural specificities can definitely be a challenge for implementing a proper Child Protection Policy. For instance, a parent hitting their child is a common sight in Eastern Europe (decreasing over the last decade, but still not out of the ordinary). Teachers coming from that part of the world would require training and a lot more explanation than those from US, UK, Canada or Australia. Parents who have recently moved into the country would have to be carefully approached in case an incident is suspected. This is only one example of how such policies should be treated with caution as the mere definition of child abuse is vastly culturally dependent.

### **3. Can you describe effective teaching, learning and assessment practices?**

A lot of the educational research is dedicated to what makes effective teaching and learning practices. Below are a few of the ones which in my experience work best:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| • Modelling                                   | • Using spaced teaching                                   |
| • Allowing room for mistakes                  | • Providing constructive feedback                         |
| • Employing group work                        | • Creating a good school climate                          |
| • Learning from experience                    | • Establishing reciprocal relationships with families     |
| • Providing students the opportunity to teach | • Understanding individual student needs                  |
| • Using visual aids                           | • Caring  |
| • Integrating technology                      | • Recognizing positive intent behind challenging behavior |
| • Implementing inquiry-based learning         | • Promoting reasoning                                     |
| • Explain why something is being taught       | • Recognizing positive intent behind                      |
| • Communicating high expectations             | • Instilling independent learning skills                  |
| • Building relationships                      |   |

Assessment is a bit more complicated, because it requires understanding of data, data analytics, and some basic principles of statistics. I do not believe in assessment as an end goal, but rather a means. Successful assessment should be used to provide critical information to teachers on the level of mastery of curriculum standards taught (if reported properly, it will provide the same information to parents). This is why formative assessment in all of its forms is so important. Additionally, when planning out the academic year teachers should plan for a variety of assessment types in order to provide students with different opportunities to express their knowledge – preferably this plan should include at least one long-term research project for each subject. Summative assessments should be less rare than formative ones and must be well-structured, planned, and aligned to both the curriculum standards and the teaching that occurs in the classroom.

### **4. Can you describe having good partnerships with parents and the community?**

Parents work best with a school's leadership when their voice is heard, when their concerns are addressed, and when they are involved in the decision making process. For that, I believe it is important to establish a level of trust by being completely transparent. A parent council to which the leadership reports on a monthly basis in face-to-face meetings is an efficient strategy to get parents on

board. Keeping an open door policy makes the leadership team more accessible and the morning meet and greet familiarizes leaders with parents. Regular informational sessions keep parents up to date and result in excellent feedback from the community on a larger scale. Communication should be consistent and regular – a weekly newsletter always sent on Thursdays, or a monthly one always sent on the last day of each month. Last, but not least, it is critical to involve parents as volunteers in school activities – events preparation, career days, student-led conferences, classroom observations, MAP proctoring, afterschool reading club, and chaperoning trips.

### 5. Can you describe effective leadership and how to build leadership capacity as a senior leader?

As described in the answer to the first question, effective leadership empowers teachers and is guided by the proverb “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” It takes time, it takes patience, and it takes self-control, especially in stressful times when it seems easier and faster to do something yourself than explain to someone how to do it. Much like when building relationships with parents, trust and transparency are key. I do not believe in autocratic leadership. In fact I have trouble considering it to be leadership at all. Transactional leadership (which I also consider to be a management type, but not a leadership style) is highly unsustainable – void of the reward/punishment the entire system crumbles. A truly transformational leader knows when to be democratic, coaching, servant, bureaucratic, visionary, pacesetter, or laissez-faire.

Leadership capacity is built through delegation, shared responsibility, and the overall development of a team. Much like teachers provide a safe environment where students can learn from their mistakes, good leaders should assure their teams are empowered to create their own solutions. Power should be shared and micromanaging avoided at all costs. Leadership is a service, not a rank and is measured by what the team, not the individual, accomplishes. Sustainable leaders learn to listen, because if they don't they quickly find themselves surrounded by people who have nothing to say. They lead by example. They are not afraid to admit their mistakes. They recognize talents, make requests (not demands), co-develop SMART goals, and establish a system of collaborative reporting and feedback. They celebrate achievements. The true attestation to great leadership however is a team where the team is uniform and the “boss” is unrecognizable.

For an insight of who I am as a leader, below is my DISC profile (the complete report can be read here: [www.pillossof.com/about-me](http://www.pillossof.com/about-me)).

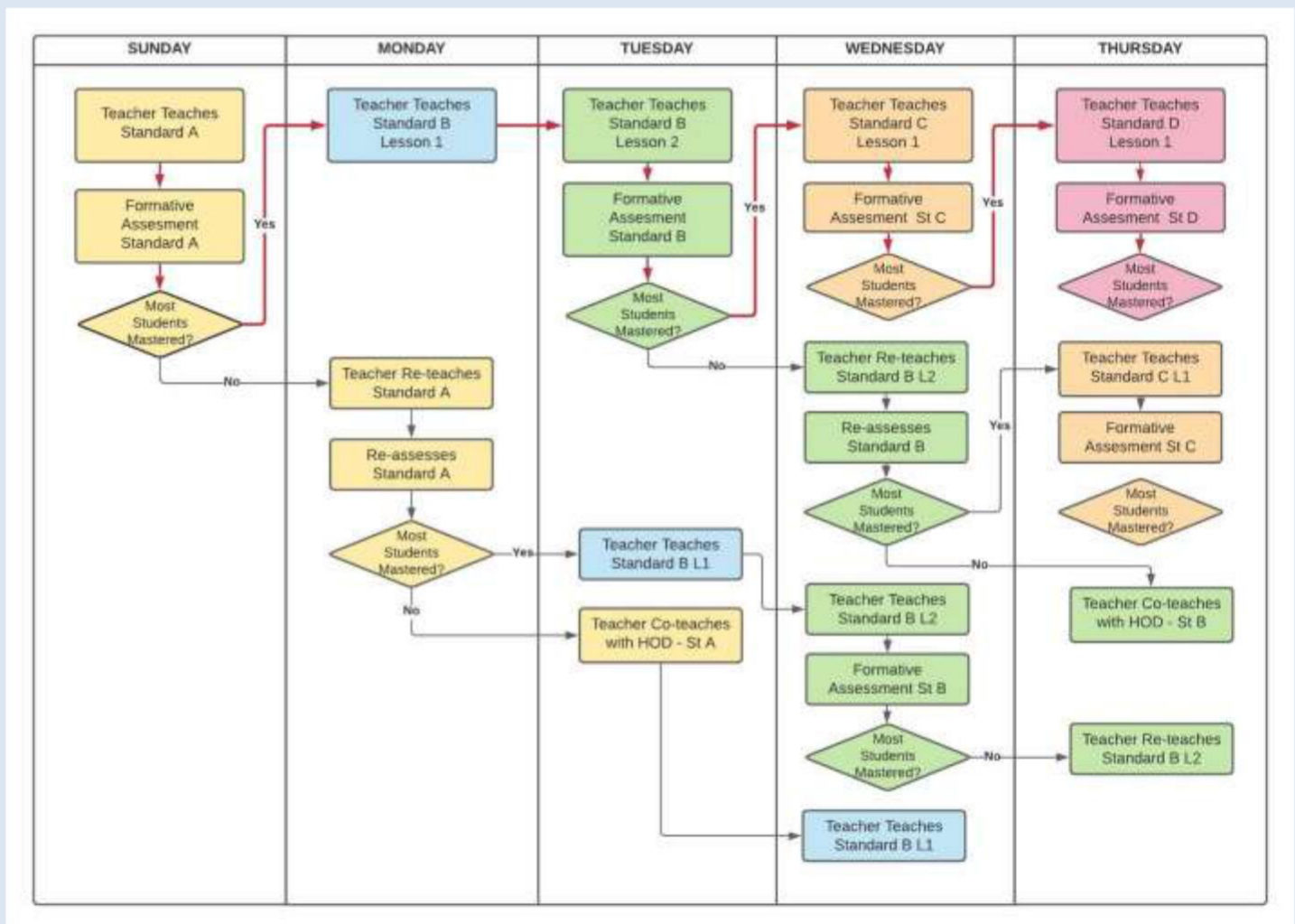
Driving	Inspiring	Relaxed	Cautious
Ambitious	Magnetic	Passive	Careful
Pioneering	Enthusiastic	Patient	Exacting
Strong-Willed	Persuasive	Possessive	Systematic
Determined	Convincing	Predictable	Accurate
Competitive	Poised	Consistent	Open-Minded
Decisive	Optimistic	Steady	Balanced Judgment
Venturesome	Trusting	Stable	Diplomatic
<b>Dominance</b>	<b>Influencing</b>	<b>Steadiness</b>	<b>Compliance</b>
Calculating	Reflective	Mobile	Firm
Cooperative	Factual	Active	Independent
Hesitant	Calculating	Restless	Self-Willed
Cautious	Skeptical	Impatient	Obstinate
Agreeable	Logical	Pressure-Oriented	Unsystematic
Modest	Suspicious	Eager	Uninhibited
Peaceful	Matter-of-Fact	Flexible	Arbitrary
Unobtrusive	Incisive	Impulsive	Unbending

## 6. Can you describe how you envision raising student achievement?

There are three main components to raising student achievement – school climate, outstanding teaching, and use of educational data. The full presentation for my educational data research can be found here: [www.pillossof.com/strategic-planning](http://www.pillossof.com/strategic-planning)

Student achievement data is one of my specialties and in my career as an educational data scientist I found that more often than not school professionals view data as a simple description of what happened. Boys in Grade 6 have an acceptable attainment in English, because their MAP Reading scores indicate 76% of them met the expectations by achieving the 41<sup>st</sup> percentile, however only 14% exceeded the expectations by reaching at least the 61<sup>st</sup> percentile. Assessment data can do so much more than lead to purposeless statements like the latter. It can tell a story – who, when, how, why. It can be used to make predictions and generate actionable insights. Making full use of educational data (not only assessment, but surveys, attendance, and any other measurable quantity) can and does sustainably improve student achievement.

The below diagram best describes the process of how formative assessment data should be used to improve student attainment.



## 7. Can you describe how you envision 21<sup>st</sup> century learning?

21<sup>st</sup> century learning refers to the knowledge, skills, and use of technology that will position current students to succeed in a world of collaboration, critical thinking, grit, adaptability, self-discipline, and perseverance. Yuval Noah Harari's view on the future might be grim, but it is accurate. As jobs are becoming increasingly more automated, as information is readily available at our fingertips, as artificial intelligence and deep learning neural networks use massive amounts of data to make

decisions a human being is incapable of comprehending, people's ability to redefine themselves will be quintessential. This is why it is crucial for students today to learn to be independent thinkers, to know how to find necessary information in the Internet of Things, to possess the capability of distinguishing between fake or manipulative information, to be lifelong learners, and to preserve high levels of child-like curiosity.

### **8. Can you describe your vision on inclusion and what this would look like?**

One of the engineers of the school inspection framework in the UAE told me in discussion last year that every single classroom in every single school around the world has at least one child with special educational needs in it. Being a person who needs some convincing with tangible evidence, especially in such general and grandiose statements, I did the math. I compiled all the definitions of special educational needs I could find and used data from US psychoeducational assessments over the last 5 years (number of conducted assessments by state, and number of positive assessments), I factored in underassessment and underreporting, and I compared that to the database of all the schools (I used the total number of students and student-to-teacher ratios to approximate the number of classes) in the country by state. Indeed, the analysis indicates the statement's validity is highly probable!

Taking that into consideration naturally changed my perspective. I never doubted the fact that all children should be valued equally, treated with respect, and provided real learning opportunities. Having a fresh look into classes, I started making observations to see if I could spot children with special needs in each of my school's classrooms. I did, but unfortunately the teachers hadn't. So I started working with the SENCo and the SEND department on developing guidelines for teachers to follow to modify expectations. I referred back to my school days – truly, I could not run a mile as per my teachers' expectations or the norms in under 6 minutes, but I was doing rather well in other aspects of PE class; therefore, I would have needed modification for only a few curriculum standards. But if that made sense for a PE class, why shouldn't it for a math class? After all some students are spectacular in numeracy, but have no special orientation and struggle to visualize an inner diagonal of a cube. The SEND team and I worked hard with the math HoD and the two Grade 7 teachers. We developed a process which the teachers could independently follow to modify expectations and guided them in applying it to their classes. Between the Fall and Winter MAP testing, all students who were performing in the 1<sup>st</sup> percentile were lifted. In fact the lowest performing child was in the 11<sup>th</sup> percentile.

I envision a school where all teachers modify their expectations towards all of their students for every class. Then no fish shall ever again be asked to climb a tree.

### **9. Can you describe using data effectively? Kindly refer to your experience with MAP as well any other effective assessment resources.**

The use of formative assessment data to inform instruction is described in the flowchart of Question 6. MAP results can and should be used for both long-term and short-term planning. For lessons teachers should refer to the learning continuum to establish the students' level of mastery of a particular standard prior to actually teaching it. This will improve their lesson delivery and better align the written to the taught curriculum, because teaching will be relevant to the students' performance. Using other MAP reports for pacing guide creation is also very convenient and beneficial. More aggregate reports show entire domains where a large group of students requires support. Further to that a very in-depth analysis opens the doors to sectioning students off into streams where their weaknesses can be directly targeted. Strategies to handling streams vary – students who struggle a lot could have more lessons of a particular subject throughout the week than their peers, they could have custom designed drill lessons; on the other hand, students who are consistently outperforming could be given the opportunity to sit for a higher grade subject (for example Algebra I in Grade 8).

CAT4 is another valuable source of data which gives insight into students' aptitudes (often incorrectly labeled as abilities) for learning. Although there are a lot more types of aptitudes than the assessment examines, such as auditory, kinesthetic-active, and interpersonal, the four it does consider are sufficient for most classrooms, provided teachers do individual modifications as well. I prefer using CAT4 during teaching (versus MAP which I mostly use during learning) and divide students into type A, B, C, or D, where:

- Type A is a High Verbal, Low Non-verbal student
- Type B is a High Verbal, High Non-verbal student
- Type C is a Low Verbal, High Non-verbal student
- Type D is a Low Verbal, Low Non-Verbal student

If I were to teach rhyming patterns in sonnets, I would approach these four types of students in very different way, yet achieve the same level of understanding. I would assign a *Type A* student a piece of reading material (for the most part solid text) which explains the concept. An appropriate task for a *Type B* student would be to identify the rhyming pattern and write their own sonnet with it. I would have a *Type C* student to use shapes to identify rhymes in a given sonnet and then describe the pattern. I would ask a *Type D* student to assemble large pre-cut puzzle-like pieces of a sonnet where the rhymes have been highlighted in matching colors and then record the observed pattern. At the end of such an activity I would expect that all of the students have achieved the lesson objective with the same level of understanding, despite taking different routes to reach there. On a side note, it is important to note that when class allocations are being done, it is a must to leverage CAT4 data to create heterogeneous classes.

Other exciting sources of data are also assessments like WIDA, online resources that result in Lexile and Quantile scores, running records, and platform engagement reports.

An assessment resource which I developed with Canon and Scan2x allowed us to track the progress and development of students through the curriculum standards for English, Math, Science, Arabic, and Islamic subjects on diagnostic, end-of-quarter/end-of-semester, and final exams. We created an adapted bubble sheet consisting of two back to back pages – one where students enter answers to multiple choice questions and another where teachers bubble in the number of points a student received on each open-ended question. The entire student paper, containing the question paper, the bubble sheet, and the answer sheet where the student wrote the answers to the open-ended questions, is then scanned. We installed professional heavy duty scanners which could go through 100 sheets of paper in one minute and scan front and back simultaneously. Once the software processes the scanned images using OMR (Optical Mark Recognition), the teacher has to verify the process was completed properly. At this stage, four things happen:

- The soft copies of the exams are stored in long-term archive, where they can be accessed for 10 years
- The teacher receives an email with an excel sheet of the overall results for each student, which was built fully compatible with the school's reporting system to allow for direct import and no manual grade-entry
- The parents receive a password protected copy of the scanned document on their registered email address
- The data broken down by standard and DOK level is migrated into PowerBI (a visualization software) where teachers and leaders have anywhere access to the dashboards which allow them to inform instruction and school decisions; you can see Dashboard 3 on <http://tinyurl.com/dataakns>

**10. Can you describe what you envision to a typical day in your role, should you be appointed?**

I am passionate about standing at the school's main gate in the morning and greeting students, parents and teachers as they arrive to school. I try to arrive at least half an hour before teachers are supposed to. That gives me a chance to make a round of the building, enjoy a cup of coffee and get into the mindset of the day. My days often begin with parent coffee mornings or information sessions. I do like to spend as much of my time as possible inside the classroom whether it is to teach, collaborate with teachers, or have observations. I would therefore like to see myself continue to do that for at least half of the school day. I am very active during break time – it gives me an opportunity to interact with both students and teachers in a less formal environment. I would like to dedicate some part of my day to one-on-one meetings with teachers and department heads where we review lesson plans, discuss challenges they are facing with academics or with student behavior. I reserve an hour or so around dismissal time for open door parent meetings. I try to spend the rest of the school day in professional development or scheduled team meetings.

Any lesson planning, grading, written feedback, data analysis, or other concentration-demanding activities I typically finish either at school once teachers leave, at a nice café if a few of us need to collaborate (online meeting have become a lovely alternative), or at home if I need to put my feet up.

## DETAILED US CURRICULUM EXPERIENCE

### Oakwood High School, Ohio (2005-2007)

After graduating university, I got my teaching license and became a teacher of Middle and High School Science and Math. I was selected, along with three other teachers from the school, to trial, pilot, and report on the then-developing Common Core Initiative. As part of this project we were required to teach sample standards with specified resources, assess and track student progress, and send monthly reports to the state committee with detailed evidence, including lesson plans, assessment samples, student work, video recordings of lessons, and student achievement results.

### Kardan Schools, Kabul (2018-present)

I joined Kardan as a consultant with a few three-week professional development sessions in my first year. I was appointed as the group's Director of Education in my second year of working for the organization and would spend one week per month on ground as well as the months of June, July, and August which are mid-year as per the Afghani academic calendar. I moved to Kabul permanently in the summer of 2020. When I initially began my work with Kardan the education being delivered was as traditional as it could get — teacher centered classrooms, input-based instruction, no curriculum, no proper assessment, no differentiated instruction, and low student outcomes. It is only the current political developments that force me to leave the country and I do so with tears in my eyes because of the numerous achievements the Kardan team and I managed to accomplish, the key ones of which are listed below:

- Completely redesigned the organizational structure of the schools to include an academic, a pastoral, and an operational leadership teams;
- Established a head office structure to align the academics and operations across the schools in the group;
- Engaged the group in collaborations with international organizations such as Education Above All, Yalda Hakim Foundation, Georgetown University, USAID, UNICEF, Infrontier, Music in Secondary Schools Trust, and others;
- Led the staff selection process to assure the highest provision for teaching and learning
- Designed a 360-evaluation for all academic staff;
- Conducted regular academic trainings for all leadership and teaching staff;
- Held full responsibility over budgeting, student fee collection, financial aid, and school staff salary scales;
- Initiated accreditation processes with IB and NEASC;
- Mentored the Head Office Development team in the writing and implementation of over 200 school policies and procedures;
- Developed reporting processes on all levels of the organization to improve accountability;
- Secured over USD 600,000 in funding from international foundations;
- Collaborated on new school campus design with architect and engineering teams;
- Redesigned the curriculum to align with Common Core State Standards;
- Established parent council and significantly improved parent relationships and communication;
- Introduced and implemented Health and Safety policies and procedures across the schools;
- Developed and introduced healthy lifestyles for students through redesigning cafeteria menu options and implementing school-wide sports programs;
- Designed and implemented a Learning Experience Platform (LXP) across the group, which allowed all schools to flawlessly conducted online lessons during quarantine and the subsequent periods of blended learning;
- Transformed assessment practices to include assessment for, of, and as learning;
- Reengineered the report cards and the way student achievement is tracked to reflect learning outcomes and have full alignment to IB requirements;

## Al Khaleej National School, Dubai (2016-2020)

I stated working with AKNS in May, 2016 long-distance until January, 2017 when I moved to UAE. When I joined, the school was just beginning its transformation from a barely acceptable status. As part of the Senior Leadership Team I played an integral and instrumental role to a vast number of changes that resulted in the school being on the cusp of very good now.

### **1. Assessment and Student Achievement**

- a. Developed and implemented internal and external assessment processes and policies that would guarantee reliable, valid results;
- b. Established a culture of assessment for learning vs. assessment of learning, including training teachers, HoDs, and other Senior Leaders into formative assessment methods and strategies
- c. Monitored and improved the use of formative assessment in the classroom via lesson observations, feedback to teachers and HoDs, and analysis of data generated from various digital formative assessment sources;
- d. Worked with teachers and HoDs towards the consistent use of formative assessments and data generated from them in order to modify their lesson plans and pacing guides;
- e. Developed and implemented Teaching and Learning Binders (TLB) for each teacher with the full set of data and in-depth data analysis for all of their classes;
- f. Led a series of PD sessions for all teachers and HoDs in the use of data inside the classroom, the use of TLBs for differentiation;
- g. Developed the school-wide strategy for the use of CAT4 data for measuring student aptitude, correlating it to MAP and internal results, and working with teachers and HoDs to achieve intricate in-lesson differentiation, accurate IEPs, and personalized challenge and support for students;
- h. Trained teachers and HoDs in the development of various assessments and questioning techniques as per Depth of Knowledge Levels and Bloom's Taxonomy;
- i. Worked with HODs to restructure assessment rubrics to be precise, specific, quantifiable, and objective;
- j. Introduced progress assessments for all grades in subjects that are assessed only internally, such as Arabic Language and Islamic Studies, to measure overall progress through the grade-level appropriate academic standards;
- k. In collaboration with the rest of the SLT transitioned the school into assessing, evaluating, and providing feedback on students 'progress through the academic standards by directly linking every summative and formative assessment to one or more standards across all subjects and grade levels;
- l. In collaboration with the HoDs regularly reviewed, modified and adapted the curriculum based on the internal and external assessment results;
- m. Developed and in collaboration with other SLT members implemented a literacy streaming program for Grades 4-10 in English, Arabic, and Mathematics to close the attainment gap;
- n. Together with teachers organized student events, training sessions and seminars to involve students in tracking their own progress and being aware of their strengths and weaknesses;
- o. Developed and implemented student-friendly progress trackers with SMART target setting, revisited on several occasions during the academic year in individualized parent-teacher-student meetings and student-led conferences;
- p. Created and developed writable data wall displays for each classroom where students could record their external assessment results during the year, set targets, and monitor their own progress;

- q. Redesigned and restructured external assessment events (MAP) to allow sufficient time and appropriate environment for students to demonstrate their highest potential;
- r. Developed an incentive program for students based on their progress and attainment results on external assessments;
- s. Incorporated MAP results into the subject overall grades to further incentivize students by creating a KHDA approved mathematical formula involving 4 components – RIT score, percentile, normative growth, and personal growth;
- t. Created, developed, and implemented an auto-grading solution which automatically grades and displays students' performance on summative assessments by academic standard on an 8-tier scale in Power BI;
- u. Transformed the school's reporting to parents to include real-time student results and feedback;
- v. Developed and implemented a system of weighted assignments to provide increasingly more valid internal assessment results;
- w. Worked with teachers and HoDs to diversify the assessment types to include DOK4 long-term projects, research, and writing-intensive pieces;
- x. Implemented a unified assessment calendar to avoid assessment overcrowding and to allow traceability by all stakeholders;
- y. Reported to and discussed with the parent council and the board of governors the school's data, progress, and attainment;
- z. Wrote all assessment and students achievement SEF sections and actively participated in all DSIB inspector meetings.

**As a result of the above:**

**Assessment moved from Acceptable to Good;**

**DSIB inspectors highlighted the assessment systems, data analysis, and use of data as one of the top three school strengths;**

**Progress and attainment moved from Weak and Acceptable to Good and Very Good in different phases and subjects;**

**Teaching for effective learning moved from Acceptable to Good.**

**The above further significantly aided in:**

**SEND provision moving from Acceptable to Good;**

**Relationships with parents moving from Acceptable to Good;**

**The school's overall rating moving from Acceptable to Good.**

**2. National Agenda Parameter**

- a. Developed the school-wide National Agenda Action Plans;
- b. Worked on the School Improvement Action Plans in collaboration with the Superintendent;
- c. Integrated the National Agenda Parameter into the school's daily life by working with teachers and HoDs to integrate it into their lessons;
- d. In collaboration with the English Language HoDs worked on aligning the ELA curriculum to both PISA and PIRLS as well as initiating numerous Reading and Literacy initiatives through the academic year across the school;
- e. In collaboration with the Math and Science HoDs worked on aligning the subject curricula to both PISA and TIMSS;
- f. Led informational sessions, discussion meetings, and seminars for both students and parents on the content and importance of the National Agenda Parameter;
- g. Developed intricate data analysis methods to allow for targeted differentiation and appropriate levels of challenge and support.

**As a result of the above:**

**The National Agenda Parameter moved from Below Expectations to Meeting Expectations;  
Students consistently improved their results on benchmark assessments; Student results exceeded the UAE national average.**

**3. Curriculum**

- a. In collaboration with teachers and HoDs modified the curriculum in accordance with student results in external assessments, including SAT, TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS, and SAT;
- b. In collaboration with other SLT developed unified lesson plans across grade levels and subjects to better target the teaching and learning of academic standards;
- c. Led training sessions for teachers on unwrapping the standards;
- d. In collaboration with teachers and HoDs worked on defining grade-wise power standards for English, Math, and Science subjects;
- e. Worked with HoDs in planning the curriculum progression in English, Math, and Science across grade levels;
- f. In collaboration with other SLT improved the number, quality, and quantity of provided electives to satisfy a wider range of career paths;
- g. Implemented a graduation tracker through which credits and course requirements to be monitored;
- h. In collaboration with other SLT developed and implemented a High School course directory aligned to the US curriculum, providing the desired variety of courses, and a system of pre-requisites and co-requisites to allow students to choose their own course enrollment irrespective of their grade level.

**As a result of the above:**

**Curriculum design and implementation moved from Acceptable to Good; Curriculum adaptation moved from Acceptable to Very Good.**

**4. Digital Transformation and Innovation**

- a. Introduced a centralized BYOD program for Grades 4-12;
- b. Introduced, implemented, and maintained a school-wide School Information System, Virtual Learning Environment, data analysis and data visualization systems;
- c. Worked with HoDs and teachers to consistently and efficiently use of all newly introduced systems;
- d. Worked with HoDs on Digital target setting for teachers, where the targets were updated on a bi-weekly basis in PLC meetings;
- e. Assured the effective and efficient use of all digital tools, including online book editions, online supplementary educational resources, school-owned educational hardware, and student-owned devices;
- f. Transformed the ICT curriculum for all grade levels to include coding, starting as early as KG1;
- g. Effectively procured and utilized a supplementary budget of 1.5 million AED to modernize the school's IT infrastructure, including re-designing the CCTV network to exclude blind spots on campus, re-cabling the school to provide a WiFi access point in each classroom, equipping each teaching space with an Interactive Whiteboard, and updating all computer labs stations;
- h. Developed and implementing a software for scanning and analyzing summative assessments with both MCQs and open-ended questions;
- i. Implemented a Device Management Software allowing teachers to monitor and control student activity during lessons;
- j. Implemented a digital system for school-wide incident reporting in lessons, during breaks, and outside of school hours;

- k. Spearheaded the Distance Learning initiative in terms of technical execution, student, teacher, and parent access, lesson development, content delivery methods, synchronous and asynchronous lessons, and teacher training.

**As a result of the above:**

**The school was rated Developed in the Distance Learning Inspection;**

**The school's use of technology in and outside lessons was highlighted as one of the school's strengths;**

**Student innovation skills moved from Acceptable to Good and Very Good.**

**5. Leadership**

- a. Alongside other SLT performed formal and informal lesson observations, gave feedback to teachers, and contributed to teachers' and HoDs' end-of-year evaluations;
- b. Participated actively in all parent council meetings;
- c. Was involved in interviewing, hiring, and firing of teachers and school staff;
- d. Alongside other SLT wrote SEF in preparation for DSIB inspections;
- e. Alongside with other SLT wrote all NEASC accreditation reports.

## **DETAILED IB CURRICULUM EXPERIENCE**

### EIS International School, Sofia (2011-2015)

I was an MYP and DP teacher of Mathematics, Science, Physics, Chemistry and Biology from 2011 to 2013. In this role I:

- Developed and implemented interactive learning media to increase student understanding of the course materials;
- Developed and implemented assessment rubrics;
- Routinely met with parents regarding in-class issues to discuss solutions;
- Performed student background reviews to develop tailored lessons based on student needs;
- Established clear objectives for all lessons, units, and projects;
- Employed a broad range of instructional techniques to retain student interest and maximize learning;
- Taught students to utilize problem solving methods;
- 98% of my students successfully passed their DP exams;
- Some of my students were the national toppers for the DP exams for both years in which I was teaching the DP program.

Furthermore, in the period between 2013 and 2015 and at the time of the school's accreditation I was the acting PYP coordinator and a teacher of Mathematics. As an acting PYP coordinator, I was actively contributing to the following areas:

**1. Leadership**

- Supported and mentored new PYP teachers in the classroom;
- Provided learning engagement input and feedback for PYP teachers;
- Provided opportunities for teachers to observe one another in practice and supported them through regular classroom visits.

**2. Communication**

- Was an active part of the Senior Leadership Team of the school, the Pedagogical Leadership Team, the Primary Academic Committee and the Academic Committee and provided feedback about the progress and development of the PYP;
- Kept the leadership regularly informed of PYP developments;

- Assisted teams in planning for the PYP during regularly scheduled planning meetings; Maintained communication between the school and the IB;
- Ensured that curriculum-related parent meetings and workshop opportunities are provided; Communicated newly published PYP documents to all PYP teachers and the leadership;
- Contributed to the presentation and promotion of the academic program within the school.

### **3. Professional Development**

- Provided induction to the PYP for new PYP teachers;
- In consultation with the leadership of the school, identified areas for professional development, and planned internal and external workshops accordingly;
- Communicated relevant PYP professional development opportunities for staff; Reviewed Professional Development (PD) applications from teachers;
- Registered PYP teachers for IB PDs.

### **4. Curriculum**

- Provided PYP teachers with relevant PYP curriculum documentation;
- Provided guidance for PYP teachers in understanding PYP Scope and Sequence documents; Ensured that PYP teachers understand how to use the PYP unit planner;
- Ensured that curriculum documentation is up-to-date;
- Liaised with the Head of Academics regarding PYP curriculum issues;
- Oversaw the review of the Program of Inquiry on an annual basis and submitted reports to the leadership team.

### **5. Documentation and Resource Management**

- Kept copies of all correspondence with the IB, including forms, documents and reports;
- Assisted the Head Academic in determining main curriculum resources and other needs for professional development, and in placing resource orders;
- Ensured that teachers keep long-range plans for the PYP up to date;
- Prepared and submitted any documentation required for authorization and evaluation; Ensured that all requirements and procedures set by the IB concerning the Program are adhered to.

## LIST OF PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

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