

# Bess Streeter Aldrich PYP Newsletter

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Dr. Heidi Penke, Principal  
Jodi Fidone, IB Coordinator



Jodi

## Self-Study and Evaluation

Program evaluation in the PYP is both a requirement of and a service provided by the International Baccalaureate Organization for its authorized schools. The main purposes of program evaluation are:

- to assess the implementation of the program within the school
- to assist the school in developing and maintaining a program that reflects the philosophy and the standards and practices of the IBO.

Program evaluation occurs three years after authorization and every five years thereafter. It involves three stages:

- The self-study
- The school visit
- The evaluation report

### The Self-Study

(During the 2016-17 school year)

This important process of self-study, guided by a questionnaire, involves staff, parents and students in its own assessment of its delivery of the Primary Years Programme. The responses to the self-study are the outcomes of discussions and reflections on the evidence gathered in the process. This self-study precedes the school visit.

### The School Visit (Fall of 2017)

This visit ensures the quality of the program at Aldrich, while offering feedback to the school. It aims to be diagnostic and constructively critical, supporting the self-evaluation process.

### The Evaluation Report

The regional IBO offices will respond formally to the school after the program evaluation visit. The report will include commendations, recommendations and where appropriate, matters to be addressed by the school.

This process will be a learning experience for all of us as we work together to acknowledge the accomplishments attained as well as analyze the areas of improvement and growth.

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## IB PYP Curriculum Framework

The IB PYP curriculum provides an international experience while ensuring that state and district educational standards are met. There are six transdisciplinary themes that are repeated throughout the grades. Each grade level addresses different aspects of the themes. These themes are global and explore the commonalities of human experience.

Teachers write a unit of inquiry for each theme. These units are approximately 4-6 weeks in length. Every unit of inquiry is organized around a central idea and lines of inquiry. Since these ideas are related to the world beyond school, students see the relevance of the content and connect with it in ways that are engaging and challenging. Students who learn in this way begin to reflect on their roles and responsibilities as learners and become actively involved with their learning. All students know that a unit of inquiry involves them in in-depth exploration of an important idea, and that the teacher will be collecting evidence of how well they understand that idea. They will expect to be able to work in a variety of ways, including on their own and in groups, to allow them to learn to their best advantage.

### *Transdisciplinary Themes*

**Who we are:** An inquiry into the nature of the self; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, communities and cultures, rights and responsibilities; what it means to be human.

**Where we are in place and time:** An inquiry into orientation in place and time; personal histories; homes and journeys; the discoveries, exploration and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations, from local and global perspectives.

**How we express ourselves:** An inquiry into the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.

**How the world works:** An inquiry into the natural world (physical and biological) and human societies; how

**How we organize ourselves:** An inquiry into the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the structure and function of organizations; societal decision-making; economic activities and their impact on humankind and environments.

**Sharing the planet:** An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict with other living things; communities and the relationships within and between them; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.

**Bess Streeter Aldrich**  
506 North 162nd Ave.  
Omaha, NE 68118

**Phone:**  
(402) 715-2020

**Fax:**  
(402) 715-2035

