Evolution of an Immersion Program

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The Beginning....
Just over ten years ago as a mother of infant twins I wanted an environment that would best support their bilingual development...
thus began the first independent Mandarin immersion school in New Jersey and New York.
Our Mission

HWIS is an immersion preschool and elementary school that provides the best foundation for your child to succeed in the 21st century by fostering a love of learning while developing them into bilingual and bicultural students.
Overview of HudsonWay Immersion School Today....

- Founded in 2005
- Full-time independent private day school
- Serve Preschool to 5th grades
- A full language immersion program model
- 200+ students at two campuses in New York City and New Jersey (Summit)
- Target languages by Campus:
  - NYC-Mandarin/English
  - NJ-Mandarin/English
  - NJ-Spanish/English
- Other programs – summer camp, afternoon preschool, after school K-5, mommy & me, summer camp abroad
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Challenge #1
Finding and developing administration

1. Few with immersion experience
2. Not enough administration experience
3. Public vs. private school mentality
4. Multiple language program
5. Pre-K vs. elementary
6. Multiple campus oversight
7. Succession planning

There is no single person who will have it all!

Combined 60+ years experience in immersion
Challenge #2
Attracting, training and retaining teachers

1. Preschool teachers needed – but few with ECE background
2. Caring for preschool age – cultural differences abound!
3. Native Mandarin speaker/English language ability
4. Turnover - Visa issues/immigrant experience/prestige/growth
5. Culture and values alignment
How HWIS copes with challenges related to teachers

- Identify
  - Interns
  - University partnership

- Hire
  - Education investment – Masters ECE
  - Visa sponsorship – OPT, H1-B
  - Relocation

- Develop
  - Professional Development
  - Conferences
  - Master teacher coaching
  - Smaller class sizes

- Retain
  - Visa sponsorship
  - Child tuition benefit

- Advance
  - Advancement opportunities
  - Multiple location
  - Leadership training
Challenge #3
Selling the proposition and managing expectations

1. Selling new concept to broad audience
2. Addressing academic concerns
3. K-5 – where do students go after Grade 5?
CoGAT Assessment 2015-2016
NY & NJ (K-grade 5) *

- Measuring cognitive development
- Adapting instruction
- Understanding if predicted ability differs from observed ability

* 65 students
School: Hudsonway Immersion School

Grade: 5
Level: 5
Admin: Spring 2016

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<td>Index = National Norm Group</td>
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* National Percentile Rank of the median scale score of students in the grade, Suburban/Public school norm group and Independent school norm group.

This report may include MC-Only and MC/CR tests.
(YCT) Youth Chinese Test Level 4 (NJ&NY) Average over past 2 years

- Listening
- Reading
- Writing

Grade 3
Grade 4
Grade 5

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Final Thoughts

1. Addressing challenges requires a combination of strategies unique to each school’s situation

2. Our program will continue to evolve as it faces new challenges