

TEACHERS' TIME: COLLABORATING
FOR LEARNING, TEACHING, AND LEADING

**How Time Is Used to Support Teaching
and Learning at The International High School
at Laguardia Community College**

By Jacqueline Ancess





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Introduction

Can the faculty of one small high school in the largest big-city, public school bureaucracy in the United States reimagine and redesign the use of time to make itself a collaborative community and educate its multiethnic, immigrant, new English language learner students in the way it believes is best? Can such a school actually work? Can students at such a school actually perform at high levels, especially when they are diverse immigrant, new English language learners? The International High School (IHS) at LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City, New York, answers with a resounding, “Yes we can! And yes, we have . . . for 31 years!”

In 1988, when New York City had a 30% high school dropout rate, *The New York Times* reported that 90% of IHS’s first class graduated in 4 years, and all the graduates went on to college (Sturz, 1998). Nearly 30 years later in 2015, IHS had an 89% 4-year graduation rate, compared with the citywide rate of 72%, and a 6-year graduation rate of 91%, compared with 77% citywide (New York City Department of Education [NYC DOE], 2016). IHS’s principal reported that the average IHS student graduates high school with 30 college credits, which they accumulate from courses taken at LaGuardia Community College alongside the college’s matriculated students. In its 2016 NYC DOE School Quality Review, IHS received the highest possible rating on all seven indicators measured by the NYC DOE: rigorous instruction, collaborative teachers, supportive environment, effective school leadership, strong family-community ties, trust, and student achievement. Over the years, IHS graduates have gone on to colleges such as Bard, Barnard, Bennington, Brandeis, Clark, Cooper Union, Cornell, DePauw, Georgetown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Middlebury, New York University, Rice, Skidmore, State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany, SUNY at Binghamton, SUNY at New Paltz, SUNY at Stony Brook, University of Michigan, and Vanderbilt as well as the City University of New York (CUNY) (IHS, n.d.-a).

From IHS’s beginning, the use of time has been instrumental to its success. In contrast to typical hierarchically organized, factory-model schools that divide faculty into management and workers, IHS organizes itself as a collaborative community that seeks the commitment of faculty and students rather than the conventional compliance sought by factory-model counterparts. As a collaborative community, IHS distributes leadership and governs by consensus with representation and active participation from all constituent groups. Collaboration is at the heart of IHS’s beliefs about how life in school should be lived, and how teaching and learning are most effective., and how teaching and learning are most effective. Collaboration is at the core of Collaboration is at the core of the school’s organization of teachers into interdisciplinary teams that teach the same heterogeneous cohort of students, as well as the process for hiring, supporting, and evaluating teachers, the roles teach-

ers take, and relationships IHS has with multiple external partners. The school collaboratively organizes teachers into interdisciplinary teams that teach the same heterogeneous cohort of students, and it cooperatively, as well as the process for hiring, supporting, and evaluating teachers. Collaboration is also at the core of the roles teachers take, and relationships IHS has with multiple external partners. Operationalizing a school like IHS requires a use of time and a response to the constraints that govern the use of time that are different from the factory-model high schools that predominate in New York City and throughout the country in which the schedule and contractual work rules drive the educational program and the roles people play.

This case study presents a picture of how IHS uses time to organize teachers' work and to support the development of teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions. The study presents the school's opportunities and structures for teacher learning, how teacher learning interacts with student learning, how the use of teacher time supports the growth and development of students, and the conditions that facilitate the school's use of time for teachers' work. At IHS, as in any organization, a constellation of factors and their synchronistic interactions drives success and renders the whole greater than the sum of the parts. The constellation of IHS's structures, mechanisms, schedules, policies, and practices is propelled by its anchor belief that collaboration can produce the best possible results for individuals and the community. This interwoven system makes IHS successful and gives it its unique identity. Advocacy by faculty and external partners has contributed to policy, scheduling, and budget flexibility and exceptions to regulations that facilitate IHS's operational components. These components include the ability to select school faculty committed to IHS's pedagogical beliefs and collaboration; create unconventional faculty positions to meet unique needs; establish governance and organizational structures such as committee meetings and interdisciplinary teams that operationalize the school as a collaborative community; use time as a resource that enables the kind of teaching, learning, assessment, customized interventions, college course taking, off-site internships, close teacher-student relationships, teacher evaluation, professional development, governance, and student supports that IHS provides; and create schedules that differ daily or weekly.

Methodology

A case study methodology was used, including semistructured individual and small group interviews, classroom and meeting observations, and a review of IHS artifacts and research. Interviews were conducted with key players: the principal, an assistant principal, the school's teacher leader, known as School Leader, four teachers, and the founding principal. Observations were conducted of six classes: 11th–12th-grade chemistry, 9th–10th-grade English, 9th-grade algebra, and three electives. Observations were also conducted of four meetings: Coordinating Council, social studies disciplinary team, one 9th–10th-grade Interdisciplinary Team meeting, and one 11th–12th-grade Interdisciplinary Team meeting. Reviews were conducted of IHS artifacts, including sample student and teacher schedules, the Chart on 2015–2016 Professional Development, the school's *Personnel Procedures for Peer Selection, Support, and Evaluation*, the IHS website, the NYC DOE's School Quality Review report for 2015–2016, the school's governance map, and the Internationals Network for Public Schools website. A review of prior research on IHS as well as the Internationals Network for Public Schools was conducted to provide history and context. Data were coded in accordance with research questions regarding use of time to organize teachers' work, opportunities and structures for teacher learning, how the use of time supports the development of teachers' knowledge, skills, and dispositions, how teacher learning interacts with student learning, how the use of teacher time supports the growth and development of the students, and the conditions that facilitate the school's use of time for teachers' work.

History and Context

Located in a borough of Queens that was once a manufacturing area, close to the East River from which one can see the Manhattan skyline, IHS is co-located in a low-rise building with another small New York City public school, Middle College High School (MCHS). Across the street is LaGuardia Community College, IHS's partner institution of higher education where IHS students take college courses. A few blocks away is the outer borough annex of the Museum of Modern Art. Today the neighborhood is rapidly gentrifying with high-priced condos and rental apartments rising in tall glass towers with terraces overlooking river- and cityscapes.

Now the flagship of a national network of 18 International High Schools with over 6,000 students, IHS was founded by Eric Nadelstern, its first principal, in 1985 with 60 students. A collaboration between the New York City Board of Education and CUNY, IHS initially emerged in response to the concern of Cecilia Cunningham, then principal of MCHS, and Janet Lieberman, an administrator at LaGuardia Community College, about providing underperforming new English language learners with a high school model of education that would prepare them for college (Fine, Stoudt, & Futch, 2005). In creating a model for immigrant new English language learners, IHS adapted the successful MCHS-LaGuardia Community College model that was designed to help “nontraditional” students see themselves as college-competent and to transition easily to 2- or 4-year colleges after graduation. Like their MCHS counterparts, IHS students take college courses free of cost at LaGuardia Community College, alongside matriculated college students, for which they receive both high school and college credit, and have access to the college labs and library. A class called Seminar facilitated by a high school faculty member supports students taking college classes in navigating the challenges they encounter.

Currently, IHS's population of 518 students comes from 54 countries and speaks 39 languages. They are 35% Asian, 2% Black, 49% Hispanic, and 14% white. The school is 100% free lunch (InsideSchools, n.d.). Seventy-seven percent of teachers have 3 or more years of experience. Because of the school's affiliation with the CUNY Early College Initiative, students can stay at IHS for a 5th year at no cost and graduate high school with an associate's degree from LaGuardia Community College.

Fine et al. (2005) describe all the International High Schools as “transcultural academic settings” rather than a mono-or multicultural setting because “students are asked to interrogate and engage with their cultures/languages of origin, with English and U.S. culture, and with the broad range of linguistic and cultural possibilities” (p. 21). At IHS, students have a common educational experience in a socially safe environment where they are encouraged and may choose to use their native languages

for understanding content but use English as the language for public discourse—when they engage learning tasks, collaborate in small groups with same- and other-language classmates, respond and report out to their classes, and present and defend their portfolios in 10th grade and for graduation. As a result, they speak English in both social and academic discourse in every class every day. When the New York State Education Department auditors cited IHS, in its early years, for violating the time regulations governing English as a Second Language (ESL) learning, then principal Nadelstern argued that the International model provided students with more minutes of English learning in a day than the conventional method in which students received English language instruction for only one 45-minute period per day. New York State granted IHS a waiver permitting it to use its ESL methodology, which today is used in all 18 International High Schools.

This perspective on language learning and use for immigrant new English language learners is coupled with the belief in collaboration as an instructional, social, and political strategy in IHS’s educational philosophy statement (IHS, n.d.-b):

1. Limited English proficient students require the ability to understand, speak, read, and write English with near-native fluency to realize their full potential within an English-speaking society.
2. In an increasingly interdependent world, fluency in a language other than English must be viewed as a resource for the student, the school, and the society.
3. Language skills are most effectively learned in context and emerge most naturally in purposeful, language-rich, interdisciplinary study.
4. The most successful educational programs are those that emphasize high expectations coupled with effective support systems, as mirrored in our portfolio presentation requirement for graduation.
5. Individuals learn best from each other in heterogeneous, collaborative groupings.
6. Career-oriented internships facilitate language acquisition as well as contribute a significant service to the community.
7. The most effective instruction takes place when teachers actively participate in the school decision-making process, including instructional program design, curriculum development and material selection.

The principal explained that IHS’s mission is to “open the door to the American Dream and success in society and in a global world for immigrant students. We

are a school for immigrants, and in everything we do, we are designed to help our students academically, emotionally, and socially in academics and language.” She discussed the importance of teaching students collaboration for problem solving and success in life and emphasized that faculty and administration model and mirror collaboration for students and each other. A social studies teacher who is the faculty-elected School Leader and who chairs the school’s central decision-making committee (Coordinating Council), added that collaboration was key to commitment: “Otherwise, teachers do not have buy-in.” The assistant principal confirmed the School Leader’s perception: “Teachers are immersed in the culture of the school and have so many opportunities to meet and be connected. They feel more ownership and have an interest in what happens.”

The school’s commitment to collaboration as well as other programmatic features such as student evaluation portfolios, career-oriented internships, community service, and college course taking as well as teachers’ participation in instructional program design, curriculum development, and school governance all drive decisions on the use of time that are described in this study.

Use of Time to Organize Teachers' Work

For IHS to enact the mission of being a collaborative community in support of student growth and development, in which staff participate in all aspects of community life, time must be organized for teachers' instructional as well as organizational and governance responsibilities. The following discussion separates instruction from organizational and governance work to clearly describe each component and how time is used to enact it. However, instruction—teaching, student and teacher learning, and students themselves are integral not only to teachers' work on instruction but also to the organizational and governance tasks for which teachers are responsible.

Use of Time for Teachers' Instructional Work

IHS is organized into five theme-based Interdisciplinary Teams: three 9th–10th-grade teams comprising the Junior Institute and two 11th–12th-grade teams comprising the Senior Institute. Five faculty members from different subject areas sit on each of the 9th–10th-grade teams: English language arts, math, science, social studies, and a counselor or teacher-counselor (a teacher who functions as a counselor). The two 11th–12th-grade teams each have seven faculty members. One team has two English and two science teachers and one social studies and one math teacher. The second team has two math and two social studies teachers and one English and one science teacher. This allocation of staff along with opportunities for students to take cross-team classes provides encouragement and necessary flexibility for Senior Institute students to take college courses as well as accumulate the credits they need to graduate high school.

Art, physical education, and special education teachers teach across teams. At least one teacher on each team is licensed in ESL. On each team, teachers are scheduled for either morning or afternoon teaching sessions, which facilitates scheduling students to take college courses and participate in internships and community service as well as other activities without creating conflicts with high school courses. Teachers on the morning schedule begin their day with period 1 and end their day with period 6. Afternoon schedule teachers begin their day with period 2 and end with period 7; however, afternoon schedule teachers come in for period 1 on Tuesdays, when they participate in disciplinary team, faculty, and committee meetings. Table 1 shows the two schedules.

TABLE 1. TEACHER AND PARA SCHEDULES**Early Schedule**

DAY	TIME	NOTES
Monday	7:55–3:05	Last class ends at 2:15 Teachers may meet with a student or another teacher
Tuesday	7:55–2:15	One period schoolwide meeting; one period team meeting Students have elective or family group during meetings
Wednesday	7:55–3:05	Team meetings from 1:00 to 3:05 9th-graders go to gym; 11th- and 12th-graders come late All students go to electives except 12th-graders who work on their portfolios or take college classes or electives
Thursday	7:55–3:10	Last class ends at 2:15
Friday	7:55–2:15	Last class ends at 2:15

Late Schedule

DAY	TIME	NOTES
Monday	9:10–4:20	Last class ends at 3:30
Tuesday	7:55–3:30	One period schoolwide meeting; one period team meeting
Wednesday	9:10–3:05	Team meetings from 1:00 to 3:05
Thursday	9:10–4:25	Last class ends at 3:30
Friday	9:10–3:30	

Three teams, named Shine, Stars, and Journey, of 9th- and 10th-graders comprise the Junior Institute. Two teams, named International Quest and International Dreamers, comprising 11th- and 12th-graders constitute the Senior Institute. Each of the five Interdisciplinary Teams has a theme that frames a two-year course of study developed collaboratively by its teachers. The principal places incoming students into one of the three Junior Institute teams, creating heterogeneous groups while ensuring that students have peers who can provide native language support. Ninth–tenth-grade counselors place students into Senior Institute teams, again using the criterion of heterogeneity.

Each Interdisciplinary Team comprises 75 to 80 heterogeneously grouped students who are then organized into heterogeneous strands—analogous to classes—of 26 students. Strands are scheduled for 70-minute periods and meet four times a week. The 70-minute period aims to support student collaborative learning in small groups, deeper learning, English language instruction, and thematic projects. In the Junior Institute, each strand has the same program and travels together, and each team is block scheduled, so that students’ classes occur at the same time. Although there is no tracking and students attend classes in-team (taught by the teachers on their team), the three Junior Institute teams decided to parallel schedule math across all three Junior Institute math classes to create a math sequence of algebra and geometry so that students could take the math courses they need and have increased

opportunities for in-depth study. The three Junior Institute teams collaboratively scheduled the time so that all Junior Institute students take math classes in 9th and 10th grade outside of their teams, and Junior Institute math teachers all teach at the same time. In the Senior Institute, students' schedules are more individualized since they also take college courses, do internships, and work on individualized portfolios required for graduation.

Instructional Time. Teachers spend a total of 20 hours a week involved in direct instruction—16 hours with whole classes and 4 hours with small groups in NYC DOE–mandated noncredit enrichment classes or tutoring for students who need additional support (See Table 2). Four days a week, teachers are scheduled to teach three 70-minute content area classes per day plus the mandated 30-minute enrichment class, such as computer or *Reading Plus* to help students struggling with reading. In addition, teachers, each week, teach three other 70-minute periods called small group, which is devoted to individual or small group student support. Teachers use these small group instructional blocks (and two additional sessions scheduled for after school twice a week) to provide support for students who are struggling and to mentor students on their portfolios, which are required at the end of 10th grade and for graduation. Students may work with a mentor teacher to self-assess their academic growth or develop a Mastery Statement, which is required for their portfolio presentations (NYC DOE, 2015). Teachers and students schedule these sessions individually and on an as-needed basis, although teachers do encourage individual students to attend their support sessions. One teacher reminded a student to attend her small group “because you owe 20 minutes of work because you came late.”

Teacher Meeting Time. The Interdisciplinary Teams have autonomy akin to a mini-school which provides teachers with the authority and a formalized process for collective decision-making about instruction, school organization, and governance that is designed to support student success, faculty collaboration, collective responsibility, and mitigate against teacher isolation and alienation. The school's determination to create a structure that empowers teachers to collectively make organizational, governance, and instructional decisions, acknowledges the impact these decisions have on classroom instruction and teaching work and the importance of teachers having a voice about those conditions that affect them.

Interdisciplinary Teams are regularly scheduled twice weekly for 70-minute meetings, which enable teachers to effectively use their autonomy, as the principal explains, “to do what they see as best for kids to succeed.” Teams use these meetings to develop and make decisions about curriculum; schedule themselves and students; provide counseling interventions such as team meetings with students and family members; use data, including attendance, portfolio, grade, credits, NYSESLAT (New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test), and CUNY assessment exams to identify struggling students and create individualized student plans

to support them (NYC DOE, 2015); create protocols to help students behave and work better; make decisions about assessment procedures; and allocate instructional resources as well as funding for trips. Teams select their own leaders, who then represent the team in school governance and other organizational venues.

The Interdisciplinary Teams determine when students are ready to take college courses and which college courses are appropriate for them. The assistant principal pointed out that the student-teacher ratio of 75/80:4 safeguards against teams being overloaded with administrative duties and ensures that they have sufficient time to devote to curriculum, instruction, and student needs. The Interdisciplinary Teams create a sense of cohesion, caring, and connectedness, especially important for students who, as immigrants, may be separated from family members. “Students feel a sense of well being; that they are cared for and connected to many adults in the school. Time for teachers to collaborate makes the caring culture here more feasible—it is an essential part to the caring culture,” commented the assistant principal.

Interdisciplinary Teams are also a communication mechanism of the schoolwide governance structure. At Interdisciplinary Team meetings, the team representative from the schoolwide governance committees and Coordinating Council reports on what has occurred at those meetings, and if necessary, the team comes to consensus on issues where their feedback is required for a particular committee. On one occasion, Interdisciplinary Teams had to report back to the Coordinating Council on their team’s response to a new electronic grading system which raised privacy concerns for some teachers and students. Teams will also identify issues for their representatives to bring to the committees on which they serve.

Interdisciplinary Teams are responsible for peer support and professional development for their members (IHS, n.d.-c). Teachers interviewed reported that Interdisciplinary Team meeting time “keeps staff philosophically aligned,” “says that the work we do has value,” and “has a professionalizing effect.” The meetings enable teachers to develop trust: “We can ask for feedback from the team, where not necessarily elsewhere,” “everyone can feel vulnerable and open,” “teaching is public,” and “you are comfortable with people seeing your flaws.” One teacher remarked that the regularity of the meetings where this trust and interdependency develop “increases opportunities for learning.” Another said, “[You] feel empowered to make changes where there are stress points.” Nonetheless, teachers are aware of the limitations of meetings: “tensions can develop,” “being in a lot of team meetings can be hard,” and “discussions can go in directions that are not necessarily productive.”

The principal explained that each week teachers have a total of 7 hours of planning and meeting time (including the Interdisciplinary Team meetings). Four days a week, they have one 70-minute individual preparation/planning period, which complies with the total number of minutes contractually required for planning. To facilitate

teachers' collaboration on curriculum, these planning/preparation periods are scheduled for the same time block. During this time, teachers plan and revise lessons, provide and receive feedback from colleagues, locate resources, develop materials, organize students, design handouts, read, grade, and provide feedback on students' work. Teachers have their own spaces in beehive-like offices that support informal collaboration and collegiality.

Faculty members are also scheduled for monthly 70 minute meetings with colleagues within their disciplines to address curriculum development, offer and obtain feedback on their plans for courses, instruction, assessment, and challenges; identify and solve problems; build content and pedagogical content knowledge; and schedule teachers for student assessment presentations.

On Wednesdays, the entire faculty is available for an 80-minute meeting, which can also be used for formal professional development as well as additional Interdisciplinary Team meetings. In the 2015–2016 school year, IHS recorded 62.33 hours of whole-school staff professional development (IHS, 2016) that did not include the additional hours of professional development at the monthly 70-minute disciplinary team meetings, the twice-weekly 70-minute Interdisciplinary Team meetings, or the 70-minute planning/preparation time, four times a week. Table 2 shows a sample teacher schedule.

Student Schedules. One day a week, Junior Institute students have a 70-minute advisory class, called Seminar, in which the team counselor/teacher-counselor leads students in reflection, goal setting, college and career readiness, and community building. Students listen to guest speakers, conduct college and career research, and explore potential college courses (IHS, 2016). One day a week, Senior Institute students have a 70-minute advisory block called Family Group, led by teachers and counselors/teacher-counselors, that focuses on group, individual, and college counseling; development of college applications; graduation portfolio advisement; and personalized learning time.

To support students taking college courses at LaGuardia Community College, a social studies teacher is released for two-thirds of his teaching time to take on the role of Early College Coordinator. The position is funded from the regular allocation for school staff. This teacher is the liaison to LaGuardia Community College and the college staff and oversees the 5th year at IHS (Early College Initiative). This role also includes overseeing students' registration for college classes, providing students with support for college work as needed, and guiding students and disseminating information on college aid in the college application process. The Early College Coordinator conducts 10 advisories for students taking college courses, providing them with feedback on those courses and information about college that will help them succeed. A paraprofessional provides students with math support.

■ Professional Responsibilities
 ■ Direct Contact with Students

TABLE 2. INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL, SAMPLE JUNIOR INSTITUTE TEACHER SCHEDULE, HISTORY TEACHER (EARLY SCHEDULE)

PERIOD	TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
1	8:00–9:10	Teacher Preparation*	Governance Committee meetings or Disciplinary Team Mtg meetings	Teacher Preparation*	Teacher Preparation*	Teacher Preparation*
2	9:15–10:25	Global History	Interdisciplinary Team meeting	Global History	Global History	Global History
3	10:30–11:40	Global History	Global History	Global History	Global History	Global History
4A	11:45–12:15	Enrichment	Enrichment	Small Group/ Mentoring	Enrichment	Enrichment
4B	12:15–12:55	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
5	1:00–2:10	Global History	Global History	Interdisciplinary Team meeting (until 3:05pm)	Global History	Global History
6	2:15–3:25	Small Group-Extra Help (until 3:05)	Leaves at 2:15		Small Group-Extra Help (until 3:10)	Leaves at 2:15

* Teacher preparation periods are mandated by the Department of Education and the Teachers Union contract.

IHS's School Leader pointed out that the Senior Institute's schedule is synchronized with LaGuardia Community College's course schedule so that students can take both high school and college courses without conflicts. Although IHS's schedule is annualized for the whole school so that the scheduling of student and teacher programs (i.e., schedules) occurs only once a year and is in compliance with the NYC DOE requirements for scheduling, the Senior Institute schedule is organized into three semesters a year to create the flexibility necessary for students to take college courses without disrupting their high school course taking. The three semesters are Fall I, Fall II, and Spring semesters. Fall I takes place from September to January; Fall II takes place from January to the February break; and Spring semester takes place from the February break through June. During Fall II, Senior Institute teachers teach elective courses. A teacher, for example, developed a course on architecture as a social science and taught a class on zines (small-circulation magazines written by the students) that resulted in a 9th and 10th-grade Zines Fair. Students' college course taking reduces the register of high school classes, which enables teachers to team-teach electives or develop new courses or portfolio projects. Because the Junior Institute is annualized, students take college courses before or after their high school classes.

Use of Time for Teachers' Organizational and Governance Work

IHS's expectations for staff, which extend "well beyond the limits of their job descriptions" (IHS, n.d.-c, p.12), illustrate some of the ways in which staff roles are conceptualized to support the school's intention to be a collaborative community. Teachers are asked to take on responsibilities such "as club advisors, school events coordinators, and members of high school and college committees" (IHS, n.d.-c, p.12). Responsibilities extend beyond the school to the community, beyond school hours to after school, and beyond classroom teaching to include:

- Membership in an instructional team and participation in team meetings
- Interdisciplinary curriculum development in collaboration with other members of the team
- Participation in Peer Evaluation Teams
- Participation in out-of-school conferences and workshops/membership in professional associations
- Occasional writing for publication
- Mentoring candidates for graduation and participation in portfolio presentations for certification

- Advisement (programming)
- Extracurricular activities
- Membership in a school governance committee
- Cultivating and maintaining relationships with students, involving making contact with parents, counselors, family workers and other teachers
(IHS, n.d.-c, p.12).

At the beginning of each year, teachers are asked what activities they want to offer and the time frame for that activity. Decisions are made based on staff responses. For example, two teachers run a soccer club that meets on Fridays for two hours after school. Depending upon the activity, teachers are paid per session.

Teachers also participate on one to three of the six committees that comprise the school governance structure. Committee meetings occur during the school day. Those committees and the Coordinating Council demonstrate the school’s commitment to collaboration at every level as they provide an opportunity for voice from the diverse members of the school community. The committees include the Steering Committee, Guidance Committee, Early College Committee, Teaching and Learning Committee, Student Life Committee, and Personnel Committee. (Appendix B, IHS Governance Map). The school’s last quality review explained that teachers

lead six committees. . . . The chairs of each committee facilitate monthly meetings with teacher representatives from each interdisciplinary team and set goals for themselves each year. They report to the SLT [Coordinating Council] with their work (NYC DOE, 2015).

Each committee’s representatives are elected from the five Interdisciplinary Teams. Committee chairs are elected by the faculty. The Coordinating Council, Teaching and Learning, Student Life, and Personnel Committees meet monthly while the Steering, Guidance, and Early College Committees meet weekly, as the responsibilities of those committees require closer and more frequent attention. All committee meetings are scheduled for 70 minutes.

As mentioned earlier, the Coordinating Council is chaired by the School Leader who is elected by the faculty. This is a one-third compensatory time teaching position, which the current holder described as “a hybrid teacher-administrator role serving as the voice of the teachers.” The School Leader also participates in external meetings and is a member of the principal’s cabinet. The Coordinating Council comprises the administration—the principal and two assistant principals—the parent coordinator, United Federation of Teachers (UFT) chapter leader, chairs of the six committees,

and representatives from the Interdisciplinary Teams, parent community, and student government. The Coordinating Council discusses issues brought by committees, Interdisciplinary Teams, and others internal to the school, then generates and considers proposals and determines solutions. Decisions are made by consensus among the constituents of the groups charged with the particular decision-making.

The Steering Committee, comprising the administration, School Leader, UFT chapter leader, and Interdisciplinary Team representatives, meets weekly and is responsible for disseminating information to teams, making quick decisions, and developing the Coordinating Council agenda. The committee also reviews how Interdisciplinary Teams are supporting each other and whether the Interdisciplinary Team teacher leaders spiral out to other teams to support them so that they are performing well. The principal explained that the Coordinating Council and Faculty Forum, a mechanism for gathering the entire staff, “are used for big decisions—like a big curriculum shift.” The shift in the Junior Institute math program moved to Faculty Forum after the math department and Interdisciplinary Teams came to a consensus on a parallel math schedule for the Junior Institute. One Coordinating Council meeting addressed the issues of strategies for struggling students and reinforcing the integration of restorative practices into the curriculum to reassure students of the school’s support in the wake of the Presidential election results. Students expressed the perspective of their peers, and parents discussed issues with which they might need help, such as protecting their children if undocumented parents were detained.

The Guidance Committee, which meets weekly, consists of guidance counselors and teacher-counselors. IHS created the teacher-counselor position to reduce the counselor-student ratio, which increases the time spent with students on college advisement, the application process, and the procurement of scholarships and financial aid. The teacher-counselors are released from classroom time to participate on the committee. Guidance Committee members turn key information in to their Interdisciplinary Teams.

The Early College Committee consists of the two Senior Institute counselors and the Early College Coordinator, who chairs it. The committee discusses and plans for the Early College Initiative with LaGuardia Community College and reviews and troubleshoots any student or program issues.

The Teaching and Learning Committee discusses issues related to teaching and learning and creates proposals to address them. It recently presented to the Faculty Forum on approaches to reading across the content areas and recommendations for action.

Chaired by the Student Life Chairperson, the Student Life Committee comprises student representatives, Interdisciplinary Team representatives, and a liaison from the Steering Committee. The Student Life Chairperson is a compensatory-time position with reduced teaching. The chairperson works on community service, student

activities, student government, and FUSION, which are student assemblies. After the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the committee planned and convened a FUSION on the post-election environment, with alumni and speakers discussing undocumented people's rights.

The Personnel Committee, which comprises the chairperson, Interdisciplinary Team representatives, and the Steering Committee representative, is responsible for discussing issues related to personnel and creating proposals in response to those issues. It coordinates the process for the recruitment and hiring of applicants for staff positions, peer support, and the teacher and supervisor portfolio evaluation process, a system created by faculty early in the life of the school and revised in 2010.

Teacher Learning

The focus of teacher learning is determined collaboratively by the faculty. Opportunities for teacher learning are organized and structured in two ways: events and embedded experiences. Events are experiences that have a finite time frame with a topical focus, such as quantitative literacy, and a pre-structured format, such as a workshop or a conference. Embedded experiences are integral to the school culture, contextually responsive at a granular level to authentic teaching and learning goals, and are routine, like monthly disciplinary meetings. Sharing effective practices in response to a teacher's query or problem generates individual and collaborative learning in response to a current and felt need. At events, teacher learning might be described primarily as information or knowledge transmission, whereas embedded experiences engage teachers in an ongoing collective and collaborative inquiry or investigation into their own and their peers' practice. Both kinds of learning involve knowledge building and are seen as valuable. The PD Hours 2015–2016 School Year chart (Appendix C) provides examples of both types of professional development at IHS. Event experiences have included a schoolwide workshop on new technology the school purchased, a workshop on a strategy and rubric adapted from Teachers College Reading and Writing Project to teach argumentation, and an all-day professional development by the Internationals Network for Public Schools. Embedded experiences are exemplified by the description of activities during Interdisciplinary Team meeting time: "Curriculum planning and sharing; interdisciplinary units and skill-based activities development; discussion about student personal and academic growth; restorative justice circles with students; preparation for parent meetings" (IHS, 2016).

The flow of a social studies disciplinary team meeting illustrates the embedded inquiry approach to professional development. Four issues and questions framed the meeting agenda: 1) feedback on the curriculum of the Fall I semester, 2) What are you doing for Fall II (the current semester)? 3) What are you doing for the Spring semester? 4) How do we merge skills within and between Junior and Senior

Institutes? During the meeting, department members made their coursework, strategies, instructional challenges, and questions transparent and reflected on their practice. One teacher reflected on students' responses to a research paper in his Constitutional Law class and his responses to students' struggles:

Reflecting on this semester, I felt students got a better understanding of complex details. I pushed them. For lower level students, I modified the choices. I had them focus on one argument. Sources were difficult for them to understand, so I wrote summaries of complex text and also mixed it with original text. I probably did too much for one semester. I used lot of discussion in class so they understood it better. It was more intense than usual.

Another teacher shared that students learn argumentation when he tasks them with "getting into the argument right away" instead of the background information. This comment raised related questions on students' capacity to evaluate and refute evidence and to determine whether the sources and/or evidence students select fit into the arguments they have framed. Teachers then shared solutions. This conversation led to a deeper discussion on students' thinking when they select sources during their online searches to find information and evidence related to their arguments: "What are some strategies for searching so that students play around with different sources to see which fits their paper?" One teacher viewed students' behavior as a symptom of insufficient engagement and suggested a solution to deepen students' buy-in: "Get students to think of questions." For the next meeting, the team considered investigating components of research. This cognitive trajectory demonstrates how a disciplinary meeting where teachers share students' learning and their own instructional challenges and solutions informs their teaching, curriculum development, and other areas for learning. Their questions build new areas for collective inquiry and the opportunity to acquire new knowledge they can use to improve their instruction.

IHS's teacher support and evaluation system is another feature that advances teacher learning. The system was designed to "foster and support professional growth on the part of the teacher" and combines self- and peer evaluation along with "other professionals" in a "sharing relationship" (IHS, n.d.-c, p.4.). "Other professionals" refers to counselors or administrators. The "sharing relationship" is explained in *Personnel Procedures* as the shared responsibility of the team for its members. This collegiality is grounded in the belief that the team is successful to "the extent that it helps all its members set and reach their goals and move to a new level of success" (IHS, n.d.-c, p. 12). The individual and the collective good are established as mutually reinforcing.

The system's peer observation and review components promote teacher learning by introducing faculty to a range of instructional strategies, supporting them to experiment with these strategies in their own classrooms, encouraging them to assess their

behavior in the context of others' professional practice, facilitating the sharing of insights and ideas, and "institutionalizing the process of continuous self-evaluation" (IHS, n.d.-c, p. 6) thereby making teaching and learning public and increasing individual and collective accountability. Team members support each other by exchanging ideas, observing one another's classroom teaching, writing peer observations that focus on the staff member's goals, and discussing problems and progress. Team members advise their colleagues on writing self-evaluations and on preparing their evaluation portfolios and presentations to the Peer Evaluation Team (PET), which consists of four randomly selected staff members, including a representative of the Personnel Committee who serves as chair. The PET conducts staff evaluations and makes recommendations to the principal on teachers' appointment, continuance of probation, and tenure as well as the continuance of service for tenured teachers. In addition, the principal explained that the assistant principals review teachers' goals for professional growth and recommend a peer with whom to collaborate in pursuit of those goals.

In the evaluation process for teachers, each faculty member develops a portfolio that contains her or his goals for the year, student evaluations, and work samples that demonstrate teaching capacity and contribution to the content area, teacher's team, IHS, or teaching profession. These portfolios include lessons, student work samples, and one (for tenured faculty) or two (for nontenured faculty) self-reflections, peer reflections, and administrator evaluations (IHS, n.d.-c, p. 5). Nontenured faculty complete self-reflections at the end of each semester while tenured faculty complete them at the end of each year. Self-reflections are self-assessments of practice and focus on learning and growth. Peer reflections focus on goals and are based on team members' classroom observations of teachers' implementation of IHS's philosophy and pedagogical beliefs: collaboration; continued use and development of students' native language; use of whole language, writing process, and experiential learning for English language development; heterogeneous grouping; and course organization around themes, among others (IHS, n.d.-c).

Teachers make presentations of their portfolios to the PET. All faculty are reviewed by the PET in their first 2 years at IHS, and tenured faculty are reviewed every 3 years. At the presentation, teachers discuss their goals and accomplishments of which they are particularly proud. The team discusses the portfolio with the teacher.

Interaction of Teacher and Student Learning

Based on IHS's student data, in particular, graduation and college admission outcomes, one must conclude that the International educational model, including the time devoted to teacher growth and development, supports the growth and development of its students. A 2005 study of the schools in the Internationals Network further confirms the salutary effects the International model has on students' development:

Graduates of the Internationals develop academic competencies in core content areas, as well as respect for and knowledge of their home country and language, an appreciation of other languages and cultures, a strong base in democratic education and a sense of social responsibility that is both local and global (Fine et al., 2005, p. 1).

The principal commented that the staff believes that collaboration “helps us to be our best because of opportunity to share our strengths. Teachers develop their best curriculum together, not alone.” She asserts that when teachers collaborate, they are most effective in supporting students socially and emotionally and in helping them to manage their behavior. Time spent collaborating allows teachers to see what colleagues have done and create better intervention plans for students. Teachers, in interviews, repeatedly referred to the value of collaboration and how much a point of identity it is. The power of the school's collaborative culture is evidenced in its high teacher retention rate, its low teacher absence rate, and the fact that for over 30 years, IHS's five principals have all come from within the school.

Teachers bring their experiences with and learning about collaboration into their classrooms, which are designed for the collaborative group learning that is the staple at IHS. “There is one learning model for all,” said the principal. “Everything we do with students we mirror with teachers and administration.” As part of the evaluation process, students, like teachers and administrators, must develop portfolios and presentations of learning, which they do in 10th grade and for graduation. And like their teachers, students participate in the evaluations of their peers' portfolios. Beginning in 9th grade, students sit on the portfolio panels of 10th-graders. When they are in 11th grade they are panelists on the portfolio presentations of 12th-graders. When students prepare their portfolios in 10th and 12th grades, they are guided by a teacher mentor. Teacher mentoring of student portfolio development occurs during time scheduled for small groups and/or professional activities, such as lunch or hall duty, which are contractually required. Similarly, teachers are supported by colleagues in the development of their own evaluation portfolios and presentations. These analogous processes and experiences are mutually validating and reinforce the school's vision of itself as a collaborative community.

Conditions that Facilitate School's Use of Time for Teachers' Work

Since its inception over 30 years ago, IHS has navigated state and city bureaucracies, rules, and regulations; the politics of multiple governors and mayors from opposing political parties; and school chancellors with widely diverse philosophical persuasions to implement the innovative policies and practices that they “see as best for kids to succeed” (Valane, interview, 2017). A confluence of fortuitous conditions have made this possible, including a long-standing tradition of *policy by exception*, (Darling-Hammond, Aness, & Ort-Wichterle, 2002)—which permits individual schools and districts to design and implement innovations that bypass particular regulations—practiced by both the State and City Departments of Education and the UFT; powerful partnerships with practitioner-created and -led external organizations; a high level of school-based autonomy including budgets and staffing; and professional capital, commitment, and persistence. The principal commented, “There is sufficient system flexibility.” Throughout its history, IHS has been strategic in its use of the system’s flexibility.

Several of IHS’s most critical features regarding the use of time have been possible only because exceptions to policy have been formalized by provisions in the contract between the UFT and the NYC DOE. These exceptions include IHS’s 70-minute time frame for class periods, time allotted for teachers to serve as graduation portfolio mentors to seniors, teacher planning/preparation periods for 4 instead of 5 days a week, compensatory time positions such as the School Leader, time for teachers to participate on governance committees, and time for active involvement in the process by which teachers are hired, supported, and evaluated. Four contractual provisions grant IHS the exceptions to policy required to implement these innovations: the School-Based Option (SBO), which was established in the 1987 UFT-NYC DOE contract, the Progressive Redesign Opportunity Schools for Excellence (PROSE) established in the 2014 UFT-NYC DOE contract, Circular 6, and the Compensatory Time Position provision.

The SBO enables a school to bypass certain work rules if 55% of teachers who are UFT members (not of the whole staff) votes to approve:

A school-based option is a modification of the UFT/DOE contract that has been approved by the staff and principal in order to improve education in the school. It provides the flexibility to adapt the collective-bargaining agreement to the particular needs of individual schools. The contract’s provisions that may be changed include those governing class size, rotation of assignments, teacher schedules and rotation of paid coverages. (UFT, n.d.-d)

SBOs must be voted on every year to continue. IHS has voted for its SBOs on students and teachers' schedules and planning/preparation periods every year for the past 30 years.

PROSE increases the flexibility granted by SBOs to modify contractual teacher working conditions so that schools can expand as well as initiate innovations, including redesign and teacher hiring and support. PROSE also introduces an option to the state teacher evaluation process, so that schools can produce customized components for the evaluation of their teachers. Schools must apply to become a PROSE school by submitting a proposal for initiatives that are “driven by teachers and leaders working in a fully collaborative community focused on excellence for students” (UFT, n.d.-c). The NYC DOE and UFT jointly select the PROSE schools. Although PROSE options are required to be renewed every 5 years, IHS decided to renew annually, which means each year 55% of teachers who are UFT members vote to approve the school's continuance with their PROSE initiatives. PROSE formalizes and institutionalizes school-level decision-making authority on innovative teacher hiring, support, and evaluation practices for PROSE schools. It is worth noting that IHS and MCHS principals had made individual arrangements with the UFT and the NYC DOE about 30 years ago to determine their own teacher hiring, support, and evaluation processes, because they understood then, the relationships of such decisions to schools' capacity to deliver the kind of education that they knew was “best for kids to succeed” (J. Valane, interview, 2017).

As explained in the UFT contract with the NYC DOE, compensatory time positions allow for “non-teaching assignments like lunchroom supervisor, dean, programmer or grade adviser . . . in lieu of teaching periods and, in effect, reduce the amount of time the person spends teaching” (UFT, n.d.-a). Compensatory time positions are determined by the principal in collaboration with the school's UFT committee. After the principal and committee meet and agree on the position's qualifications, the school's UFT members must vote through an SBO to ratify the position. Only after the compensatory time position has been ratified can the position be posted, individuals apply, and a teacher be selected to fulfill the position. This provision legitimates positions such as School Leader and the Early College Coordinator.

Circular 6 of the UFT contract, which regulates time programmed for teachers' professional activity periods, enables IHS's teachers to participate on the school's six governance committees during the regular school day. According to the UFT contract, “most secondary school teachers and elementary teachers in eight-period schools are programmed for a professional period, for which they elect a professional activity” (UFT, n.d.-b). Teachers select their professional activities from a menu but are permitted to deviate so long as there is approval by the principal, who is required to consult with the UFT school chapter leader on the number of positions and their qualifications.

Through a New York State Education Department policy created in the 1990s, schools could be authorized by the state to graduate their students by an approved system of portfolio performance assessments that exempted them from the New York State Regents exams in math, science, and social studies (but not English language arts) that are otherwise required for graduation. IHS was one of several schools granted a waiver from these Regents exams and instead graduate students by a portfolio system. This innovation changed the use of teachers' time, as teachers who mentored seniors in the portfolio process spent considerable individual time with them to develop rigorous portfolios and presentations along with confident oral presentation skills that include responding to questions raised by panelists. Although some of the mentor time is absorbed by Family Group, teachers use time scheduled for small group work and enrichment to mentor students working on portfolios.

Several long-term powerful partnerships with external grassroots organizations, funded throughout the years by private foundations including the Annenberg Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Panasonic Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and The Wallace Foundation have facilitated and sustained IHS's implementation of innovative use of time. These include longer periods for deeper and collaborative learning, flexible scheduling for dual enrollment, and flexible use of teachers' nonteaching time for portfolio assessments. For the most part, these grassroots organizations have been practitioner-created and -led. In the 1990s, IHS was a member of the Center for Collaborative Education, the New York City chapter of the Coalition of Essential Schools, founded by Deborah Meier, which was a primary advocate and designer for the New York State Education Department agreement that granted IHS and other schools a waiver from the New York State Regents to graduate students by a system of portfolio assessments. When a new State Education Commissioner planned to rescind the waiver, the graduation portfolio schools joined together under the leadership of IHS's former principal, Eric Nadelstern, who was one of a small group of New York City principals to form the New York Performance Standards Consortium, which became and is now an educational and advocacy organization of 40 schools that takes actions and influences policy necessary to ensure the continuance of the waiver to graduate students by a system of portfolio assessment. IHS is also a member of the Middle College National Consortium, which grew out of the original partnership with LaGuardia Community College and is active in the movement for dual enrollment and the national expansion of and public funding for Early College. This organization was founded and is led by a practitioner, Cecilia Cunningham, the former MCHS principal.

Partnerships with the CUNY Early College Initiative and the Internationals Network for Public Schools support the continuance of IHS's flexible organization of teacher time and work. The school's affiliation with the CUNY Early College Partnership supports cost-free dual enrollment and a cost-free 5th high school year that allows students to accumulate sufficient credits for an associate's degree as well as a high

school diploma. As mentioned earlier, student enrollment in courses at LaGuardia Community College during the school day reduces IHS class size and increases time for teachers to participate in activities such as individual student portfolio mentoring. IHS and its higher education partner cooperate to foster mutual understanding of each institution's goals and challenges regarding their collaboration. The college dean oversees IHS's college program. The school's principal is a member of the college president's cabinet and meets with college department chairs so that the college and high school vision for students' college experience is aligned.

IHS's membership in the Internationals Network for Public Schools, which was formed in 1995 as the number of International High Schools in New York City began to increase, provides opportunities for interschool collaboration and learning as well as policy and advocacy support. Founded by a former IHS practitioner, Claire Sylvan, the Internationals Network for Public Schools advocates at the city and state level for the interests of the International High Schools to safeguard the innovations that have been at the core of the school's identity. In 2015, the Internationals Network for Public Schools became one of six nonprofit organizations permitted by the New York City schools chancellor to be an affinity group within the NYC DOE. In another exception to policy, the current NYC DOE administration has allowed six voluntary networks of schools that existed under the administration of former Mayor Michael Bloomberg to continue with some of their prior autonomy, while the rest of the school system was being reorganized into geographic superintendencies (Wall, 2015). The International High Schools affinity group has its own superintendent, who, remarked the principal, "supports the Internationals, understands what they do, and can provide clear critical feedback on how they do what they do, not what they do." Principals including IHS's sit on superintendent-level committees in which they collaborate and discuss the needs of schools. With its own support system, the Internationals Network for Public Schools is in a position to reinforce, protect, and sustain those innovations that define IHS as well as the other International High Schools in New York City.

Several IHS design features, which have long been embedded in the school culture, also facilitate the innovative use of time, including the school's small size, its capacity to recruit, hire, support, and evaluate faculty, and its function as a collaborative community with a well-defined distributed leadership model and collaborative governance structure. The time for the extensive communication and feedback loops embedded in the committee and team organization described earlier, and the time for multiple opportunities for collaboration and participation in the governance system, nourish and sustain faculty belief and ownership in the school as well as faithful implementation of its ethos and essential practices. The time for structures and mechanisms that operationalize these features is not occasional or accidental but regular and formal, indeed habitual, so that absent them, IHS's identity would unravel. The school's small size, team organization, and time for collaboration facilitate the kind of just-in-time decision-making and anomalous innovations exemplified

by the Junior Institute's change in the math schedule discussed earlier. IHS's ability to select its teachers is critical to its sustainability, as its power over teacher hiring decisions increases the likelihood that faculty will support the school culture, policies, and practices, and faithfully implement them. The school's autonomy to design and implement a peer evaluation system linked to peer support for professional growth creates an incentive for collective responsibility for teachers to improve their practice.

Professional capital or faculty capacity and experience is another important condition undergirding IHS's effectiveness in using time to benefit teachers' work. The level of the staff's experience (77% of IHS teachers have 3 or more years of experience, as mentioned earlier) and careful vetting of staff to ensure a philosophical and pedagogical match contribute to the value teachers find in their multiple opportunities to collaborate and learn from one another as well as to their commitment. For over 30 years, IHS has also been able to select effective leaders, including its principals, from within the school, which has sustained its culture, promoted necessary growth and change, and avoided stagnation and groupthink.

Conclusion

Time is a critical resource in the education that schools provide. Often, schools assume that the ways in which time is used are fixed and they have no options to make changes that might improve their conditions, practices, and outcomes. In such cases, school visions, promising education programs, and innovative ideas can be held captive by real or imagined regulatory constraints governing time. IHS demonstrates how a sense of agency and an activist approach to the conditions of schooling can create opportunities for innovative uses of time. Although the political environment in New York City and State were propitious for IHS's innovations, the school's leadership and affiliations with like-minded schools and external organizations made significant contributions to the creation of that environment and continued support. IHS's commitment to a vision and philosophy of school as a collaborative community that gives teachers a powerful role in collaborating on decisions governing the conditions of their teaching, students' learning, and the faculty's professional growth, support, and evaluation has encouraged teachers to support, buy into, and indeed, author innovations required to enact the IHS model over time. Although committed to the core features of its model, which enacts its goals and values, IHS shows itself to be a learning community that makes changes as it encounters new challenges and develops new knowledge. The IHS community understands that the structures and mechanisms that operationalize its ideas are strategies, not goals. It understands that innovations in how and for what purpose time is structured require staff members to possess the knowledge and skills to effectively use the new configurations of time if their goals are to be achieved. Creating the time slots will not automatically convey such knowledge or outcomes. Importantly, IHS's use of time is organic, growing out of the school's need and commitment to create particular opportunities that were vital to the realization of its vision of educating its particular students.

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