

## **Internationalism and National Standards: Perspective from a School**

Thirteen years ago I participated in an Internationalism Working Party at my school. We looked at the concept of Internationalism; what this was, what it meant for our school and how internationalising our community could be achieved. Our discussions and investigations ranged across many fields including examining the Primary and Middle Year International Baccalaureate Programmes. We discussed the need for our community – parents, students and staff - to understand and embrace diversity. We recommended that cultural and ethnic diversity should become central in our thinking and reflected in all our school structures; this awareness needed to be embedded not only within the curriculum but also needed to be supported by co-curricular activities that celebrated diversity. Our committee believed it was important that our international students had a voice and that our overseas families should be supported in their transition to living in Melbourne and assisted to connect into the school community.

Thirteen years on our local and national landscapes have changed. We now have a national curriculum standards, at my school we are embracing the PYP and MYP; each of these curricular programs requires intercultural understanding as a component of our teaching and pedagogy, Throughout Australia we now also have national regulations and standards governing international education so that the recruitment, teaching and welfare of international students is regulated. At my school, our community has continued to diversify with students and staff originating from all corners of the globe. Our curriculum is imbued with an awareness of diversity and our co-curricular activities have a global tint celebrating multicultural Australia. Our students have a voice through a student body - the International Relations Society and our international parents are supported through WesleyPride's International Parents Group.

In these thirteen years much has been achieved and so it is a good time to reflect and examine what has changed, how deeply we have achieved the goals we set ourselves and reflect on how we can continue to enhance our community's embrace of diversity and intercultural understanding.