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An analysis of the nature of the Governance of International Schools and the potential for securing appropriate governance

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**An Analysis of the nature of the Governance of International Schools and
the potential for securing appropriate governance**

Archibald Paul James Sheppard

A thesis for the degree of Doctor of Education (EdD)

University of Bath

Department of Education

July 2011

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This research enquiry is dedicated to my parents, Archie and Dianne Sheppard, without whose support I would have never been able to accomplish this. Also, to Mary, Jeff and Chris who were my on going mentors and the ones who kept ‘showing me the light’! To all of you, I am forever in your debt!

Declaration of authenticity for doctoral theses

I hereby declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, contains no material previously published or written in any medium by another person, except where appropriate reference has been made.

ABSTRACT: Research Enquiry – Archibald Paul James Sheppard

The aim of this enquiry was to *‘analyse the nature of the governance of international schools and the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governance’*. The research questions were: *‘What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by heads of international schools?’* *‘What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by representatives of organizations that accredit international schools, and the owners of international schools?’* and *‘What is the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governance of international schools?’*. The relevant literature was reviewed. Empirical data were collected by means of a questionnaire-based survey of heads, and interviews with: executives from accreditation organizations, representatives of owned schools and heads. A framework for the analysis of the data was developed, which employed two analytic distinctions: the ‘ownership’ of schools, and potential of a financial profit impetus.

The main findings are as follows. The governance of international schools is not static, and successful governance is dependent upon the type of school and board structure. Boards tend not to receive proper and on-going training and many of the models of governance in use have inherent weaknesses, which require a more robust system of oversight. Governance structures and practice have not been able to keep pace with the increasing complexity of types of international schools. The organisations that accredit international schools, including their governance, have been unable to deal with the monitoring and enforcement standards of governance. Despite an inability of accreditation organisations to monitor and enforce standards of governance, they should take up this responsibility. To achieve this potential, a multi-faceted approach is necessary. Accreditation organizations need to gain further understandings of the governing of ‘owned schools’. Common guidelines and standards for governance will be required.

Chapter 1.0 – Introduction

1.1 How it all started:

The story begins in my final year of a Canadian boys' boarding school where I had the obligatory meeting with my parents and housemaster; they 'mapped out' what they felt was the best career path for me, a career in education. Not surprisingly, at the age of 18, I went as far in the opposite direction as I could only to come full circle some 5 years later. My training and undergraduate education was all in Canada. As far as I knew my entire career would be spent within the confines of Canada. It was not until one dreary February day, in Alberta where I was teaching, that I noticed an advertisement for a post as a Mathematics teacher, in the Dominican Republic (DR). I pondered the options, remain in Canada with -30C and 2m of snow or head to the Dominican Republic, with +30C and endless miles of sandy beaches; needless to say the decision was simple, I packed for the DR and the rest, as they say, is history.

Within Canada, as a teacher, moving from one province to another is not straightforward. There are issues of territorialism between provincial education authorities, so the notion of taking my skill set and plying the trade somewhere else in the world quite frankly never entered my consciousness until that cold fateful day. What began as a year abroad has turned into a change in the trajectory of my career. I now regard myself as an international educator, the meaning of which I will soon delve into more deeply, having now been abroad for 12 of the last 16 years. I will soon take up another post, this time in Africa, as the Director of an international school.

During my time overseas I have been a teacher, a principal and for the last 8 years a Director or Superintendent; it is these 8 years as a senior administrator that have framed my desire to explore the area of how schools are governed. I have seen first-hand how a school's atmosphere can change dramatically as the result of a shift in how a school is governed. While in Kuwait, as a Superintendent, I had worked to rebuild a school which had had a teacher retention rate of well under 50% with issues of poor staff morale. Having successfully changed the culture and rebuilt staff retention to over 85% this was all to come to nought. The school's owners, the de facto governing body, made significant changes to the ownership structure of the school and ultimately how it was governed. Since my departure, 4 years ago, the rate of retention has

returned to where it was, morale is worse than before and the school's reputation seems irrevocably tarnished within the educational community in the region and beyond. It has been encounters such as this, experienced not only by myself but countless other directors that leads me to the contention that Macnamara (2005) is correct in his assertion that governance "*might well be the most significant leadership issue of our time*" (p. 1).

It is armed with my experiences, and the comments of Macnamara and others, that lead me to the aim of this research enquiry, which is '*an analysis of the nature of the governance of international schools and the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governing*'. My goal is to achieve this aim by answering these research questions:

- i. What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by heads of international schools?
- ii. What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by representatives of organizations that accredit international schools, and the owners of international schools?
- iii. What is the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governance of international schools?

1.2 The scope of international education

International schools have a fairly recent history within the overall story of education. From modest beginnings, argued by some to have been in the 1920's (Hill 2001, Hayden, 2006), there has been an explosion in the number of overseas schools from the few to estimates today of over 5,000 schools, with over 4.6 million students (ISC Research, 2010). However these schools represent only a fraction of all schools worldwide. The vast majority of teachers and students reside within national systems of education. To give this some perspective, the British educational inspectorate, Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), inspected 7,065 "*maintained schools and pupil referral units*" (Ofsted, 2009: p.142) during the 2008/2009 academic year while in the United States "*nearly 50 million students are heading off to approximately 99,000 public elementary and secondary schools*" (ibid, 2009: p.1).

The very nature of international schools, spread throughout the world and not answering to any single entity, makes their enumeration at best a carefully crafted estimate. In 1989, Matthews estimated that there were in the order of

1,000 international schools responsible for the educating of nearly 500,000 students with approximately 50,000 educators. As noted by ISC Research this number has, in the last 20 years, grown by a factor of just over 5. It is understandable then that issues relating to international schools have not, at least historically, been given as much time and attention as within national systems (ISC, 2010).

Another feature of international schools, often in contrast to schools within national systems, is the demographics of its teaching staff and also often its student body. At the last international school where I was Superintendent, I had over 15 nationalities represented on my teaching faculty, whereas in most national systems this would likely be far more homogeneous. There were over 30 nationalities represented within our student body. In addition to those who manage schools, there are those who govern them. Again, national education systems tend to have governing bodies which are more likely than not to be made up of constituents of the local community and as a result can often comprise a similar ethnic and educational upbringing to those in leadership positions in the school, such as the head of school. However, in most international schools homogeneity between the board and the administration is far from certain and is often simply not the case. Governing bodies of international schools, depending upon their governing model, can have expatriates in addition to host country nationals and to add to this complexity, the head of an international school often will be from a different national educational system than those of the governing body.

I argue that due to the very nature of these schools, scattered geographically and not under the auspices of any one entity, often having stakeholders from a wide variety of backgrounds, creates a highly unusual situation within education, certainly in contrast to national systems of education. As a consequence, the notion of ensuring a method for securing appropriate governing, which is critical to the on-going success of an international school, is challenging but essential to the continued success of this form of education. As a result of the aforementioned solitary nature of international schools, under the scrutiny of no single entity, accreditation organizations are currently the only educational consortium; there are a number of them, which loosely act together, in place to achieve this.

1.3 What are the issues?

As alluded to, I have been witness to issues where the governing of international schools has been, at least in part, responsible for adverse conditions within a school. While relatively speaking there are few international schools, by comparison to national systems, they do however have a greater variety of governing models than exist within most national systems. I contend this variation results in greater complexity in how to address the challenge of evaluating a school's governing structure, by the accreditation organizations, in terms of accreditation but also how to deal with issues of governance should things go wrong.

As acknowledged above, adding to the variety of governing models is the divergence of backgrounds of members of not only the educational leadership team but also often those on the governing body. As noted earlier, for the head of an international school to not share the same national educational background as those who are responsible for the governance of the school can be commonplace.

There are a number of organizations which are responsible for accrediting international schools and, at present, they do not offer a consistent set of guidelines and standards in terms of the governing of these schools. It is also appropriate to point out that an international school does not have to seek accreditation, as it is completely voluntary unlike within national systems which mandate oversight, normally through a government agency. I offer that having a cohort of schools which have no commonalities in terms of governing models or national educational backgrounds of either those who lead or govern these schools should necessitate an accreditation structure designed to support appropriate governing.

1.4 The next chapters

Following on from the introductory chapter, Chapter 2, which reviews the relevant literature, examines what is meant by 'international', in terms of education and schools; this chapter will also analyse the current literature on governance and the existing theories of governance and their respective models, along with who the stakeholders are in this debate. The third chapter will lay out the conceptual framework which will be the lens through which all the data is analysed. The fourth chapter will describe the methodology for this research

enquiry. The methodology chapter outlines the phases of this research, incorporating how the data on the current landscape of governing, within international schools, was collected. The methodology chapter will explain the interrelationship between the pilot enquiry and this research enquiry, while summarizing how the data will be analysed. A further 2 chapters will provide an analysis of the data collected in conjunction with what was learned through the literature review. The first of these 2 data analysis chapters will explore the state of governing within international schools to better understand what is currently in place and how the current conditions are perceived by those responsible, namely the heads of international schools as well as those who own and those who accredit international schools. The subsequent chapter will investigate the issues surrounding accreditation within international schools and the role of accreditation in securing appropriate governing within international schools. Following these 2 data analysis chapters I will use the seventh chapter to discuss the key themes and findings of the research enquiry. The final chapter reviews the research, sets out the conclusions and comments on possible ways forward for the governing of international schools.

Chapter 2.0 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

To support the development of the research questions, in addition to ensuring their validity, it is necessary to undertake a thorough review of all the relevant literature pertaining to the subjects of this inquiry. The literature review therefore will primarily examine 3 concepts. The first concept to be probed is that of international schools. The aim of the review of this literature will be to give a greater degree of understanding to this concept both from a pedagogical and historical perspective. The second focus of this chapter is the review of governance, within education while also exploring its historical roots, both in terms of national systems and those within international education. With a clear discernment of the meaning of international, both in terms of education and schools, it is imperative to gain a clear understanding and appreciation of the meaning of governance and the theories and models associated with governing, both in general terms and in relation to education. Finally, this chapter will review the current status quo of accreditation for international schools; the review will explore what accreditation means within international schools, who is responsible for it and what the process for accreditation involves, in terms of the governance standards.

2.2 The international dimension:

2.2.1 What do we mean by international?

In examining the meaning of international education what becomes apparent is the relative difficulty to ascertain any one definition of the term. Interestingly, Hayden (2006) postulated in considering a definition of the term that,

“perhaps it is most appropriate therefore to consider international education as an inclusive umbrella term which incorporates a number of other more specific interpretations, or as a Venn diagram in which different concepts overlap to varying degrees”. (p.5)

This compromise position, while expedient, does not provide a solution and one is left to still consider the difference between an international education and an international school. A core difference between the 2 terms, while not

always clear, is rooted in what is being taught as opposed to within what setting. Interpretations of what an international education may be range from the more inclusive, such as Husen and Postlethwaite (1985) who view it as including *“all educative efforts that aim at fostering an international orientation in knowledge and attitudes”* (p.2660) to a more specific view, such as Borunda et al (1985) which sees international education as trying to *“come to grips with the increasing interdependence that we face and to consider its relationship to learning”* (p.1).

The complexity of defining what an international school may or may not be is grounded in the knowledge that

“for the most part the body of international schools is a conglomerate of individual institutions which may or may not share an underlying philosophy” (Hayden and Thompson, 1995: p.332).

Hayden and Thompson (1995) acknowledge that with the growth of international schools, and the corresponding increase in educators devoting all or part of their career within this milieu, there has been a greater desire to investigate this phenomenon as well as to classify these schools into typologies.

Some of the first attempts to describe what may constitute an international school are attributed to Leach (1969) who proposed a categorization of international schools which had 4 areas, which were:

1. *“one serving or being composed of students from several nationalities”* (p.7),
2. *“the ‘overseas’ grouping...schools set up as a personally owned, parent-owned or foreign-government owned in another nation and, in most cases, serves only the expatriate community”* (p.8),
3. *“those founded by joint action of two or more governments or national groupings”* (p.9), and
4. *“those who belong to the International Schools Association (ISA), or could do so”* (p.10).

However no sooner does Leach finish each of these descriptions than he acknowledges potential shortfalls or misgivings about them. In the intervening forty years there have been a number of other attempts to define what an international school may or may not be.

Terwilliger (1972) developed 4 general characteristics which included having a significant number of non-host country students, educators from a diverse set of backgrounds and a curriculum, which is a synthesis of the best of several national systems. The fourth characteristic is noteworthy, in terms of this research, as Terwilliger felt that

“the composition of the board of directors should, ideally, be made up of foreigners and nationals in roughly the same proportions as the student body being served . . . only if the policy making function is firmly in the hands of persons with a diverse background can the school impart the special climate in which internationalism flourishes” (p.360).

Terwilliger’s comments are noteworthy as they portend the importance of governance, in this case, for success in a school being international, which is a fundamental premise of this research inquiry.

Over the last forty years the number of international schools has increased and so too have the typologies of international schools as put forward by various academics. Ponisch’s (1987) {in Hayden & Thompson, 1995} delineation of the types of school more than doubled Terwilliger’s to eleven types of international schools. Ponisch (1987) included a variety of models of schools including ones based upon organizations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, serving mobile families. What became clear through this wide-ranging framework of what is classified as an international school was the inescapable conclusion that the

“number and nature of categories into which international schools can be subdivided is to some extent arbitrary, with categories less likely to be discreet groupings than broad areas which often overlap” (Hayden & Thompson, 1995: p.335).

Further to this acknowledgement of the potentially arbitrary nature of classifying the schools is the acceptance that underlying all of this *“is a fundamental issue of philosophy”* (ibid: p.336).

In a marked shift from the on going proliferation of types of international schools, Matthews (1988) {in Hayden & Thompson, 1995} distilled the formula down to 2 types of international schools. Matthews (1988) believed that

international schools could be divided between those which are 'market driven' and those which are 'ideology driven'. Matthews' differentiation classified schools which were "*founded for the express purpose of furthering international understanding and cooperation*" (Hayden & Thompson, 1995: p.336) while essentially all the rest having "*arisen from the needs of particular expatriate communities*" (ibid: p.336). While Matthews's dichotomy seemed logical and there are schools which clearly fit neatly into one or other of the categorizations, these models could not ultimately be seen as discreet entities. It can be argued that there are schools which legitimately have elements of both the ideology and the market.

As Hayden & Thompson (1995) postulate, it may be more appropriate to offer a description of what the nature of an international school is as being a combination. This amalgamation is in line with the work of Gellar (1993), which focuses less on the taught curriculum but more on the interactions of the students and allowing it to occur in a supportive and tolerant atmosphere. As Gellar (1993) believes, international schools should be about 'building bridges and not walls' and would define international in terms of the extent to which schools nurture this process. Gellar (1993), therefore, believes that any school can be international.

It becomes apparent, I contend, that the earlier comments by Hayden (2006) would be the most accurate in terms of defining an 'international school' as one seen through a variety of lenses. To add clarity to the above hypothesis, I offer another measure of determining the type of school that exists within an overseas setting, at least for the purposes of this enquiry. This determination would be made by identifying schools based upon their governing structure. I offer that this form of classification allows for any composition of national and non-host country students and whatever programme is offered thereby becoming the most inclusive form of delineating these schools. During my time overseas I have worked in schools which had, as their basis, a variety of models of how they were operated. Some schools were clearly owned by an individual or small compact of like-minded individuals while others were considered to be something akin to a 'trust', where the former often looked for a return on the investment while the latter was more inline with a charity. I contend that it is this delineation which has the potential to clarify both the *raison d'être* of a school and also acknowledges the reality that the effectiveness of a school starts with how it is governed, all things flowing from this relationship between the governing and

leadership of a school. Regardless, identifying a school as an international school is only answering 'part of the question' of how to identify these schools.

Hayden and Thompson (1995) effectively bring the debate full circle with the conclusion, which I concur with, that whether or not one chooses to delineate schools as international or not "is perhaps less important than the nature of the education experienced by students in those schools" (p.338), moving the debate from the superficial to the more substantive of what is taught.

We often, albeit superficially, categorize schools in the overseas' market on the basis of their curriculum; it is not uncommon to hear educators comment that 'this is an American school' or 'I teach at an IB school'. These curriculum based models can be broadly described as one of 3 major typologies, a US-based curriculum, a UK-based curriculum or an IB (International Baccalaureate) curriculum. There are no doubt others, including for example schools using a Canadian curriculum, but these are minor players in contrast to the aforementioned 3. There is little agreement on whether either a curriculum can define a school as international or what such a curriculum might even look like. Skelton (2002) acknowledges that the

"inevitable lack of clarity about the definitions of 'curriculum', 'international school' and 'international education' helps explain why the creation of an international curriculum has to be a work in progress" (p.41).

Skelton concludes that "*it might be better to think of an 'internationally-minded-curriculum' rather than of an 'international' one*" (Ibid: p.42). This concept of 'international-mindedness' fits neatly into Thompson's (2001) paradigm where he asserts that in terms of student learning "*it is more likely to be caught, than taught*" (Thompson, 2001: p.287). Thompson (2001) draws upon a 'brick wall' metaphor to explain how 'internationalism' is meant to permeate all aspects of the school and refers to the concept of "*interstitial learning*" (ibid: p.287) to explain how the learning around and between what is being taught in the classroom is what makes meaning and brings it all together. Therefore, an international school would be one which fosters and encourages these types of interactions and interplay between and amongst both students and staff. While this metaphor permits a potentially clear appreciation of this process, it does not address, in my estimation, how external factors can influence this learning, either strengthening or weakening the process.

It is acknowledged that the above is by no means the definitive explanation of either international schools or international education. However, for the purposes of this research, I will synthesize the above to define an international school as one which embodies the core elements of Matthews (1988) and Gellar's (1993) definitions of international. These definitions focus less on the taught curriculum and more on the interactions of students where the school actively seeks to foster international understanding. I argue, that if these interactions are happening, it also satisfies Thompson's paradigm of 'interstitial learning'. This research will therefore use the term 'international schools' and the aforementioned definition in examining the research questions.

2.2.2 An historical perspective:

To better frame this discussion is an exploration into the genealogy of international schools. The history of international schools can be traced back to the 19th century. While this period was marked with the growth of national systems of education there was "*tension between the parallel growth of national systems of education and a popular awareness of international relations and sentiments*" (Sylvester, 2002: p4). As one can imagine, those who were advocating such a radical view

"fundamentally all were out of step with the nineteenth century. In an era of provincial loyalties, they argued for loyalty to mankind" (Scanlon, 1960).

While most research into the origin of international schools is rooted in the 20th century, there is a clear body of evidence of a movement towards international education much earlier. From a western perspective, the first international school may well have been the Spring Grove School, which began operations in 1866 (Sylvester, 2002). In Stewart's (1972) work on the history of progressive and radical education in the UK he refers to his 15th chapter as 'The International School', in referring to the Spring Grove School. Stewart argues that this was really the first era of globalization and that the formation of this school, and others like it, where

"leading advocates of free trade hoped to realize their vision of international harmony by the creation of a new type of education which would enable citizens of different countries to become international ambassadors" (p.118).

This belief of an era of globalization in the late nineteenth century would corroborate the work of Friedman (2000) where he contends that the present age of globalization is, in fact, the second era of globalization. In spite of the sporadic efforts in the 19th century and a few notable efforts in the early part of the 20th century, both Hill (2001) and Hayden (2006) identify the traditionally accepted starting point for international schools as 1924. Within weeks of each other and on opposite sides of the world, Geneva and Yokohama, 2 schools were started, both with parents as their driving force. The International School of Geneva and the Yokohama International schools are certainly considered to be the cornerstones of 20th century international education. The parents of children attending these schools were looking for “*a school which would give their child a complete and well rounded view of the world*” (Hill, 2001: p.11).

As has been discussed, at various junctures within this enquiry, much of the initial growth of international schools has been attributed to globalization, multi-national companies expanding and taking expatriate employees, and their families, with them. During the latter half of the 20th century there were a number of ‘watershed’ events which have shaped the landscape of international schools. While conferences had been taking place amongst educators within international schools, it was in 1949 that the Conference of Internationally-minded Schools (CIS) was formed, marking the “*first known official, intercontinental grouping to bring together schools with a common (international) cause*” (Hill, 2002: p.22). The formation of CIS was followed closely, in 1951, with the creation of the International Schools Association (ISA), which came about from the desire, by a group of mostly school governors from international schools in Geneva.

The growth of international schools, from their start in the 1920’s, through to the mid-20th century was steady, as Matthews (1988) estimates there were approximately 1,000 international schools but the growth then exploded through to the end of the 20th and into the 21st century. The most recent data, by ISC Research, in June 2010 has listed that there are currently 5,628 English-medium international schools worldwide (see Figure 1) with an overall student body of 4,153,618 students (ISC Research, 2010).

Figure 1: Number of International schools, by geographic area, as of 2010

Region	Number of Schools
Africa	520
Americas	710
Asia	2,946
Europe	1,293
Oceania	159

(ISC Research, 2010)

While the initial international schools were almost exclusively for the children of expatriates this has changed too with the growth of international schools. As an example, the country with the most international schools in South East Asia is Thailand, with 144 international schools. As Langford et al (2002) identify, while there is an expatriate population in Thailand many of the students attending international schools are coming from

“the economic elite of the local country who believe that such an education will lead to higher education possibilities in North America or Europe” (p.48).

The review of the literature, with respect to the notions of international education and schools, reveals the lack of singular definitions enabling a definitive identification of the meaning of both terms. I argue that given the almost exponential growth, not only in the purely numeric terms of the number of schools but also in the variety and types of schools, that it is critical for a compromise position. This compromise would address what these terms mean in order to then shift the focus on to the issues of governance, which brings me back to my working definition of international schools. As outlined earlier in this chapter, my definition of international schools is as institutions, which embrace the core elements of the definitions of Matthews (1988) and Gellar (1993) whereby the focus is less on the taught curriculum and more on the interactions of students and the creation of opportunities to foster international understanding.

From this point, attention is now turned to understanding the concepts of ‘governance’, models of how schools are being governed and those who have set themselves as being responsible for accrediting and monitoring international schools.

2.3 Governance

2.3.1 An introduction to governance

Balarin et al (2009) commented that governance *“in a general sense refers to the ‘pattern of rule’, which is concerned with regulation, direction and procedure,”* (p. 10); this is differentiated from the act of governing, which is how the aforementioned ‘pattern of rule’ is enacted and by whom. Kjaer’s (2004) defines governance, focusing on the term ‘rules’, as *“the setting or rules, the application of rules, and the enforcement of rules”* (p.10). I will examine the concept of governance from a number of perspectives: examining the theories of governance and their respective models, an historical retrospective of governance within secondary education, an overview of the current status of the governance of international schools, and finally to examine who has taken on responsibility for accrediting international schools and thereby evaluating governance within these institutions.

2.3.2 Governance Theory

Just as the meanings of international education and schools are far from clear, there is a similar pattern in terms of what is meant by the term governance. Jessop (2001) and Whitehead (2003) acknowledge both the increased interest in and plurality of understandings as to what governance refers to. Jessop believes that *“this interest is reflected in growing ambiguities about the meaning of governance”* (2003: p.1). Kooiman and Jentoft’s (2009) work on governance continues along this path with the assertion that *“governance has become a catchword”* (p.819). Much of this ambiguity appears to have its roots in globalization and the shift from the ability of one country to assume it has control over its sovereignty to the realization that there is now a more global reality where there is now a *“focus on the role of networks in the pursuit of common goals”* (Kjaer, 2004: p. 3-4).

Any definition of governance must be dynamic and subject to modification as societies change. As Cornforth (2003) points out, there has been a shift from where, historically, governance was treated differently between the public, private and voluntary sectors to where now *“the boundaries between the sectors have become blurred”* (p.6); this is inline with Whitehead’s (2003) assertion that governance is

“no longer focused primarily on the political realms of public sector government but are increasingly incorporating a range of interests drawn from the private sector and civil society” (p.7).

In addition to evolving, governance can be seen as organic in as much as for it to be effective it is now more reliant on a plurality of players and networks (Whitehead, 2003; Kjaer, 2004; Jessop, 2003; Kooiman & Jentoft, 2009). Kooiman & Jentoft see governance as *“the whole of interactions instigated to solve societal problems and to create societal opportunities” (p.820).*

Kooiman & Jentoft (2009) further define governance to be *“an intentional activity, consists of three components: images, instruments and action” (p.820).* Images refer to *“the how and why of governance”* and *“not only relate to specific issues at hand, but to fundamental social, political and ethical questions” (Ibid: p.820-821).* The instruments are what link the images to the action and the determination of what is the most appropriate is a combination of what is accessible and what is felt to be applicable. The final element, Action, is where the instruments are put in play with such activities as implementing policies. Beyond the elements of governance, Kooiman & Jentoft (2009) identified both a structural element to governance along with orders of governance. The structures of governance include hierarchical, which pertains primarily to a citizen’s interaction with the state but can extend to the interactions within corporations. The second structure is self-governance where citizens will govern themselves, clearly outside the control and purview of the government. The final structure is co-governance which is identified through a variety of partnerships. Whitehead (2003) refers to networks as an important part of governance and this is in line with Kooiman & Jentoft’s (2009) definition of co-governance. The final aspect of their model of governance is that of orders of governance. First-order governing is seen as the frontline governance where the ‘day to day affairs’ of people are dealt with. Following on is second-order governing which moves from the personal to the institutional from where the first-order governing emanates. Kooiman and Jentoft’s final order of governance is meta-governance is the organization of the conditions for governance.

Kooiman & Jentoft (2009) identify meta-governance as *“the centre of the concentric circles, feeding into, binding and evaluating the entire governance exercise” (p.822)* or more aptly put it is *“the governance of governance” (ibid: p.819).* While it has been noted that governance has been progressively

devolving from the state to other sectors, Jessop (2003) contends that “governments play a major and increasing role in all aspects of meta-governance” (p.6). It is critical to point out, as Whitehead (2003) does, that meta-governance is not designed to supplant governance but rather to ensure its efficiency, as

“meta-governance is premised on the existence of governance regimes and as such it seeks to extend and connect work on governance to related changes in political control and authority” (p.8).

Whitehead (2003) and Jessop (2001) summarize the parameters of meta-governance in 3 ways. First, meta-governance acknowledges the on going influence of hierarchical forms of power. It also focuses on “*the role of self-organizational forms of power and action in realizing political and economic goals and strategies*” (Whitehead, 2003: p.8) and finally the identification of the interplay between “*self-organizational networks and the hierarchical structures within which they are embedded*” (Ibid: p.8), which Jessop (2001) described as negotiated decision-making.

Rhodes (1996) builds on the notion of networks, as an integral component to understanding governance. In his work describing how the British government had evolved and now operates, he comments that networks “*are now a pervasive feature of service delivery within Britain*” (1996: p. 652). Rhodes explains that with the devolution of government services, it is no longer the case that the centre, referring to government, can be seen as solely responsible for the outcomes from decisions they have made due to the interactions that are now necessary with a variety of outlying organizations, dependent upon the area concerned.

Kooiman & Jentoft (2009) summarize the meaning and role of meta-governance as

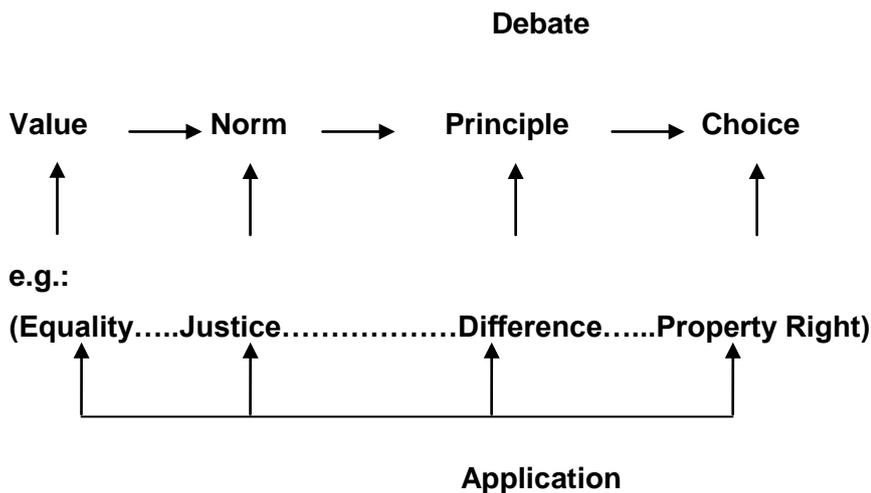
“the governance order where values, norms and principle are advanced according to which governance practices can be formed and evaluated” (p.823)

and see it as an essential part of governance, which is interactive whereby it is able to

“bring these notions to the surface so that they can be explained, discussed, defended and evaluated before they are allowed to underpin the choices made” (ibid; p.824).

Kooiman & Jentoft (2009) explain this relationship through a meta-governance process, represented as a flow chart (see Figure 2):

Figure 2: A flow-chart to represent the meta-governance process



(Kooiman & Jentoft, 2009: p.823)

This representation views these aspects of the process on a continuum from a more general and fundamental idea, with values, to the most specific and what is applied, in terms of choice. It identifies the notions of norms and principles as intermediary. It is acknowledged that while this process is seen as a linear one, in reality, it would “*naturally follow more random patterns*” (ibid: p.823).

Kooiman & Jentoft (2009), Whitehead (2003) and Jessop (2001, 2003) all conceptualize governance, as well as meta-governance, as being “*founded on certain basic principles and work according to a set of values that are made explicit*” (Kooiman & Jentoft, 2009: p.833). Governance is a fluid process which has and continues to evolve with the ongoing shift from government to networks of actors involved in the act of governing.

With a framework of what governance, and meta-governance, are it is appropriate to now examine some of the theories of governance. I suggest that

Kjaer's (2004) modification of Baudin's work to comment on governance theories is an apt one, where she writes,

"The army of governance theorists is so disparate that one is led to think that the word, governance, itself is like a label placed on a whole batch of bottles which are then distributed among diverse producers each of whom fills them with the drink of his choice. The consumer has to look carefully."
(p.188)

While this analogy is somewhat 'tongue and cheek', I contend that it is accurate in as far as the world of education is concerned and the relative difficulty, perhaps impossibility within international education, to find a single theory of governing which would apply to all international schools. An exchange I witnessed at a recent international education conference, I argue, illustrates the lack of any single theory of governing seen as applicable to all. The exchange was between 2 consultants, whose consulting focus is on governance, to international schools who were deriding the other's assertion of the most appropriate governing model for international schools. Nonetheless, it is germane to identify the various theories of governing, as Cornforth (2003) identifies, with the focus shifting from "*what matters in organizations is the way they are managed*" to a "*growing interest in how to improve the quality of governance*" (p.3).

2.3.3 Governing theories and models

Accepting Kjaer's (2004) assertion that

"there is not one coherent body of governance theory, and it is difficult to get a clear picture of what governance theory is about" (p.2)

has lead me to consider the works of Cornforth (2003), Macnamara (2005) and Gill (2005) to inform this discussion of governing.

Cornforth (2003) postulates that given the reality of how complex and sophisticated organizations are today that these theories offer a 'one-dimensional' perspective of governance and that a 'multi-paradigm' approach offers a better understanding of governance. He further postulates that there is a

“growing recognition that many management problems and issues require a move from linear thinking and simple either/or choices to seeing them as paradoxes” (2003: p.11).

Examining issues as a paradox requires *“embracing and exploring tensions and differences rather than choosing between them”* (Ibid: p.11).

In the spirit Cornforth described above rather than laying out each of the 3 researcher’s theories of governance, as if they were discreet entities, I will examine each researcher’s theories with the aim to find commonalities between their models. Based upon the commonalities, I have formulated 5 overarching theoretical model types. These model types are by no means meant to be a definitive set but rather a basis from which to compare and contrast the concepts. While not all of their theories, or models, fit neatly within my delineation this list does capture the majority of them. I have chosen: Traditional Governing, Policy-dominated Governing, Governing with a Democratic Focus, Stakeholder Governing, and Management Control Governing. The choice of the groupings was based upon an examination of each of the theories, of the respective author, and comparing and contrasting them with the theories of the other authors. The nomenclature for these groupings was designed to identify a central theme to the theories which comprise the grouping. In spite of the wide scope of theoretical model types, there are a few remaining theories and or models which will be discussed within a final section.

Traditional Governing

The intention of this section is to identify theories and models which have historically been dominant within either the public or private sectors. Traditional models of governance are ones, as Harris (1994) describes, where the board clearly sees their roles as guardians of the corporation or mission, in terms of charitable organizations. While Gill (2005) describes 9 models of governance, he identified *“three board types with a primary focus on governance”* (p.41), which are *Traditional, Policy Governance and Results-based*.

Cornforth (2003) identifies *Agency Theory – a compliance model* as the *“dominant theory of the corporation and corporate governance arrangements”* (p.7). Cornforth’s theory identifies the owner and those who manage the owner’s entity as having different interests. With this theory the primary function of a

board is to ensure compliance and control of its managers. This theory while prevalent within the corporate world has less applicability within the non-profit due to the often lack of clarity as to who the owners would be.

Within non-profit entities Gill's (2005) *Management model* shares a number of similarities to Cornforth's *Compliance Model*, in terms of the board maintaining control over almost all functions of the organization. In an organization under Gill's *Management Model*, if there are senior staff, such as a Head of School, "*that individual is clearly in a role subordinate*" (p.157) to that of those on the board. Gill's *Traditional model* is "*perhaps the most common board type historically used in the voluntary sector*" (ibid: p.158) and, as the name implies, has a 'top-down' structure. The *Traditional model* relies heavily on a committee structure. As Gill (2005) points out, committees "*are used to process information for the board and sometimes do the work for the board*" (ibid: p.158).

In my experience, while models within this framework may have a place within the business world, the case for their utilization within that of the world of international education is less clear cut. They do offer a strength to a board which is motivated towards the success of the organization, but, within an international education milieu, the notion that the senior manager's interests would vary from that of the board are less likely. If the core premise for an international school is assumed, in almost all cases, to be the education of students then the Head of School will be uniquely placed to have training and insight into how to most effectively guide the direction of the school. However, there is a good case for arguing that one area where this model would have some relevance is in terms of finance; in my professional experience, most educators come from national systems where historically they have little fiscal control and therefore little training in it either.

Policy-dominated Governing

I have identified Cornforth's *Partnership Model*, Mcnamara's *Carver Model* and Gill's *Policy Model* as all having attributes which would identify them as policy-dominated models of governing. Models which are policy-dominated are "*grounded in a human relations perspective*" (Cornforth, 2003: p.8) where the primary focus of the board is to "*improve organizational performance*" (ibid: p.8). These models share a common focus for a board to be primarily strategic, whereby the mission of the board is to ensure continued success through

strategic support of management. Cornforth's theory within this framework is the *Stewardship Theory* and the model is the *partnership model* which aptly describes the goal of the board and the management team. A central element to Cornforth's (2005) *partnership model* is the consideration of the need for drawing on the expertise of members of a board. Gill's (2005) *Results-based Model* is, in my estimation, from part of the policy-dominated typology of governing models, with the focus on the board's setting a clear direction to ensure optimum results, usually in terms of financial gains. The *Results-based Model* espouses the belief that the CEO should be delegated with the responsibility and authority to achieve the stated objectives of the organization. Macnamara's (2005) *Carver Model* and Gill's (2005) *Policy Model*, which Gill also refers to as the Carver Model, follow similar lines to Cornforth's in their desire to focus on performance and thereby the 'ends' in addition to a focus on policies.

These models espouse the use of policy to "*establish organizational aims {ends}*" (Gill, 2005: p.160). Carver, an American author, created this model where the focus is on policy governance. As Oliver (2009) explains the theory behind Carver's policy governance model which identifies the concept that "*organizations exist to fulfil their owners' purposes and that boards exist to represent those owners*" (p.4). Carver believes that this model of governance is applicable to any type of board and it can be referred to as "*a foundational technology of governance in that many other techniques can be adopted if kept within this framework*" (Carver, 2006: p.7). Carver has many followers within international education and there are a number of schools which have adopted his model, either in part or its entirety, to oversee the governance of their schools. As Oliver (2009) describes the model, it "*is a complete system through which boards can conceptualize, organize, and fulfil their mandate*" (p.2). Oliver goes on to claim that the *Carver Policy Governance Model* has "*become the single most influential model of governance in the world*" (p.2). While I concur that Carver's model has a strong following, within international education, I would assert that it is not the dominant approach within international education. Gill's (2005) review of the *Carver Model* acknowledges this point with his assertion that while numerous North American organizations have tried this mode,

"they have expressed frustration, saying it is too complex to understand and implement, requires too much time and training, creates too much distance between the board and organization and erodes board control and accountability" (p.39)

Gill (2005) offers an additional model which falls within this framework, the *Collective Model* where the focus of the board and the staff is on “*single team decision-making about governance and the work of the organization*” (p.156). Cornforth’s (2003) reference to human relations aptly describes the premise of Gill’s (2005) *Collective Model* whereby boards associated with this model are ones who are most commonly ‘single issue’ groups, often taking on an advocacy role within the community. Gill does, however, acknowledge that this model is best suited to small and/or emerging organizations.

While I have noted some of the perceived weaknesses of models within this type, there are most certainly benefits to these models. As acknowledged, international schools are a disparate group with no single coordinating organization. As such, schools are often left to ‘fend for themselves’ and with, in some cases, high turnovers of both boards and heads of school, having a model in place focused on policy has its merits. Having a board model focused on policy allows for a template which can be utilized regardless of the turnover of board members or the Head. The challenge, as with the Traditional Governing Models, is for organizations to recognize the strengths, and inherent weaknesses, of their dominant governing style and being prepared to augment it within another, thereby mitigating the weaknesses.

Democratic Focus Governing

Models having a Democratic Focus to governing draw upon a more western centred focus, where the underlying basis for the models are rooted in the notion that everyone deserves equal representation. Cornforth’s (2003) contribution to this form of governing is the *Democratic Perspective*, with the model of the same name. Cornforth argues that “*democratic government is a central institution in Western societies*” (2003: p.9) and his model espouses the virtues of this approach which include the notion of ‘one man, one vote’ along with pluralism whereby those who represent the public will do so representing different constituencies (Cornforth, 2003). This model can be seen in many international schools where there is a fully or partially elected board, typically constituted with parents of current students. This notion of electing board members identifies a probable reason for a dichotomy which exists within international schools and within a national system, independent schools. For example, in the US it would be almost unheard of to have a parent elected board within an independent school. The reason, I hypothesize, that we see so many

parent-elected boards in international schools can be traced back to the growth of diplomatic missions. As the US increased the number of foreign posts it needed to ensure there were schools for the dependents of its diplomats. The diplomatic staff, by and large, came from an experience in public education; as a result, as boards were formed for these new international schools, the public education model was copied. Finally, Cornforth (2003) also identifies that expertise, in terms of selecting board members with specific skill sets, need not be a central requirement which it would be within his *Partnership Model*.

Macnamara (2005) refers to his *Consensus Model* which I would describe as an egalitarian or democratic approach to governing where all board members are equal and this equality reaches beyond simply 'one man, one vote' but also to shared responsibility and liability. While both Macnamara (2005) and Cornforth's (2003) models are rooted within a western perspective and have their differences, they both share the same desire that their respective board clearly set out the organization's objectives and decision-making processes.

While the ideal of 'one man one vote' is laudable, the reality within international schools can often undermine the potential benefits this model may have. As having recently taken over an international school with a fully elected board, there are certainly potential shortcomings with this model's implementation. Parent involvement within international schools is not known to be strong, outside of a direct interest in things relating to their child. As an example, barely 25% of our parent body turned out for the annual General Assembly where the board was elected; as such, it is possible for pockets of the community to elect members to the board, which has the potential for creating challenges to the board being representative to all.

Stakeholder Governing

As the name implies, stakeholder governing entails boards being accountable to "a range of groups in society other than just the organizations' owners" (Cornforth, 2003: p.9). Cornforth's *Stakeholder Theory*, with a model of the same name, sees boards appointing a variety of stakeholders with the intended consequence being that the board "will be more likely to respond to broader social interests than the narrow interests of one" (Ibid: p.9).

Cornforth's stakeholder theory has applications in all sectors of governance from the private, where its utilization is as an alternate to having shareholders, to both the public and non-profit sectors. Cornforth (2003) notes that this theory has been utilized in the UK, within the field of education, as the government has legislated that "*state-funded schools are required to have governing bodies made up of people appointed or elected from various groups*" (p.10). Within the international education context this variety is often the case within schools, with elected boards especially, where a variety of national and cultural representations may be found. Additionally, a number of international school boards are mandated to have diplomatic representation on their board, based upon the original foundation of the school.

Macnamara (2005) offers the *Cortex Model*, which has as its focus the customers and clients of the institution. In addition to the focus on these groups is the parallel desire to measure the success of the institution to meet the needs of its clients or customers. As Macnamara identifies, "*the Board's main job under this model is to clarify and set the outcomes measures of success*" (p.1), with this in place the board is then able to turn its attention to ensuring the organization has the resources it needs to be successful. While this model is valuable in assisting a board to become more accountable and transparent it also has potential shortcomings should the board not be "*competent enough to understand the business well enough to clearly enunciate*" (Ibid: p.1) any outcomes measures. A board modelling the *Cortex Model* will clearly lay out its objectives and measures for success.

It is certainly true, amongst international schools with elected boards, that representation should be seen as inclusive rather than exclusive. Using Cornforth's UK example, this inclusiveness is more likely to be achieved within a more homogeneous population, as may still exist in a number of UK constituencies, as opposed to the often very heterogeneous international schools. In my experience, the reality within international schools is often that the minority represent the majority, as some cultures are averse to seeking out public representation. For these models to be more effective, within the international milieu, they need to mitigate this potentially inherent problem.

Management Control Governing

This form of governing, as the name implies, sees the management as the locus of control. Cornforth's (2003) *Managerial Hegemony Theory*, with its 'rubber stamp' model, outlines a reality which is dominated by having the control of the operations of a corporation within the management and the board is simply there in an overseeing role, other than in times of crisis. Cornforth describes a situation which can be traced back to the early 20th century and the work of Berle and Means (1932) and that

"although shareholders may legally own and control large corporations, they no longer effectively control them, control having been ceded to a new professional managerial class" (Cornforth, 2003: p.10).

Gill (2005) offers a similar model, the *Advisory Board Model* where he too coins the term of a 'rubber stamp' model, where the board is primarily to provide legitimacy to the organization and "*governing is only in a nominal sense*" (Gill, 2005: p.161). Gill warns that this model has inherent risks to board members and is not advisable for an independent organization. However, Gill laments that

"many boards fall into this model by default, either by abdicating their governance responsibilities through excessive reliance on a CEO or by allowing a powerful CEO to usurp those responsibilities" (Ibid: p.162).

Theories and models for unique roles

As with all taxonomies, there are those models which do not fit neatly within the framework. Most of these theories are for unique purposes for the governance of an organization. Gill (2005) offers several models which generally have a time element to them. Gill's *Operational Model* describes a situation where the board is doing the work of both the board and the management and is most often associated with the "*founding stage of pre-incorporation through incorporation and into early post-incorporation*" (p.155). This is then an evolutionary model. Gill's *Constituent Representational Board* fills a very particular function which is "*typical of publicly elected-bodies, federations and other constituency-elected boards*" (2005: p.158). These boards often, especially within publicly elected boards, have "*grievance-resolution or ombudsmen-like functions*" (ibid: p.158). Gill's final model within this framework is the *Fundraising*

Board whose main focus is to raise funds to support charitable causes. There is an expectation that board members will be directly responsible for the raising of funds for their respective cause. However, they are normally at 'arm's length' from those who are the beneficiary of the funds raised.

Cornforth's (2003) *Resource dependency theory*, with its co-option model, is designed for boards that are looking to

"maintain good relations with key external stakeholders in order to ensure the flow of resources into and from the organization" (p.8-9).

This also includes the concept of 'boundary-spanning' where the board wishes to include within its membership individuals who have links to agencies which can be of benefit of the organization.

Macnamara's (2005) *Competency Board*, which he describes as developmental, is designed to ensure that its board members have the skill and knowledge to fulfil their obligations within their roles and responsibilities as board members. This model's strengths are embedded in its ability to recruit and develop board members but *"it doesn't drive policy creation"* (Macnamara, 2005).

In reviewing the works of Cornforth (2003), Macnamara (2005) and Gill (2005) I believe it becomes apparent that it is unlikely that any one grouping of governing theories would meet the needs for all international schools. Governing and international schools share a common trait of both being comprised of a wide-ranging set of styles, each with its own parameters. Additionally, to add to the complexity of international education, the governing of schools may successfully borrow from more than one governing type. However, I also believe that many in the field of international education consider that successful governance must, by definition, subscribe to one type, which I assert to be inappropriate. It is also germane to acknowledge the difference between theories of governance and theories for governance. The former refers to models, which can be used for analysing governance and governing, while theories for governance are the basis on which governing is structured and enacted.

2.3.4 What constitutes good governance?

To some the term 'good governance' might be an oxymoron. Thus Drucker (1974) laments that there

"is one thing all boards have in common, regardless of their legal position. They do not function. The decline of the board is a universal phenomenon of this century" (p.628).

However accurate Drucker's comments may be I believe, as I am confident Drucker would too, that to aspire to good governance is certainly realistic and may even be attainable. It is also worth acknowledging that Drucker's assertions were made over a quarter of a century ago and significant strides have been made in improving board governance. Gill (2005) aptly describes good governance as being *"both about achieving desired results and achieving them in the right way"* (2005: p.29) which points one in the direction of understanding that good governance is as much about the means as the ends. However, Gill's comments describe the 'what' rather than the 'how'. What attributes are connected to good governance?

In reviewing the literature, I found a plethora of ways to define good governance often in terms of the type of governance that the author espoused. As an example, in Jessop's (2003) work on governance he refers to a reflexive self-organization and that the attributes fall in line with this just as Chait's (2005) descriptions of governance as leadership lead him to examine good governance in terms of leadership.

While I concede arguments can be made for a variety of descriptor models for what constitutes good governance, I have chosen to use Board Source and their 'Twelve Principles of Governance that power exceptional boards' (2005) in conjunction with the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) International Trustee Handbook (2007) to consider the principles of good governance. I was first made aware of Board Source by the Executive Director of one of the US accreditation organizations who considered it 'his bible' for assisting schools in attaining good governance. As Chait (2005) acknowledges, Board Source is the *"premier resource for practical information, new ideas, and leadership development for board members of non profit organizations worldwide"* (p. X). The NAIS handbook (2007) also follows along

these lines, as the NAIS itself is a non-profit organization for other non-profit organizations. I contend that using a non-profit model for this research is appropriate given that it was the founding premise of most international schools and one that remains for a significant number. For those schools operating a for-profit model this differentiation will be acknowledged at the end of this subsection.

Board Source (2005) believes that

“good governance requires the board to balance its role as an oversight body with its role as a force supporting the organization” (p. 1).

The twelve principles of governance are: *Constructive Partnerships, Mission Driven, Strategic Thinking, Culture of Inquiry, Independent Mindedness, Ethos of Transparency, Sustaining Resources, Results-Oriented, Intentional Board Practices, Continuous Learning, and Revitalization.*

Constructive Partnerships

Constructive partnerships *“recognizes that the effectiveness of the board and chief executive are interdependent”* (Board Source, 2005: p.3). NAIS (2007) challenges board trustee’s to *“work to keep the board’s relationship with the head a dynamic and positive one”* (p. 13). A fundamental tenet of this partnership is the notion that while a board respects the division of labour they also become an ally of the chief executive in the pursuit of the mission. Gill (2005) comments in his research that many boards *“experienced problems because they had made no clear demarcation between governance and management roles”* (2005: p.41), or as Otto (2003) very succinctly points out, that a central tenet to appropriate board operations is the notion that *“boards governed and managers managed”* (2003: p.134). As Carver (2006) acknowledges, *“no single relationship in the organization is as important as that between the board and its CEO”* (2006: p.153).

Mission Driven

Being mission driven is to *“uphold the mission, articulate a compelling vision, and ensure the congruence between decisions and core values”* (Board Source, 2005: p.6), which is congruent to NAIS’ (2007) belief that a trustee

should “*fully understand and support the school’s mission, vision, and core values*” (p.7). Gill (2005) echoes this sentiment as he describes good governance to include not only a vision but the values that need to form the foundation for the organization as well as maintain vigilance. Macnamara (2005) adds to Gill’s notion of vision with his belief that good governance includes the board’s “empowerment of management toward a clearly established vision” (Macnamara, 2005). Carver (2006) in his design for policy governance believes that a model of good governance needs the board to “*Cradle the vision*” and “*explicitly address fundamental values*” (2006: p.30).

Strategic Thinking

Within this strategic thinking principle, a board will make certain that significant time is allocated to strategic thinking and acknowledge that “*strategic thinking derives from and drives strategic planning*” (Board Source, 2005: p.8) because for a trustee,

“one of the tools to perform your governance role effectively is a strategic plan derived from the mission of and vision for the school” (NAIS, 2007: p.53).

It is critical that this process is not seen as a periodic exercise but rather as part of a board’s on going responsibilities. This is in line with Gill’s (2005) belief that good governance must include direction, echoed by Carver’s (2006) assertion that a board “*thrust the majority of its thinking into the future*” (2006: p.31).

Culture of Inquiry

The crux of this principle of a culture of inquiry refers to the attention to group dynamics by a board and ensuring that the board is operating as a single corporate body, as “*authority is vested in the board as a whole*” (NAIS, 2007: p.14), as opposed to allowing it to become the forum of individual members. Certainly this would be vital when dealing with boards which are either fully or partly elected. I contend that this is what Gill (2005) is referring to, at least in part, when he includes participation as part of what constitutes good governance, which is in line with the notion that “*board members respectfully listen to, acknowledge, and solicit different points of view*” (Board Source, 2005: p.10).

Independent-mindedness

Similar to the *Culture of Inquiry*, this concept of independent-mindedness offers a critical lesson for boards which are elected, in whole or part, that they must work to make sure that the board has the “*ability to put the organization’s interests first*” (Board Source, 2005: p.12). An integral element to this is the willingness of a board to create a “*conflict-of-interest policy that includes guidelines for disclosure, review, and recusal*” (ibid: p.12). NAIS (2007) believes that the success of a school is dependent upon, in part, “*the ability of individuals to govern themselves with integrity and hold the school in trust*” (p.172).

Ethos of Transparency

Within the Ethos of Transparency is the belief that

“it is in the organization’s best interest to develop open relationships with staff and donors, as well as stakeholders and the larger community” (ibid: p.14)

which NAIS (2007) refers to as a “*web of relationships*” (2007: p.139). I believe this ethos of transparency to be one of the more critical components as it has a significant impact not only on non-profit schools but the growing number of for-profit international schools. In national systems there is often legislation governing the need for transparency but this is rarely the case within international schools. Gill (2005) acknowledges that transparency is vital not only with respect to decision making but to operations, mirroring Macnamara’s (2005) belief that good governance includes open communication with the public and access.

Compliance with integrity

The notion of compliance with integrity revolves around a board’s “*fundamental task to ensure that the organization operates legally and ethically*” (Board Source, 2005: p.16). Within the board structure, they should “*promote strong ethical values and disciplined compliance by establishing appropriate mechanisms for active oversight*” (Board Source, 2005: p.15). Gill concurs in his construction of what constitutes good governance. Carver’s policy governance also draws upon this with “*universally accepted principles of accountable*

governance" (Carver, 2006: p.329) which outlines 8 principles of accountable governance. These are

- *"The board governs on behalf of all owners*
- *The board is the highest authority in the company, below only the owners.*
- *The board is the initial authority in the company.*
- *The board is accountable for everything about the company.*
- *All authority and accountability is vested in the board as a group.*
- *Governance roles and executive roles have different purposes.*
- *Delegation should be maximized, short of risking the board's fulfilment of its accountability,*
- *Assessing board performance requires evaluation of both governance and management."*

(Ibid: p.329)

This notion, within the international context, takes on even greater potential significance given the lack of requisite oversight as would be normally found within a national context, something Macnamara (2005) and NAIS (2007) argue for, in the need for effective oversight and both go on to describe a 'Duty of Care'.

Sustaining Resources

Board Source (2005) identifies sustaining resources as ensuring a balance between creating ambitious plans and ensuring the financial support to sustain them. Where many international schools are heavily reliant on tuition fees, as their primary source to fund their operational budget, this creates a significant challenge for a board. Board Source (2005) sees good governance as necessitating that *"boards link bold visions and ambitious plans to financial support, expertise, and networks of influence"* (p.17). NAIS (2007) cautions trustees to acknowledge that they are accountable *"for both the financial stability and the financial future of the institution"* (p.10). Gill (2005) echoes this but is more precise in his warning that providing resources in order to achieve the aims of the institution must be done *"without undue risks to stakeholders"* (p.29).

Results-oriented

A board is called upon to move beyond the mundane review of year-end reports to *"measure the organization's advancement towards the mission and evaluate the performance of major programs and services"* (Board Source, 2005: p.19). Gill's (2005) inclusion of monitoring results uses less strenuous language

in indicating a board should be “*periodically ensuring that the organization is well-maintained and progressing*” (p.29). I believe within the international context that a formula more closely resembling Board Source’s than Gill’s is more appropriate given the normally absent requisite oversight.

Intentional Board Practices

This concept of Intentional Board Practices could easily have been pulled from the Carver approach to governance through policy. Board Source (2005) indicates that through the creation of the policies that “*boards create structures that guide how they come together as a governing body*” (p.22). These policies make the work of the board more deliberate and with a purpose, allowing for decisions to be made in a timely manner and, as NAIS (2007) points out, members of the board should see themselves as

“the ultimate custodian of the school’s well-being and its future...approving and monitoring policies as a tool to achieve this end”
(p.41).

Continuous Learning & Revitalization

While Board Source identifies continuous learning and revitalization as separate principles, I consider them as operating in tandem. While the Continuous Learning mirrors Gill’s (2005) notion of a board evaluating its own performance it moves further by including how the board has added value to the organization. I see the principle of Revitalization as a part of this through including the “*planned turnover, thoughtful recruitment, and inclusiveness*” (Board Source, 2005: p.25) as part of the learning paradigm, where a board learns and this impacts the aforementioned decisions.

Although Board Source does not explicitly acknowledge ‘for profit’ education, NAIS does in their International Trustee Handbook. Given the number of international schools that are owned, it is more than prudent to comment on this structure. NAIS (2007) starts with the acknowledgement that “*an independent school is a business – and the business is education*” (p.160). NAIS goes on to state, what may appear obvious, that both a non-profit international school and a for-profit one needs “*a positive financial balance at the end of the fiscal year*” (ibid: p.160). While it neither condones nor condemns the model of a for profit school, NAIS lays out what it believes are the difference between the 2 models but does

so in comparing not 2 schools, one for profit and one not, but rather contrasting a for profit business with an independent school. It is my assertion that this is not relevant and mirrors the distance NAIS and the accreditation organizations need to bridge between what has been the historical model of independent, or international, schools to the multi-variant model we have today.

2.3.5 Governance within education

A historical perspective

While I have made references, in the writing above, to international education, the overwhelming focus was on governance from a more generic standpoint as opposed to focusing on any one type of institution or organization. This section will examine governance within international education through a lens informed from the literature reviewed and the earlier cited work on governance.

Just as with the evolution of governance within the corporate world, so too has the governance within educational institutions evolved. In analysing the nature of the governing of international schools this research, will draw its data from educational institutions responsible for the education of students from the start of the educational continuum, commonly referred to as kindergarten, through to the completion of their secondary education. Historically, governance, in education, has been centralized. This centralization can be on a national scale, such as in South Africa and Singapore (Bush, 2001), or on a more regional basis, such as in the UK prior to 1988, where “*control was largely in the hands of local education authorities (LEAs)*” (Balarin et al, 2009: p.10). However just as the corporate world has seen a shift towards decentralization, “*the final decade of the twentieth century has seen a major shift to self-governance for schools*” (Bush, 2001: p.39). This shift has been deliberate and been “*underpinned by the assumption that greater autonomy will lead to improved educational outcomes*” (ibid: p.39). While this notion has significant support within the educational community it should be acknowledged that while

“educational governance does not ‘cause’ student outcomes, but it can be an important contributor to the overall effectiveness of a school system” (Brewer et al, 2008: p.21).

While there are a number of typologies of international schools, based primarily on their curriculum model, the 2 dominant types are American and British curriculum type schools. As such, I will explore the shift in how schools have been governed within these 2 jurisdictions as I contend that the majority, at this time, of those who both manage and govern international schools come from one of these 2 systems.

The British Experience

The 20th century was marked with the devolution from school boards to local authorities. This process began just after the turn of the 20th century with the passing of the 1902 Education Act, and this continued for over half a century where *“control over schools was largely in the hands of local education authorities (LEAs)”* (Balarin et al, 2009: p.10). LEAs were appointing those who would ostensibly govern schools, within their jurisdiction, but given the *“vague definition of duties left the power in schools very much in the hands of the headteacher”* (Gann, 1998: p.15).

Following on from the aforementioned shift to local authorities was a move, in the latter decades of the 20th century, to create a *“framework in which schools could be accountable to their communities”* (Gann,1998: p.20). Two pieces of legislation, the 1986 Act and the more sweeping 1988 Education Reform Act, saw significant changes within all sectors of education (Gann, 1998; Balarin et al, 2009). The 1988 legislation had a direct impact on governance where *“governing bodies became central to school administration, especially in relation to schools’ strategic planning and accountability”* (Balarin et al, 2009: p.11).

The reform movement continued into the 21st century with the 2004 Children Act which in some ways reversed the trend leading to a *“reconstitution of the education service and social care services into an integrated children’s service”* (Balarin et al, 2009: p.12). This latest incarnation by the UK government is in stark contrast to the American experience. One of the most significant results of this legislation, in terms of the governance of schools, is a *“new form of community governance”* (ibid: p.13). While schools are still able to self-manage, the focus is shifting to one of collaboration between schools, within a geographic area. This interplay between schools, which still have a degree of autonomy, and the integrated local services has created a landscape where *“the relationship*

between schools and local authority has become increasingly complicated" (ibid: p.13). I contend that this is directly opposite to the model, adopted by the US and other western countries, of site-based management (SBM). It is noteworthy though that devolution within the UK has not been uniform. It can be argued that within the UK there has been a greater emphasis on autonomy than in Scotland where LEAs still retain an important role.

The American Experience

In addition to being a significantly larger educational system than the UK, *"Americans govern their schools with a system as complicated as the country is vast"* (Manna, 2007: p.3). Since independence, in 1776, provision of education, both elementary and secondary, has been the quintessential state and local function. While this framework remains largely intact it is not accurate to portray that there is not a national agenda also at play. In 2001, the US federal government passed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation which *"extended the federal government's reach into the nation's public schools more deeply than ever before"* (Manna, 2007: p.3). While geography does play a part in the disparate nature of education within the US, it is also influenced by the number of entities which have access to impacting decisions and *"is characterized by bodies that have overlapping responsibilities across executive, legislative and judicial jurisdictions"* (Brewer, 2008: p.21).

As far back as the 19th century the local lay trustees *"had powers unmatched in any system of public education in the world"* (ECS, 1999: p.22); this has similarities to the British model of the same time. During the 19th and 20th centuries the US experienced a growth in urbanization and this resulted in a more centralist approach to the operation of school systems. However, it was during the latter part of the 20th century where some of the most significant changes to the landscape of education took place, where the US *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka* was to many one of the most seminal changes where the US Supreme Court ruled on the legality of intentional segregation. Following on this legal decision was the passing of federal legislation, in 1965, which focused on disadvantaged children and had the effect to open the door for future federal intervention within non post-secondary education.

The latter part of the 20th century saw continued change within public education in the US. The National Commission on Excellence in Education's report entitled, '*A Nation at Risk*',

"predicted in hyperbolic terms the demise of the United States as an international educational leader if it did not improve public education" (ECS,1999: p.23).

This period, through the last years of the 20th century, saw the pendulum swing from a centralized approach to one of decentralization, which included the notion of choice, within a public system. This new era of being able to choose including new types of options, such as charter schools, and the concept of a 'voucher system', where a parent could 'take their government funding' to whichever school they wished for their child. However, the most marked shift was to change the governance structure to one of SBM, where responsibility moved from the board to an individual school. The "*underlying premise of SBM is that school-level participants trade increased autonomy for increased accountability*" (Wohlsetter & Sebring, 2000: p.174). From over 80 empirical studies Wohlsetter & Sebring identified 4 basic formats for SBM, "*administrative control, professional control, community-control, and balanced control (ie., balance among school professionals, parents and community members)*" (ibid: p.26). It is, however, worth noting that even with SBM there is still an element of central oversight, especially with respect to the role of the Superintendent. Within the US system of education a Superintendent is the overall head of a school division, which is determined by geography and demographics. The Superintendent is responsible for empowering the heads of individual schools through the SBM.

While there are a few noteworthy exceptions, such as the United World Colleges (UWC) or some 'franchise models' such as the Dulwich Colleges, the vast majority of international schools are not financially or otherwise connected, other than through loosely knit professional development organizations, such as ECIS (European Council of International Schools). Given this reality most schools within the international context would fit within the aforementioned SBM model.

2.3.6 Governing within international schools today

As elusive as the notions of international education and schools are so too it can be said about defining governing within international education. As

Hayden (2006) points out even the nomenclature for international school governance can be confusing. Hayden (2006) was drawing on Schoppert's (2001) work where his study European Council of International Schools (ECIS) (2001) reported that:

"most (27% and 20% respectively) had a board of directors or board of governors, while 18% had a board of trustees. The remaining 35% had various names, with no one title being more common than the 6% referred to as the school board" (Schoppert, 2001: p.163).

Malpass (1994) argues that this variation in nomenclature is more than cosmetic. Malpass contends that there is a significant difference between a 'director' and a 'trustee', especially in terms of the implied roles; he believes that relations between a head of school and the board can be potentially more harmonious *"if the terminology used provided a clearer understanding of their respective roles"* (Malpass, 1994: p.24).

As I contend, supported by Malpass (1994), Hayden (2006) and others, the very acknowledgement that international schools are ostensibly 'islands unto themselves' can be a handicap, especially in terms of governing. With no central entity to fall back on, schools are left to 'fend for themselves' and, as Malpass (1994) laments that

"despite many years of independent management experience, it is still the case that certain schools continue to run into management difficulties" (ibid: p.22).

Blandford and Shaw (2001) add to Malpass' sentiment in commenting on studies which have *"demonstrated that problematic relationships between the board and the school make the task of the school leader more complex"* (2001: p.9).

In spite of the elusive nature of some aspects of identifying governing, within international schools, it is still possible to appreciate the structure of governing within international schools. Littleford (2002) in his extensive work with international schools acknowledges, as does Schoppert (2001b), that there are 3 main board structures within international schools: self-perpetuating, elected, and appointed boards. Brammer et al (2010) also identify 3 models of governing, within international schools, based upon the work of the National Association of

Independent Schools (NAIS). These models are: the *parents' cooperative model*, the *Carver model*, and the *Corporate model*. Brammer et al's (2010) models mirror Littleford (2002) and Schoppert's (2001) with respect to the *parents' cooperative model* which closely resembles their elected board and their *Corporate model* would be similar to the self-perpetuating of Littleford and Schoppert.

However, Littleford (2002) further refines these 3 typologies into 7 types, as outlined in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Littleford's (2002) Board Types and a description of the composition and significance of each.

#	Board Type	Description & Significance
1	Self-Perpetuating	Typically the most stable and leads to the best long term decisions.
2	Elected – Type 1	The board is elected annually from the AGM of the parent body. Structure most noted for single focused personal agendas.
3	Elected – Type 2	The board itself screens, recruits, nominates and markets candidates to the parent assembly to try and ensure endorsement. Better structure than #2, not as stable as #1.
4	Appointed by Outside Groups	Often involving embassy and/or key corporate stakeholders. This type potentially risks stability due to a lack of parent representation.
5	Combination of #1 + other chosen by the parent body	The elected component often feels a need to be elected voices for one group and not as a trustee of the mission.
6	Combination - chosen by board, by outside entities	These tend to be generally very stable boards but often lack parent involvement, which would address any instability.
7	Dual Boards	A more powerful 'shadow' board hold the real power, often individuals, embassies or corporations. The 'constituent' board is allowed to make most policy decision, but the 'shadow' one controls key decisions.

(Littleford, 2002)

I would argue that Littleford's (2002) delineation of how international boards are constructed is a more realistic framework as it allows for a continuum of the governing types which exists within international education to be included. With respect to schools which are owned Littleford's 'Dual Boards' format presents an option which may be attractive to the owners. The 'Dual Board' format allows the owners to retain ultimate control while providing a structure which would satisfy both the school's management's desire to have an effective operational structure as well as the wider community's potential hope for transparency.

In addition to the aforementioned works, there are also other organizations which have identified governing models which have potential relevance.

2.3.7 Modes of governing of international schools

International schools share many similarities with private schools, the so-called 'independent schools' in the UK or US. They have a high degree of autonomy in relation to national regulation. They are strongly exposed to market forces; many are reliant on fee income, which will be related to their status and success. The basis upon which they 'stand or fall' is, in large measure, based on their own merits. Moreover, they are only loosely connected to and associate with one another. Of course, many private schools do not operate entirely independently of national systems; indeed it would be remarkable if they did. Thus independent schools in England are subject to inspection by Ofsted. Interestingly, as I observed while in China, international schools in China must also be accredited by the national Chinese accrediting body, the National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development (NCCT). Thus private schools are not always totally independent of national governance systems.

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) provides starting points to classify international schools in terms of modes of school governing as well as cautionary tales of what should be avoided in embracing any particular mode (NAIS 2009). It identifies 3 models of governing, within independent schools, but only fully endorses one of them.

NAIS Parents' Cooperative Model

NAIS Parents' Cooperative Model is where the governing body of the school comprises parents of pupils attending the school. This model can be compared to democratic-focused governing, delineated earlier in this chapter. This model is often used in Montessori schools (Montessori AMI Society UK 2008) and, to a lesser extent, a number of independent schools. The NAIS believes that:

“this model is fatally flawed since it naturally and typically focuses primarily on the short term, is biased towards parental opinion, and is inclined on too many occasions toward a crisis posture that undermines school leadership and board governance” (NAIS 2009: p.1).

NAIS consider this model to be one that schools would 'grow out of' as they mature as institutions. The model has a variant, the Waldorf Model, which is 'faculty-driven' as opposed to 'parent-driven', but it too is seen as having broadly the same paradoxes inherent within its design given the interest of faculty members tend to be immediate or short term rather than with the longer-term strategy and securing of the institution the future of the organization (NAIS 2009).

NAIS Carver Model

The Carver model is one referred to by numerous authors in the field including Gill, Macnamara and Cornforth, and their various models have been referred to earlier in this report. While the Carver model has strengths in contrast to the 'constituent-driven models' such as the Parents' Cooperative or Waldorf models, its limitations are in the lack of responsibility at the governing body level for the institution's financial affairs. Thus the weaknesses of this model are:

“due to the lack of a financial oversight committee and anaemic board involvement in fund raising. Others (models) are concerned about a possible disconnect between the model and strategic oversight of the organization” (NAIS 2009: p.1).

NAIS Corporate Model

In the NAIS Corporate Model, the model endorsed by the NAIS, the Board has a strategic overseeing role and is not concerned with 'operational' matters –

unless they have particular implications for the institution's immediate security and future development. This model also incorporates elements of the policy-dominated governing while trying to avoid some of the identified pitfalls attached to stakeholder and management-control governing. This model is seen as the preferred option because of its 'above the fray' approach. This stance frees the board to focus on the more substantive issues of institutional stability and growth. It also sends a strong signal to the community that the board has confidence in the leadership of the school, and will not allow itself to become embroiled in management decision-making and conflict. Typically, this model of governance has a self-perpetuating board as its foundation, where the board itself is responsible for its own recruitment, and even where there are elections, for example for parent members, the board may vet the candidates.

The NAIS models reveal some major pre-occupations in school governing: a concern with long term strategic issues as opposed to being diverted inappropriately by short term sectional interests; the development of policies, monitoring and scrutiny in order to ensure that the school 'does what it is supposed to do'; and a requirement to maintain the financial security of the institution.

Understanding the composition and structure of a board is only addressing part of the equation. I would assert that, as Hodgson (2005) found, boards of international schools, especially those which have been in existence for a reasonable period of time, fail to keep up with the change. The model of governing, for the founding international schools and many that followed after, is often taken from 19th and 20th century philanthropy. As Hodgson (2005) comments,

"when one reflects on the evolution of school administration in the last 100 years, the lack of similar change in the approach to governance is remarkable" (2005: p.7).

Hodgson's (2005) comments highlight what will be a theme within this enquiry, that of the need for on-going training for members of international school governing bodies.

The governing of international schools is a complex puzzle of typologies both of the school itself and the governing style adopted. In addition to the

structural complexity is the transient nature of many boards and this transience is exacerbated by a seemingly perpetual lack of on going board training. All of these issues are then part of an entity which is meant to be the mode through which a school's mission and vision are realized.

2.3.8 Who is responsible for ensuring the appropriate governance of international schools and how?

If the majority of international schools are individual entities with no substantive connection to each other, then it begs the question as to how any degree of oversight takes place. There is no singular entity, such as Ofsted within the UK, which is responsible for oversight. However, as Fertig (2007) points out, this is beginning to change in some countries. He comments that in Dubai "*all schools, public and private, are being required to gain accreditation if they wish to continue to operate*" (p.335), which is similar to what is occurring in China, under the auspices of The National Council on Curriculum and Textbook development (NCCT). While there are these instances of international schools being required to seek accreditation the occurrence of this is still sporadic at best. As a result, there are a number of organizations which have taken up the challenge of offering oversight through the process of accreditation of schools.

Within the US, there are 5 organizations which are responsible for accreditation: WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges), MSA (Middle States Association), NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges), and AdvancED (which is the combined organization for what was formerly the North Central and the Southern Association) and NAAS (the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools). Outside of North America there is CIS (Council of International Schools) and CfBT, both are UK based organizations who offer accreditation services to international schools. However, at this time, CfBT is a very minor player having only accredited less than 20 international schools in Asia. It is important to note that there is a difference, in international education terms, between accreditation, by the aforementioned agencies, and authorization, which is what the International Baccalaureate (IB) performs when it authorizes their curriculum programs. Authorization, in this context, merely examines a curriculum framework or model which a school chooses to employ and does not extend to examining any other aspects of school operations, especially governance.

While there is a degree of crossover, a few of these organizations have agreed to offer 'joint accreditations', such as CIS and WASC or CIS and NEASC, there has been no coordinated approach to governance beyond the fact that they offer a program of accreditation which has definite similarities. I contend that this will have to change in order for there to be any systematic approach to governance standards for all international schools. As each accreditation organization is ostensibly a 'stand alone' organization, I have chosen to examine each in turn to review how they approach accreditation with respect to the area of governance.

Regardless of the entity chosen for accreditation, all the organizations adhere to a similar format, which has at its core a process which is "*predicated upon a mixture of internal school self-review and external element consisting of review by professional peers*" (Fertig, 2007: p.336). The format used in general terms can be seen to be representative for all organizations, as I contend that any particular differences, in terms of planning etcetera, are not germane to this discussion. Once a school decides it wishes to become accredited it first chooses an organization, or 2 in terms of a joint-accreditation. While it is not a hard and fast rule, the US-based accreditation organizations are generally found in specific parts of the world, based largely upon historical relationships and decisions by the US government; as an example, WASC is the primary accreditation organization for international schools in the Pacific region which I contend has more to do with proximity, as WASC is based in California, than pedagogy. Once the organization is chosen, the school applies for consideration; the chosen organization will arrange a 'site visit' to ensure that a school is at a stage where it would be appropriate to enter into the accreditation process.

Once approval to continue is granted the school enters into the 'self-study' phase; a 'self-study' can last anywhere from a year to 18 months and this is where the school does an extensive internal review of all aspects of the institution, including governance. Members of the 'self study' shall include all stakeholders of the school, including members of the governing body.

Once this study is completed and submitted the accreditation organization will put together a 'visiting team' of educators, both from other international schools within the region as well as members from the accreditation organization(s). The 'visiting team' will range in size, dependent upon the size and complexity of the school. In my last school, in China, the 'visiting team',

which was from both CIS and NEASC, was 18-strong. After the visit a report is submitted, by the visiting team, to the accreditation organization(s) with a recommendation as to whether or not to accredit the school. The board of the accreditation organization(s) makes the decision as to whether or not to accredit the school. Once accreditation is granted it is then subject to reviews (NEASC, 2010; WASC, 2010; MSA, 2010). Accreditation is reviewed as follows, in Figure 4:

Figure 4: The various timeframes for the award of accreditation, by organization.

Accreditation Organization	Length of time before review
NEASC	1 st a follow-up report within 24 months, with the first report due after 5 years.
WASC	1 st a follow-up on any recommendations in the 3 rd year and then the next report after six years.
MSA	For MSA it is a 7-year cycle.
AdvancED	For AdvancED it is a 5-year cycle.
CIS	1 st a follow-up report within 24 months, with the first report due after 5 years.

In the following sub-sections, I describe and analyse the accrediting processes of the major accrediting organizations.

New England Association of Schools & Colleges

NEASC is the oldest of the US accreditation organizations, formed in 1885. Its domestic remit is to be responsible for the accreditation of over 2,000 schools and universities within the geographic region of the north eastern United States, including Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. However, in addition to the above, NEASC also has accredited schools in 67 countries worldwide. As their Executive Director comments,

“The accreditation process we have developed over the years is a major vehicle that can and should be used to bring about educational improvement at all levels of schooling” (NEASC, 2010a).

NEASC’s involvement in the accreditation of international and American schools abroad, this distinction is found on their web site, is through their

Commission on American and International Schools Abroad (CAISA). According to their web site,

“Accreditation by NEASC is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and indicates that a school meets or exceeds established criteria within the profession for the assessment of institutional quality through a periodic process of self-study and peer review. An accredited school has the resources to achieve its stated purposes and provides evidence that its students are benefiting from the curricular and co-curricular program offered at the school.” (NEASC, 2010b).

Their web site identifies that they have a joint accreditation process with CIS.

In 2003, NEASC and CIS jointly produced a ‘7th Edition Institutional Guide’ which is used for the accreditation process. This guide would be used by international and American schools as they prepare for their accreditation. According to the guide’s glossary of terms, they view a governing body as,

“this term applies to the duly constituted group which has the ultimate authority to make decisions on behalf of the school. In a given school it may be known as the School Board, the School Council, the Governing Council, the Board of Governors, the Board of Directors, the Board of Trustees, etc.” (NEASC, 2010b: p.6).

The 7th edition Institutional Guide discusses the benefits from the accreditation process which includes that it offers a reassurance to both parents and faculty that the school has been accredited by a respected agency. The Guide further outlines that to other organizations, such as universities, that being accredited shows a “*school offers a quality education*” (NEASC, 2010b: p. 10).

The guide has a number of sections, Section ‘C’ refers to ‘Governance & Management’. The guide defines governance, for the purposes of their accreditation, as,

“There are many different models of governance in international schools, and the accreditation of a particular school does not imply that the school need adopt a specific one. Nevertheless, there are essential characteristics which been found to operate in the interests of developing

a quality school. Chief among these are the need to differentiate between governance and management, the written definitions of respective roles, continuing training in and regular evaluation of the key people, and good working relationships.” (NEASC, 2010b: p.43)

The part of the ‘self-study’ which refers to governance requires the school to submit some 22 pieces of documentary evidence which ranges from aspects of the school’s finances to the school’s policies for governing. The ‘self study’ team will then be asked to self-rate the school’s governance against a set of 9 standards and indicators related to these standards (See Appendix 1). The standards are:

1. *“The governing body shall be so constituted, with regard to membership and organization, as to provide the school with sound direction, continuity and effective support.*
2. *There shall be a co-operative and effective working relationship between the governing body and the Head of School.*
3. *The Head of School, although accountable to a higher authority, shall be the responsible leader of the school.*
4. *The school shall have educational and financial plans for the short, medium and long term, with strategies for accomplishing the school’s goals and for assessing the effectiveness of the actions taken.*
5. *The school shall observe legal and ethical principles in all its dealings with the school community.*
6. *The governing body shall have clearly formulated policies set out in a policy manual to give consistency and order to its operations, and it shall ensure that these policies are understood by the school community.*
7. *The financial resources of the school shall be capable of sustaining a sound educational program, consistent with its stated philosophy and objectives, and of providing for long-term stability.*
8. *The management of the school’s finances shall be, at all times, in accordance with the standards which operate in the host country and shall be consistent with best practice in international schools.*
9. *Parents or others enrolling students shall be informed in advance of the precise nature and scope of the financial obligations and be given an estimate of the total expenses.”*

(NEASC, 2010b: p 46-50)

While there are 9 standards, I have categorized them in terms of 3 overarching areas: governance, fiduciary responsibilities and legal requirements. I see Standards 4 and 7 through 9 as dealing primarily with fiduciary responsibility, Standards 5 and 6 dealing with the legal requirement which leaves only the first 3 having to deal with governance, and I argue that these 3 areas do not delve deeply enough into what is required to ensure a positive governance-management relationship, a theme which I believe is recurrent within the evaluation of these accreditation guidelines.

As part of the 'self-study', the committee will evaluate all these standards, and their related indicators, in terms of whether or not the institution meets them.

Western Association of Schools & Colleges (WASC):

WASC is based in California and is primarily responsible for the accreditation of educational organizations within California, Hawaii, Guam and much of Micronesia and a number of smaller areas within the Pacific. In addition it has stated that it *"is pleased to be working with schools in the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS) to provide evaluation and accreditation services."* (WASC, 2010a). WASC also undertakes joint accreditations with CIS.

WASC defines governance as,

"The governing authority (a) adopts policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school, (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff and (c) monitors results." (WASC, 2010b: p.7).

WASC refers to their accreditation process as 'Focus on Learning' and they provide an 'Overseas Manual' specifically for those schools within the international marketplace (WASC, 2010c). WASC has 5 broad areas for their accreditation process. Governance does not have its own section but is rather found within Section 'A' which is entitled 'Organization for student learning'; this section has 7 subsections, of which Governance is the second. (WASC, 2010b)

The WASC accreditation process has 9 indicators within section 'A2' on Governance. These are:

1. *"Clear Policies and Procedures,*
2. *Pretraining of Potential Board Members,*
3. *Relationship of Policies,*
4. *Involvement of Governing Authority,*
5. *School Community Understanding,*
6. *Relationship to Professional Staff,*
7. *Evaluation Procedures,*
8. *Evaluation of Governing Authority, and*
9. *Additional Findings"*

(WASC, 2010b: p.57-58)

It is noteworthy, I believe, that WASC does not combine, as NEASC does, issues of Governance with Finance. WASC has Finance under 'Section D – Resource Management and development'. However, I also believe it is germane to note that of the 9 indicators only indicator 6 makes any reference to the relationship between the governance and management when it asks *"to what degree is there clear understanding about the relationship between the governing authority and the responsibilities of the professional staff"* (WASC, 2010b: p.58). I contend that this general reference to governance and management relationship is in stark contrast to NEASC, which asks specifically about the 'Board/Head' relationship which, at least from an international school perspective, can be a critical element which needs to be clearly articulated.

Middle States Association (MSA)

The MSA is only slightly younger than NEASC, tracing its roots to 1887. MSA also allows for a joint accreditation with CIS. MSA separates its Standards of Accreditation into one of two board terms, Foundational and Operational; Governance is included in the former.

Governance is one of 6 standards within Foundational Standards' section. The MSA standard for Governance outlines it as,

"The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority that operates in the public interest. The governance and

leadership ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the school through the establishment of policy, provision of resources, and assurance of a quality educational program. The governance and leadership act ethically and consistently to assure an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. School leaders foster a productive environment for teaching and learning, timely and open communication with stakeholders, and the vision necessary for day-to-day operations and long-term planning.”

(MSA, 2010: p.11)

MSA has, in comparison to the other organizations, a more unique approach to the indicators for Governance. This Governance standard is supported through 3 sections of indicators, one which is for Governance and Leadership together followed by indicators specifically for each of them. The combined Governance and Leadership indicators deal with issues relating to policies, board training, recognizing student accomplishments and ensuring fiduciary controls are in place.

With respect to the Governance indicators, they are as follows,

1. *“The governance provides the school with effective leadership, support, and continuity, including succession planning to ensure stability of the school’s leadership.*
2. *The governance thinks and acts strategically, reflecting on its decisions and the consequences of its actions.*
3. *The governance systematically evaluates its own effectiveness in performing its duties.*
4. *The governance is focused on selection, evaluation, and support of the head of the school; policy development; planning; assessing the school’s performance; and ensuring the availability of adequate resources to accomplish the school’s philosophy/mission.*
5. *Governance refrains from undermining the authority of the leadership to conduct the daily operation of the school.*
6. *The governance utilizes a clearly defined performance appraisal system for the head of the school. The appraisal is conducted with the knowledge and participation of the head of the school.”*

(MSA, 2010: p.12).

Here I believe that the fifth indicator most clearly approaches the issue of 'board/head' relationships with its desire for the board to not 'undermine' the leadership of the school. I assert that it is critical to have statements, such as outlined by MSA, which clearly identify both the role and authority of the head of school as well as the responsibility of the board to support these as opposed to acting in a manner which limits or negates a head of school's abilities to fulfil the role.

AdvanceED

According to AdvancED's website it is

"the world's largest education community, representing 27,000 public and private schools and districts across the United States and in 65 countries worldwide, educating 15 million students." (AdvancED, 2010a: p.1).

It is the amalgamation, which took place in 2006, of 2 US regional accreditation organizations, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the North Central Association (NCA).

AdvancED has accredited over 500 schools in 65 countries, around the world, and maintains offices not only in the US but has regional offices in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. AdvancED has 7 accreditation standards, one of which is Governance and Leadership. The first accreditation standard, for governance and leadership, identifies that *"The school provides governance and leadership that promote student performance and school effectiveness."* (AdvancED, 2010b: p.10). Within this standard there are 3 indicators which pertain specifically to Governance, which are:

1. *"Establishes policies and procedures that provide for the effective operation of the school,*
2. *Recognizes and preserves the executive, administrative, and leadership prerogatives of the administrative head of the school,*
3. *Ensures compliance with applicable local, state, and national laws, standards, and regulations."*

(AdvancED, 2010b: p.10)

Certainly the most brief of the accreditation sections on governance, its language is also unique identifying that the governance within the school must 'recognize and preserve' the 'prerogatives' of the school's leadership.

Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS)

This is the smallest and newest of the US accreditation organizations, focusing on the upper northwest of the United States. In addition to being the youngest and smallest organization it is also notable that in contrast to the other US organizations is the lack of any direct mention of governance. The closest that the standards come is within one of the indicators, for the 'Support Standard' which says that "*the principal has sufficient autonomy and decision-making authority to lead the school in achieving the mission, beliefs, and expectations for student learning.*" (NAAS, 2010: p.5). However, given its limited involvement within international school accreditation, it was decided that it will not be included in the research.

Council of International Schools (CIS)

While CIS does align itself with a few of the above organizations for accreditation, it is possible for a school to seek sole CIS accreditation. As such it is reasonable to acknowledge this while pointing out that their definition for Governance remains the same as within the aforementioned NEASC one as well as having the same 9 standards and complete list of indicators.

However, there is one notable area where CIS varies from all the other accreditation organizations. In 2005 (See Appendix 'H'), the CIS board approved an interpretation of their accreditation guidelines, with respect to governance and management, for schools which are owned. This is, certainly in terms of this research, a seminal document as it is the first evidence of an accreditation organization acknowledging that owned schools do present with a different set of parameters.

These guidelines appear to serve 2 purposes. The first purpose seems to be to give governing bodies a clear understanding of the lines of authority, as they should be for accredited schools. Also, these guidelines offer a structure for

an 'advisory board', to allow for a separation between the owners and the school's management.

In reviewing these organizations, and their approach to governance, within accreditation, there are some salient points. While it is correct to identify that all the accreditation protocols address governance, it is also accurate to note that the level to which they examine governance and its effectiveness is not similar. AdvanceED while brief in its explanation of what governance means also uses some of the strongest terminology to identify what type of relationship should exist between management and governance. In addition, one notes the lack of a coherent approach to the place governance plays within international schools, given that some organizations do not identify it on its own but combine it with finance. This lack of coherence will, I contend, have a significant bearing on the role of accreditation in both securing appropriate governing and subsequently monitoring the same. This leads to the question of how an international school becomes accredited.

2.4 How do international schools become accredited?

I believe it is germane to have a clear understanding of the process by which international schools become accredited. As has been previously discussed, for international schools the role accreditation can and does play in ensuring good governance is potentially invaluable. As a result, it is germane to understand the process whereby these organizations accredit international schools.

The path to accreditation begins with a school's self-assessment of whether or not they meet the eligibility requirements to for their chosen accrediting organization. While each accreditation organization has its own set of eligibility criteria, it is worth noting, as Fertig (2007) comments, that

“the models of accreditation that have emerged within the international arena over recent years have followed essentially a similar pattern, in that have involved some form of internal review or evaluation linked to a degree of external consideration of the nature of the educational processes taking place within the organization” (p.334).

Eligibility criteria range from something as mundane as the school having been in existence for 'at least 2 academic years' (CIS, NEASC) to the very specific requirement, as set out by NEASC, stating that the school must be able to

"demonstrate the international nature of the school through a mission which includes creating international citizens, through demographics of the student body and staff, and through the co-curricular experiences and programs offered". (NEASC, 2010)

There is no consistency between organizations as to the number of type of criteria, as CIS has only 2 while WASC has 13 criteria. Schools may chose to seek a single accreditation status or a joint accreditation status which almost always is a combination of CIS and one of the US based organizations.

Should a school feel that they meet the eligibility criteria then they would apply for consideration to the agency in question. While there may not be consistency in terms of the conditions of eligibility, there is in terms of the steps which follow. All the accreditation organizations require a 'preliminary visit' to the school by members of the accreditation organization. The purpose of this visit, as CIS explains, is to *"ascertain the school's readiness to undertake the self-study and to clarify the accreditation process"*.

Upon the conclusion of a successful preliminary visit, a school then begins the most important and time consuming phase of the process, the 'self study'. This 'self study' is synonymous with Nevo's (2001) notion of internal evaluation. Nevo describes the paradigm shift from purely external evaluation to the notion of, as Fertig (2007) commented, *"the duality of accreditation"* (p.336). Nevo (2001) describes the importance of this internal evaluation as a *"major tool for school-based management"* (p.97), which is especially critical given the nature of international schools as, by their very nature, decentralized. It is expected that this study will take between eighteen months and two years to complete. By both design and mandate, the 'self study' is to include all stakeholders from within the school community.

Once the school has completed the 'self-study' it is submitted to the accreditation organization. The accreditation organization then arranges for a 'team visit'. Depending upon the size of the school, the 'team visit' will be

comprised of a team of up to fifteen educators, both from other international schools, within the region of the school, in addition to representatives from the accreditation organization. The members of the team, from other international schools in the region, are from schools which already hold accreditation status from the organization involved. The typical length of a visit is a week. This external visit offers a form of legitimization to the internal evaluation. This legitimization is necessary because, as Nevo (2001) describes, while “*internal evaluation should exist in its own right, it is always suspected of being biased and subjective*” (p.99). The 2 forms of evaluation then have the benefit of supporting the credibility of the other.

Upon the conclusion of the ‘team visit’, a formal report is submitted to the accreditation organization with a recommendation, by the visiting team, as to whether or not accreditation status should be granted. However, the final decision rests with the board of the accreditation organization. Each of the organizations have their own set of terms and conditions to granting accreditation status as well as to the length of the award.

2.5 Summary

This research enquiry examines two significant and interconnected areas, international education and of governance. I have argued that it is axiomatic that for successful international education there needs to be corresponding requisite good governance. It is noteworthy that in addition to their interdependence, these two terms share the similarity of having no clear definitions of their meaning and, in fact, both have been separately described as nebulous terms, having a variety of possible definitions. Added to these two terms is the role of accreditation, understanding who the players are and the role it plays in determining how governance is understood within international schools.

This chapter has distilled the various interpretations of the meaning of international education. Many have attempted to define international education, some of the first attempts by Leach (1969) and then Terwilliger (1972) and this has continued to the present with Hayden (2006) and others; these have moved from a definition based upon the demographics of the stakeholders to the more theoretical, considering what the intended learning outcomes may be. Finally, it has been suggested that a synthesis of all the various aspects would be more germane. It has been my contention that what international education is, is best viewed through a number of lenses; I believe that this is

achieved through a definition which embodies the work of Matthews (1988) and Gellar (1993) and focuses more on the interactions of the students than the taught curriculum. Added to this definition is the dimension of examining a school's governing structure to determine the type of school.

Building upon this notion of considering the type of governing structure of a school, issues surrounding governance and its corresponding theories were examined. While the literature review identified a number of ways in which governance is considered, I contend that the definition of this term is a coalescence of meanings which include both the acknowledgement that governance refers to the rules by which an organization should operate in addition to the notion that governance, as Kooiman and Jentoft (2009) argue, is a network which is comprised of a number of layers of governance, culminating in the idea of meta-governance.

Moving forward with an understanding of what governance may be, I turned to the theories and models related to governing. Through the utilization of my theoretical model types, dealing with both Kjaer's (2004) assertion that there is no one coherent body of governance theory and Cornforth's (2005) argument for the need for a multi-paradigm approach, I reviewed the wide array of governing theories, and their related models. Drawing from the works of Cornforth (2003), Macnamara (2005) and Gill (2005) also acknowledges Kjaer's (2004) belief that due to there being no singular body of governance theory there is a need to consider a number of sources. The review outlines the interrelationship of these models, and the degree to which they are appropriate to describe governing within international schools. With specific reference to international education, these theoretical model types are not discreet entities but rather overlapping ones, where the approach to governing in any one school would draw from not just one but also potentially a myriad of the governing types.

Following on from the examination of the models of governing, I then started from the premise that while good governance may to some be a lofty goal it is nonetheless one worth trying to attain. Accepting that good governance is a reasonable goal for an organization, I then acknowledged the important distinction between what is good governance and how it is attained. I have laid out a potential framework for describing what constitutes 'good governance'. As many have argued (Jessop, 2003; Chait, 2005), 'good governance' can be described using a variety of frames of reference. I argue that this framework, drawing on Board Source and the NAIS, has the benefit, in terms of international education, of being based upon the work of organizations dedicated to examining governance within education, as opposed to overlaying a more generic model.

In addition, this synthesis also has connections to the governing models espoused by Gill (2005), Macnamara (2005) and Cornforth (2003).

To facilitate the examination of the research questions there needs to be a mechanism to examine international schools in terms of their governance model. What follows, in Chapter 3, is an analytic framework which has been constructed from a understanding of the literature review of this chapter and relates to the basis upon which governors will govern a school. Understanding who governors are governing for leads to a clearer understanding of how they will govern, and to achieve what ends. The data generated from the pilot enquiry, augmented by the literature review of the governing theories, leads to two dominant themes cutting across all the models of governing. The first theme relates to the degree to which a school is 'owned', meaning proprietary, in contrast to being a 'community' based school. The second these relates to the role of financial impetus, namely whether one of the driving motives for the school is to generate a profit, to benefit either individuals or groups. These two themes, I argue, form the basis of the authority of how governors may govern an institution. As an example, if a school is owned and for-profit then the governors are acting on behalf of the owners and with the expected outcome of generating profit for the owners, This leads me to the acknowledgement that an analytical framework which incorporates these two will be critical to continuing the research, in preparation of both gathering and interpreting the data.

Chapter 3.0 – Developing an analytical framework

3.1 Introduction

Building upon the foundations of the literature review, I believe it is important to create a lens through which the data will ultimately be analysed. In order to achieve this, I have constructed an analytical framework of international schools, described below.

3.2 Summary leading to the formation of an Analytical framework for the governance of International Schools

In developing an analytical framework for the governance of international schools, it is relevant to identify the salient issues that lead to the formulation of the aim of the research enquiry and the research questions. As discussed in Chapter 2, identified within the literature are a number of governing theories and models and this is no different in terms of the specifics of governance within education. Additionally, it is equally as complex when considering what constitutes good governance, although for the purposes of this research this has been resolved through the utilization of a combination of the NAIS and Board Source standards. However, it is not simply governance in terms of education but more specifically the arena of international education. Finally, in acknowledging the singular nature of international schools is the compounding issue of having no singular body to oversee these schools. Therefore, to move forward to answer the research questions, a framework is necessary to provide a common lens through which to evaluate the comments of the various respondents, through both the surveys and interviews. This framework will allow comparisons to be made and ensure that the respondents consistently understand the terminology being used, to categorize governing models of international schools. Of equal importance is the need for a framework, which delineates key distinctions that will influence governance arrangements in order to facilitate an analysis.

3.3 An analytical framework for the governance of International Schools

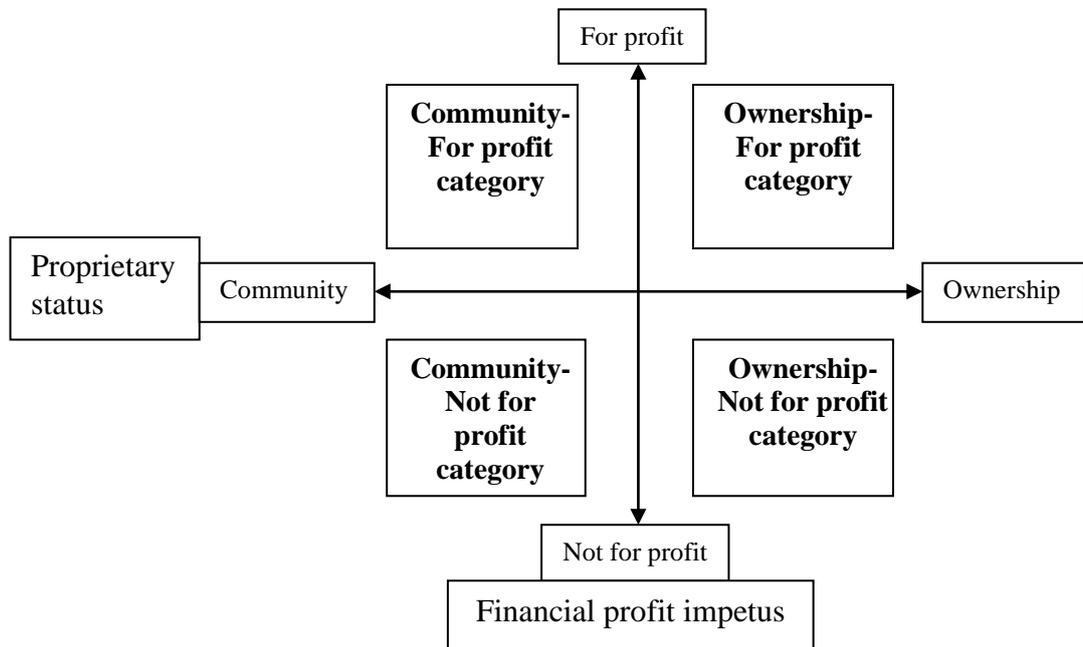
The formulation of a framework for the analysis of international school governance is based upon a series of 'distinctions', which create categories for the analysis and development of governance models.

The first analytic distinction relates to the 'ownership' of schools and is thus concerned with proprietary matters. Schools may be owned as businesses or as part of a business which may have a single owner or a group of shareholders owners. Schools may be 'owned' by a trust, which would typically have charitable purposes. It is feasible, and has happened on numerous occasions in the past, that private schools in the UK, that were set up as 'a business' is then transferred to a charitable trust. Movement in the other direction is also possible. This proprietary distinction is important because the basis of ownership is likely to influence decision making, and in particular decision making of a strategic nature.

I identify 2 main categories that result from the proprietary category: the 'Ownership' category and the 'Community' category. In the Ownership category, the school is owned by, meaning the property of, an entity of some kind, whether an individual or a business. With the Community category, the school is not 'owned' outright by an individual or shareholders in a business but may, for example, exist within in a trust or a foundation.

The second analytic distinction relates to the financial profit impetus. The distinction is whether a school exists to make a financial profit and is 'For profit' or whether it does not and is 'Not for profit'. It is an important 'fault-line' as this delineation is almost certain to exert a powerful effect on decision-making. The number of international schools that would be in this 'For profit' category is increasing in the general context of the proliferation of international schools worldwide. My estimation is that as many as 50% of international schools may be owned, and therefore could be in the 'for profit' category. These 2 analytical distinctions can be set out as an orthogonal grid as in Figure 5. This framework has implications for the form of institutional governance because the relationships and interests of the governing board are likely to vary. In the governance of schools in the different categories, different governance models are likely to be dominant.

Figure 5. Diagram showing the 4 categories established by distinguishing the 'For profit' and 'Not for profit' financial profit impetuses, and the Community and Ownership proprietary status



Prior to examining each of the types, there is one area within the financial profit impetus, which requires clarification. The reference to 'profit' is deliberate and is to be considered different from a school generating a 'financial *surplus*'. For this research, the differentiation is that a school, which generates a 'profit', is referring to an institution which is seeking to have funds, surplus to operations, to distribute to individuals or groups, as shareholders; the Council of International Schools (CIS, 2010), in its accreditation manual, refers to the notion that a school's finances must not only cover operating expenses but should be capable of creating a reserve. The '*profit*' therefore would not be invested in the school, either in operations or capital expenditures. However, a school, which generates a 'surplus', would do so with the clear expectation that the '*surplus*' is solely for the ongoing benefit of the school, either through use within the operation budget or for improvements requiring capital investment.

3.4.1 Ownership-For profit category

In this category the school would be owned by a business concern of some kind with an ownership structure and one of its purposes would be to make

a financial profit. The governance of schools in the Ownership-For profit category may take the Principal-Agent form of corporate governance (Cornforth, 2003).

As Cornforth identifies, within this compliance model, the board is responsible for ensuring that “*management acts in the best interests of shareholders*” (Cornforth 2003: p.7). The owners, for example the company that owns the school, may have different interests from those of the managers, the head of school and their staff. A potential scenario could be where the primary interest of the owners may be making a financial profit while the main interest of the head of school and staff may be in ensuring and enhancing the educational outcomes for the pupils. Clearly the two are linked but the primary interests are different. In this kind of setting, the board members would be the owners or their representatives and its role and responsibility would relate to compliance, conformance, safe-guarding the owners’ interests, and overseeing the work of the management.

The underlying principle here is that managers or agents are assumed to act in their own interests and these do not necessarily mesh with those of the owners. Hence, ‘self-serving managers’ are expected to maximise their personal utility before that of the shareholders, and, in that sense the ‘model of man’ embodied in the Principal-agent model sees management acting as in an individualistic, opportunistic and self-serving manner; hence the requirement to ensure compliance. Many would argue that ‘shareholders’ of a privately owned school are important and should be considered when strategic decisions are made but others may take the view that the nature of the enterprise requires a wider involvement of those who have an interest (in the broadest sense) in the school, the stakeholders.

3.4.2 Ownership- Not for profit category

An example of this kind of school would be where there was a clear ownership of the institution by a business enterprise of some kind but the financial profit impetus was weak and the institution was run on a ‘Not for profit’ basis. It is quite feasible for a school to be designed as ‘Not for profit’, but nonetheless, its ownership status may require the operation and strategy of the school to conform to the requirements of the owner. Additionally, a school that is designated in this category may because of changing circumstances be required to make a financial profit for its owners and this would require a change to its

category. Further, the profit may be taken as consultancy fees by the owners, who thereby make a 'hidden profit'.

The governance of schools in the Ownership-Not for profit category may follow the Principal-Agent model but may in practice be influenced by stewardship theories (Cornforth, 2003) and possibly stakeholder theories. With stewardship theories, 'model of man' is one that is collectivist, cooperative and maximises utility by meeting the organisation's and shareholder's objectives. In stewardship theory pecuniary incentives are less important, whilst intrinsic satisfaction is more so. Since managers want to be successful in the operation of the organisation, the interests of managers and owners are inherently less divergent and management is seen as possessing superior knowledge and is in a better position to act on this knowledge to the benefit of shareholders.

Under stewardship theory, the board's role is one of empowering and collaborating with management. As Cornforth (2003) identifies, the board is seen as partners and hence "*not to ensure management compliance or conformance, but to improve organizational performance*" (2003: p.8). Boards are seen as being fundamentally facilitative and seek to collaborate with operational managers in taking actions that are in the best interest of the company. Although the institution is owned, making a profit is not the central and over-riding concern, and educational concerns may be in the fore for both owners and managers. With a bias towards stewardship, the board may recruit experts to help improve performance, enhance strategic decision-making, and support the management of the school. The board may also recruit members of stakeholder groups such as parents or community members, but this is rare or sees these groups playing only a very superficial role due to the power structure of the owner. The key responsibilities for the board in the stakeholder model of governance is to balance stakeholder needs, make policy and strategy and control the senior management. The 'model of man' underpinning the stakeholder model of governing is one that broadly encompasses the Principal-agent model and the stewardship model depending on the nature of the organisations and its circumstances. The manager may be viewed as potentially individualistic, opportunistic and self-serving and to be controlled. On the other hand, the manager may be viewed as a partner in the enterprise, sharing the owner's interests and wanting to work collaboratively and in partnership with the board. There may be dangers for a governing body of an international school in the Ownership-Not for profit category in moving too far along the pathway to

stakeholder governance because such members of the governing board may seek to make decisions that were not in the owner's (financial) interests.

3.4.3 Community-Not for profit category

With this kind of arrangement, the school may be 'owned' by a trust of some kind, possibly a charitable trust. If the school had charitable status, in the UK it could not by law make a profit however it probably would not be allowed to make a loss and indeed could not on a continuing basis.

The governance of international schools in the Community-Not for profit category may combine compliance (Principal-agent) model, the partnership model and the stakeholder models. It is likely however that the 'owners' and the managers would have shared interests in the enterprise, so a compliance model, certainly engaged in over the long term would be unusual. The constitution of the governing board might vary according to regulations but could be fully elected and could comprise only parents whose children attended the school. The board could be wholly self-perpetuating where the current members of the board appointed new members to it. There could be a range of different arrangements, which includes the 'Hybrid' model, where there is a board which is a blend of elected and self-perpetuating.

3.4.4 Community-For profit category

Schools in this category are theoretically possible but in practice are likely to be rare. The reason such school types are rare is due to the contradiction between a school being community owned, meaning for all, and also being for profit.

Chapter 4.0 – Methodology

4.1 Introduction:

This chapter will identify the steps undertaken to ensure a thorough examination of the aim of the research enquiry, including how these steps were implemented. The rationale for undertaking this enquiry is explained within the section '*Setting the Stage*' in addition to a clear delineation of the type of research to be undertaken to best serve the goals of the research. This is followed by the '*Design and implementation of the Research*' which clearly lays out the planned phases of the research and what they entail. This enquiry is examined through the use of empirical data gathering, accomplished through the utilization of questionnaires and in-depth interviews. This sub-section is concluded with an outline of how the data will be analysed. The chapter will conclude with a review of how the pertinent literature was utilized to inform and shape the enquiry. As an integral part of the literature review, the challenges and rationale for including documentary research are delineated.

4.2 Setting the stage

The aim of this research is to '*analyse the nature of the governance of international schools and the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governing*'. From this starting point I developed a series of research questions, which have guided the type of study I undertook, the research design and the methods of data collection and analysis, they are as follows.

- a. What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by heads of international schools?
- b. What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by representatives of organizations that accredit international schools and the owners of international schools?
- c. What is the potential of accreditation for securing the appropriate governing of international schools?

These guiding questions informed the determination of the most appropriate methods for examining these issues and the resultant conclusions which will inform the discussions and recommendations regarding the governing of international schools.

As Silverman (2000) succinctly points out, "*the choice between different research methods should depend upon what you are trying to find out*" (p.1). I

would add to Silverman's litmus test that decisions are also impacted by how readily available is the data to be gathered, regardless of the method. For this research, the location of the stakeholders, spread throughout the world and with no coherent body to which they belong, creates a potentially significant challenge in terms of access. While it is conceded that qualitative and quantitative research are the dominant methodological approaches, in recent years

"evaluators of educational and social programs have expanded their methodological repertoire with designs that include the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods" (Greene et al, 1989: p.255).

This amalgamation of methods is known as a 'Mixed Methods' approach. Mixed Methods can be defined as

"research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or program of inquiry" (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007: p.4).

Greene et al (1989) are more precise in their definition outlining that mixed methods include at least one each of both a qualitative and quantitative method where *"neither type of method is inherently linked to any particular inquiry paradigm"* (1989: p.256). Teddie & Tashakkori (2009) view work within a mixed methods approach to be grounded within a pragmatism paradigm, which I believe to be a valid approach within the scope of this research. Given the nature of my research questions, in conjunction with some of the logistical challenges of accessing stakeholders, they are best addressed through the blending of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. However, it is acknowledged that there will be a greater emphasis on the qualitative methodology.

In considering the constructs related to gathering data, Lincoln and Guba (1985) in their work on naturalist inquiry offer 4 alternative constructs to the conventional positivist paradigm of validity, both internal and external, reliability and objectivity. Marshall and Rossman (1995) contend that these alternate constructs *"more accurately reflect the assumptions of the qualitative paradigm"* (p.143).

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) 4 constructs are truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. In their delineation of '*truth value*' the notion of 'credibility' is paramount whereby the

“goal is to demonstrate that the inquiry was conducted in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described” (Marshall and Rossman, 1995: p.143).

My research has been clear in the delineation of what the subject is, the governing of international schools. I have outlined both my definition of international education but also governance within this unique educational environment.

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) second construct of *applicability* focuses on transferability whereby the "*burden of proof lies less with the original investigator than with the person seeking to make an application elsewhere*" (p.298). This argument is germane to my work from 2 perspectives. The first deals with the acknowledgement that the data gathered cannot in and of itself be seen as representative of the whole, in terms of all international schools worldwide. As I have already identified, the grouping is too disparate and there is no unifying body to tap into. In addition, international education is a unique entity given both its demographics and geography and therefore to transfer results to another group, such as a national system of education, could well be problematic.

Lincoln and Guba's third construct, *consistency*, addresses another aspect which is apropos to the type of research I have chosen. As Marshall and Rossman (1995) identify, this construct is in response to the concept of reliability. For Lincoln and Guba (1985), *consistency* is based on the assumption that "*the social world is always being constructed, and the concept of replication is itself problematic*" (Marshall and Rossman, 1995: p.143). Lincoln and Guba believe it is the researcher's responsibility, therefore, to account for changing conditions which may occur. This notion of changing conditions is especially true within the framework of my research. For example, while within a national system of education it may be assumed that there is often little movement within the management of schools, as heads of national schools often see their post as a lifelong career, while the opposite would often be true within the international context. It has been estimated that the average tenure of a head of an international school is less than 3 years (Littleford, 2002). Therefore, while my

research is designed and described in such a way as to be replicable it is to be acknowledged that if this same research were to be repeated many, if not all, of the survey respondents would be at different schools and more than likely in different parts of the world; these changes could well modify the thoughts and opinions of those who took part in this research.

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) final construct, *neutrality*, captures the notion of objectivity. Lincoln and Guba identify the need for the researcher to be certain that the findings could be confirmed by another. In describing this construct, Marshall and Rossman (1995) identify the notion that the researcher should "*gain some understanding, even empathy, for the research participants in order to gain entry into their world*" (p.145). Fortunately for me the last 15 years have been spent as a part of this 'world' both as an educator and then ultimately as a head of school, in 7 different countries around the world.

In understanding these constructs and the dynamics of my area of research, I have chosen a number of methods to better inform my discussion. In addition I have utilized an exhaustive literature review, including documentary research, to augment the empirical component which has drawn upon the use of questionnaires and in-depth interviews, with a number of key players within the field of international education.

4.3 The design and implementation of the research

After thoughtful consideration, it was felt that the most appropriate format for the research would be to conduct it in phases. There are 4 distinct phases to this research. However, at times some of these phases were going on simultaneously.

4.3.1 Phase One

The first phase was to implement a *pilot enquiry*, an option within the University of Bath's educational doctorate program, which offered the dual benefit of providing me with the opportunity to explore some of these research questions on both theoretical and practical levels. The theoretical was focused on the desire to create an analytical framework, to more accurately identify the types of governing within international schools, which would ultimately instruct this research enquiry. This included an initial review of the literature. The practical

aspect of this enquiry centered on a qualitative survey of heads of international schools to evaluate and validate the analytical framework through their assessment of the effectiveness of the governing model implemented at their respective school. This survey was conducted utilizing both University of Bath and the Academy of International School Heads (AISH) databases, to create a pool of respondents. This took place during the fall of 2009. This phase was primarily designed to understand the challenges to achieving and sustaining good governing.

4.3.2 Phase 2

This second phase marked the start of this research enquiry. This phase, which is discussed later in this chapter, was to examine the relevant literature pertaining to governance both within national educational systems as well as within the international arena. This phase explored, among other things, the relevant guidelines for good practice, which are already available, under the auspices of accreditation agencies. In addition, as outlined in Chapter 3 it was also necessary to develop an analytical framework as the lens through which the subsequent data would be viewed. This phase took place, starting in the late summer of 2009 and continued through until early into 2010.

4.3.3 Phase 3

The third phase involved a mixed methods approach to addressing the research questions, with influence from the results of the first phase surveys. This phase sought to gain insight into not only the challenges of achieving and sustaining good governance but to seek to better understand how the accreditation process is implemented and the degree to which it has the potential to secure appropriate governing of international schools. While the first phase relied solely on a survey questionnaire, this phase built upon this survey to allow for greater information to be accessed. The surveys in this phase were also disseminated to the heads of international schools, and some others responsible for governance of international schools. Again, the AISH database in addition to my attendance to 2 international conferences, to gain direct access to the heads of international schools, was utilized. The surveys were administered using an online survey tool, SurveyMonkey (SurveyMonkey, 2010). In addition, this phase included the utilization of in depth interviews which were conducted either in person or via the Internet. These interviews included representatives of:

accreditation organizations, owners of international schools, and heads of international schools.

4.3.4 Phase 4

The fourth, and final, phase examined the results of the previous phases and analyzed them with the intended outcome of answering the research questions and in turn addressing the aspects of the aim of this research enquiry. Using the analytical framework as the lens, identified in Chapter 3, I was able to answer the research questions by reviewing the comments of the respondents, both from the surveys and the in depth interviews.

4.4 Questionnaire-based survey

Based upon the research questions and informed by the completion of the literature review I determined that a survey, using a questionnaire, would be an appropriate method to gain data related to these questions. As acknowledged earlier there were 2 questionnaires, one used during the first phase, the *pilot enquiry*, and a second that was administered in the third phase, during the research enquiry. As Marshall and Rossman (1995) identify, a survey is a preferred method when the desire is to collect a small amount of information from a relatively large number of subjects. The decision was made that it was more appropriate to obtain cross-sectional data, meaning from as large a number of respondents as possible, made at a single time as opposed to attempting to gather longitudinal data; however, it is acknowledged that the surveys were not all administered at a single time. The rationale for the surveys not being administered all at once was due to the geographic locations of the potential respondents, which was literally all over the globe, and a determination that using both the Internet and attendance at international conferences was the best manner through which to reach them.

The questionnaires were designed to be as structured as possible, to aid the analysis. Bell (1992) identifies 6 question types of which I chose *open*, *list*, *category*, and *quantity*. I chose not to employ either *ranking* or *scale*. The type of questions chosen allowed me to ask questions designed not only to elicit factual information, as to the type and constituency of a school's governing board, but also to gain insight into how the respondent felt about both the effectiveness of their school's governing structure as well as the accreditation process.

The target audience for respondents was to be heads of international schools, either those currently serving or who had served recently, along with, where possible, members of governing boards and any other educators connected with international schools. However, the *Phase One* survey was only targeted towards the heads of international schools. As mentioned, one of the most significant challenges related to the fact that potential respondents were literally spread throughout the world with no single entity responsible for oversight or coordination of these schools.

4.4.1 Phase one questionnaire-based survey

This questionnaire was the smaller of the 2, comprising only 4 questions (see Appendices A & B). These questions were designed to give respondents the opportunity not only to identify the type of governing model that was operating within their school but also to comment on its effectiveness.

For this questionnaire, access to the heads of international schools was gained through the University of Bath's Educational Doctorate (EdD) program (Appendix 'A') and the Academy for International School Heads (AISH) (Appendix 'B'). The potential respondent pool was comprised of forty students who were enrolled on the EdD programme and of the 300 members of AISH. AISH is a membership organization of primarily heads of schools, in addition to some who have been but are now retired. As a member of AISH, I have access to their 'AISHnet' which is a tool for sending out a single email to be received by all members of the organization. Questionnaires were distributed to members of both groups, via email directly to each EdD student and through the aforementioned 'AISHnet' for the AISH members. The questionnaires were sent between October 25th and November 6th, 2009. The respondents were asked to reply directly to a specified email address, and not to either the University of Bath or AISH. A combined total of 41 heads of international schools responded.

4.4.2 Phase 3 questionnaire-based survey

This survey was designed to gain more information in terms of both issues relating to the governing of international schools but also the added dimension of accreditation.

Given the ongoing geographic challenge of accessing potential respondents, I made the determination to attend 2 international conferences. In February 2010, I attended the annual Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE) conference, in Boston, USA. This conference is held towards the end of the 'recruiting season' for international educators and therefore has an annual attendance of between 300 and 400 delegates from international schools worldwide. In addition, I attended the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) annual administrator's conference in April 2010, in Malta. The ECIS conference had approximately 400 delegates, although here they are primarily from international schools within Europe and the Middle East.

In addition to accessing potential respondents through these 2 conferences, I also decided to send out the questionnaire through 2 online sources. This determination was made given the nature of the 2 aforementioned conferences I attended where potential respondents may have neither the time nor the inclination to respond to a questionnaire. The first source was to again utilize AISH. I was again able to access their 'AISHnet' to send out a single email to be received by all members of the organization. The second source was through ECIS and their Sustainable International School Governance Program. The ECIS Executive Director, sent out a group email (see Appendix 'C'), on my behalf, to nearly 40 school trustees and school heads asking for their input through completing the survey; the email included the Uniform Resource Locator (URL). Both of these endeavors were conducted during the month of April 2010.

In an effort to be environmentally sensitive and also to facilitate sending the questionnaire through the Internet, I took advantage of an online survey generating program, '*SurveyMonkey*' (SurveyMonkey, 2010). The survey (see Appendix 'E') was created and the respondents answered the questions directly to this web site, where I would then have access to the results which were tabulated automatically by the web site. Those who attended the 2 conferences were given the URL, to complete the online survey, through small leaflets given to the delegates as they registered. Those who received the email through 'AISHnet' had the URL embedded within the email sent (see Appendix 'D').

In order to reduce the chance of a respondent submitting multiple survey results, the web site only allowed one response from a computer. In addition, for all 3 formats, AAIE, ECIS and AISH, I specifically commented that should an individual have completed the survey already then they were thanked for their

contribution and requested to not submit another. The chance for a respondent to have multiple requests to complete a survey was possible given the overlap of attendees at the 2 conferences and being members of AISH. While it was a remote possibility that a respondent could make multiple submissions, I am confident given the professional nature of this body of individuals that this would not be a significant issue. Additionally, all potential respondents were informed that all information gathered would be treated with strictest confidence and inline with university guidelines to ensure anonymity when reporting the results.

A combined total of 104 respondents took part in the phase 3 survey questionnaire. The 104 respondents were comprised of heads of international schools (93%), board members (5%) and retired heads of international schools (2%). This created a data set, from both the survey questionnaires, of 145 respondents; however, it is acknowledged that there were questions in the Phase 2 survey which were additional to the ones in Phase one.

This second questionnaire was developed through the reflections on the outcomes arising in the first questionnaire. The elements of the rationale for the second, larger survey were as follows:

- the need for ongoing board training, given the transient nature of many governors;
- the role of local 'host country' legislation, and the implication of this legislation on governing;
- how some of the various stakeholders have experienced governing, in terms of the various types of governing structures;
- the role of accreditation in their experience related to governing, especially in terms of the ability for accreditation to support good governance;
- the type of governing boards which are found in international education;
- how the stakeholders have assessed the efficacy of the varying board types; and
- exploring the potential of accreditation, as outlined in Research Question 3, in securing appropriate governance.

It is also hoped that exploration of these issues, through this questionnaire, will reveal rich data sets of qualitative information.

4.5 In-depth Interviews

As Marshall and Rossman (1995) comment, in-depth interviewing “*is a data collection method relied on quite extensively by qualitative researchers*” (1995: p. 80). They go on to outline that this form of qualitative research is valuable in gathering large amounts of data in a relatively short period of time. However, Marshall and Rossman also point out that there are limitations and weakness with interviewing. It is critical that the interviewees are willing subjects and are comfortable in sharing their information. Finally, in order to make objective assumptions, from the data gathered, it is important to triangulate the interview data with data gathered from other methods; as a result, this research does not solely rely on interview data but rather utilizes it as one of a number of sources.

The interviews were designed to allow me to access information from 3 distinct groups. A total of fourteen interviews were conducted. The first was to gain access to representatives of those organizations which are responsible for the accreditation of international schools. The second was to access a sample of those who owned international schools as well as a sample of heads of international schools, who had completed a survey and agreed to be available for follow-up questions. The choice of interviews, for those who owned international schools, was due to the relative difficulty in gaining access to any significant number of owners to benefit from a survey questionnaire. However, more importantly, interviewing someone who ‘owns’ a school may require delicate language in order to elicit accurate information, especially regarding issues of profit, while not offending the owner. I am aware that there is a belief, held among many within international education, that ‘ownership’ and ‘education’ should be mutually exclusive; I therefore wanted to use the interview format as an opportunity to first assure the owners that this research was unbiased, in terms of any views regarding the ownership of international schools. Through the interview dialogue I was able to achieve this in a manner that made the owners feel comfortable in sharing their story.

Skype, a software application that allows users to make voice calls over the Internet, (Skype, 2010) was utilized given its low cost, enabling me to interview candidates, even those remote to my location. In addition, given the relatively small number of interviewees I considered this to be the most informative method of gathering data from them.

As outlined earlier in this work, there are a number of organizations which offer accreditation services for international schools. I made the determination to focus on the 'big five': NEASC, MSA, WASC, AdvancED, and CIS. The delineation between these and some of the 'lesser players', within accreditation, was made given that these 5 are responsible for almost all international school accreditations. Through my work in international education, I was personally acquainted with all of these organizations, and their executive directors, with the exception of AdvancED.

I emailed each of the executive directors of these aforementioned organizations to advise them of the research I was conducting and to seek their approval to interview them, either in person or via Skype. While I was at the AAIE conference I was able to interview the executive directors of WASC, NEASC and MSA. As the executive director of CIS is located in the UK I was able to make an appointment and visit their office, in Petersfield, England, and interviewed him there. For AdvancED I was not able to meet the executive director in person and therefore we conducted the interview via Skype. The interviews had a set of questions (See Appendix 'F') and each interview was recorded using software loaded onto my personal computer.

At the suggestion of some of the accreditation interviewees, I added some additional respondents to be interviewed given their involvement both with international education and accreditation. This was 'Purposive sampling' (McNeill, 1995) as this group was identified as being the type of individuals that may have had information relevant to this research. These were the Executive Director of ECIS and another educator who had been on the staff of CIS, as co-author of their accreditation standards on governance, as well as currently acting as a consultant to international schools in areas to deal with governance. It is to be acknowledged that the pool of respondents could have been made much more inclusive but given the constraints of time and the determination that the existing cohort would suitably represent the accreditation organizations it was felt it was not necessary.

I contacted, via email, 4 owners, in May 2010, who I had a professional connection to, as a head of international schools. I was able to make connections and schedule Skype interviews with all 4. The Skype interviews took place in the latter part of May 2010 and the early part of June 2010. These individuals were

either direct owners, part of a 'family business', or a senior member of the management team of a company which owned schools.

There were 4 interviews with the heads of international schools. Each of these administrators had previously been a respondent of one of the surveys. Two of the interviews were with heads of international schools which could be described, using the terms from the analytical framework I describe in the chapter 3, as 'Community – Not for profit' while the remaining 2 were respectively from a 'Owned – Not for profit' and a 'Owned – for profit' school.

All those who were interviewed were given the same information regarding confidentiality and the reporting of their comments within this research.

The interviewees are denoted with the following brief background and information to identify the reason for being chosen:

Interviewee 1C: The Executive Director of one of the accreditation organizations, with over 20 years experience within international education.

Interviewee 2C: This individual has been involved with education for over 40 years, over 20 of them within international education, almost all as a head of an international school. In addition he has been on the board of an accreditation organization and was responsible for writing much of this organization's governance standards.

Interviewee 3C: The Executive Director of one of the accreditation organizations, also with over 20 years experience as a head of school.

Interviewee 4C: The Executive Director of one of the accreditation organizations, with significant experience within education, both within national and international education systems.

Interviewee 5C: The Executive Director of one of the accreditation organizations, as well as having over 20 years experience in international education, over half of which was as a head of international schools.

Interviewee 6C: The Executive Director of one of the accreditation organizations, also with significant experience as a head within both national and international education.

Interviewee 1D: The senior representative of the owner of international schools. Also, with nearly 20 years experience, a former head of international schools.

Interviewee 2D: The owner of international schools.

Interviewee 3D: The owner of international schools.

Interviewee 4D: The owner of international schools, as well as having over 20 years experience within national education.

Interviewee 1E: The head of an international school which is described as 'Community – Not for profit'.

Interviewee 2E: The head of an international school which is best described as 'Community – Not for profit'. Also, was on the board of an accreditation organization and has accredited numerous schools.

Interviewee 3E: The head of an international school which is best described as 'Owned – For profit'. (Was not interviewed, respondent cancelled interview).

Interviewee 4E: The head of an international school which is best described as 'Owned – Not for profit'. Also, was on the board of an accreditation organization and has accredited numerous schools.

4.6 Literature Review

There is a growing body of research on governing within state educational systems worldwide. As has been acknowledged within this work there is research which has both documented, from the distant past through to our current conditions, the status quo within national educational systems in terms of governance and governing. I have identified the genesis for governing within education through a thorough examination of governing theories and their related models.

As much as there is a body of work examining these aforementioned areas there is a relative dearth in terms of governing within the international education context. These 2 educational realms, national and international, do impact on each other especially when it is accepted that almost all those who manage international schools, and nearly the same number who govern them, originate from a national system of education. It is further acknowledged that the national education systems of the United States and the United Kingdom are the primary source for this research. This was a deliberate choice given that the overwhelming majority of those who currently head or govern international schools are from one of these 2 countries. The research examined not only relevant literature within the public domain but also accessed research both ongoing and recently completed within the academic community.

4.7 Documentary Research

Following on closely from the literature review would be, as a subset, the use of documentary research. I concede Platt's (1981) point that this is not so much a method as "*to say that one will use documents is to say nothing of how one will use them*" (p. 31). There is very little discussion within standard methodological literature on this form of research. In Platt's (1981) work she outlines a number of potential pitfalls to using documentary research. However, given the type of documents I accessed I am confident that her concerns do not relate to this particular situation. Platt (1981) listed these concerns to include establishing authenticity, availability of documents, sampling problems, does it tell the truth and what inferences can be made.

The documentary evidence that I have drawn upon is exclusively that of protocols and procedures for accreditation as used by the accreditation organizations, as outlined earlier in this work. In terms of authenticity, all the documents that I used were located within the official web sites of the organizations and downloaded directly from them; as such, I do not believe that there is an issue with authenticity nor their availability, other than should the World Wide Web be 'down'. Accessing these documents through the World Wide Web also assures their availability, within reason, for anyone to replicate this research. However, it should be noted that there are occasions when web sites are changed or information purged after a period of time; as such I have downloaded the relevant documents, in 'pdf' format. These documents pertain specifically to the organizations which frame a part of this research so there is no issue of sampling as each organization offers only one form of protocols and procedures for the accreditation of international schools. Finally, I offer that these documents are valid given their location, available to all for scrutiny on the web, and their widespread usage by schools, both national and international, worldwide. In addition, there were no inferences drawn as they were used to identify their content in terms of how they evaluated governing within the accreditation process.

4.8 Analysis of the data

While acknowledging that the survey and interview samples are not sufficient to allow for generalization nor can they be seen to be representative of the whole of international schools, there are consistent themes which have

emerged in the data and these themes I believe are significant, giving a credible and authentic picture of the issues.

The respondent's answers from the questionnaires were, as mentioned earlier, sent directly to the online survey maker. *SurveyMonkey* collates all the data and then makes it available in a number of formats. The interviews were recorded, as described earlier, on my laptop and then transcribed for ease of analysis

The data gathered from the surveys and the questionnaires were used to delineate the most accurate picture of governing within international schools and evaluate the analytical framework I have developed to describe governing within international schools. Following on from the discussion of the status of governing, the data was utilized to outline the role of accreditation within international schools. When respondents are quoted, in line with ethical guidelines regarding anonymity, they will be assigned an alpha-numeric code. The letter 'A' will identify those who took part in the pilot enquiry, while the letter 'B' will denote those who took part in the research enquiry questionnaire. This codification will be continued for those who were interviewed, the representatives of accrediting organizations will have the letter 'C', while those who owned schools having the letter 'D' The final interview group, the heads of international schools, will have the letter 'E' to identify them. Building upon this aforementioned understanding of governing within international education I will formulate a set of guidelines and standards designed to allow consistency and good practice for the governing of international schools. Finally, I will review the data to reflect upon how effective it was in informing my research questions and answering the aim of this research enquiry.

Chapter 5.0 - Governing within international schools

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will report the findings, through the lens of the analytical framework described in Chapter 3, which comprise both the pilot enquiry as well as the data collected through this research enquiry, in addition to understanding the current state of governing within international schools. The data was gathered through the 2 surveys of the heads of international schools. I also draw upon insights, from the interviews of the heads of international schools, along with some owners of the same. In doing so, I will also analyse the experiences of the school heads under the different governance regimes. A final discussion section follows in which I review some of the key issues.

5.2 The findings

5.2.1 The way international school heads experience governing generally

A strong theme in the data was the often challenging nature of governance within international schools. While the sections to follow will analyse the data with respect to governance based upon the analytical framework of school types, there is a general feeling amongst the heads of international schools that governance is a challenge regardless of the governing model of a school. The challenges range from a lack of training to actual micromanagement by the board, which can extend to actual malfeasance. The following comments, made by one of the respondents, sums up the feeling of many.

"It has been my experience - small schools in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East - that school "governance" is a myth. Rather, governance means management to most individuals who sit on school boards. Once in awhile, with the help of member or two who understand the difference, you may drive a school board to the foothills of governance. But, boards invariably come roaring back down to the featureless and unbounded plain of management. Changes in board direction always seem to depend on individuals and not the system" (Respondent 40A)

5.2.2 Experience of governing under the different models

What follows is an analysis of the data based upon the synthesized models. As described in Chapter 3, one of the analytic distinctions related to ownership, and respondents were clear about this categorisation. Based upon the analytical framework, the respondents' categorization of the type of school they were head of was as follows:

Figure 6: Breakdown of respondents categorization of schools, using analytical framework.

Model Type	Percentage of respondents
Ownership – Not for profit	04%
Ownership – For profit	10%
Community – Not for profit	86%
Community – For profit	00%

Ownership – Not for Profit Model

Constitution of the governing board

Amongst the head of school respondents there was no commonality as to how the ownership was constructed. It ranged from a situation with “*owner/board, most members are employees of the Chair*” (Respondent 27A) to a situation where the school is “*owned by 6 companies. Each company is allowed one representative on the board*” (Respondent 36A). There were also situations, as Respondent 18A described, where

“the school is owned by three individuals who comprise a board. Then it is managed by a management company which has its own board”.

While 2 of the respondents indicated that they had 6 members on their respective boards, the other respondents did not enumerate the number of members. However it was clear that, in all cases, the ownership was the de facto board, in whatever form it took.

One of the owners, 3D, indicated that their company was set up to be a ‘not for profit’ organization, although acknowledging that “*this is not on paper, but*

it is something internally that the board and all the owners (want)". Respondent 3D went on to comment that,

"none of our board members do take profit out of the school because all of us have our own personal businesses, the school is not a business to us".

Respondent 3D indicated that their board structure had the owner as the Board Chair and indicated that *"I represent the board and I represent the policy"*. In terms of the relationship with the head of school, while they were not on the board,

"whenever there is a need for the school head attends the board, she or she is asked to attend. Otherwise it's just a direct relationship with me as the Chair Person, and the head of school" (Respondent 3D).

The strengths of this model

When asked to comment on the strengths of this model of governing, some respondents spoke of the stability of this form. One respondent felt that *"since the Board members are the legal owners of the school, they have more vested interest in the financial stability and long-term sustainability"* (Respondent 36A). This sentiment can certainly be found in Respondent 3D's comments that echoes the notion of a vested interest, *"I'm in daily touch with the head because I'm in school on a daily basis, or on a weekly basis"*.

Another strength was the clear distinction this model gave between the responsibility for educational matters (which rested with the head of school) and the responsibilities of the Board which related more to financial/resource matters. One respondent felt that the board understands:

"what they are allowed to do and what the superintendent does. They never get involved in the day-to-day operations of the school. They have their own companies to run so they leave the education part to me" (Respondent 36A).

There appears to be no sense of conflict but rather of the board acknowledging who is best to get the job done and empowering them. When Respondent 3D was asked about who made which decisions, it was clear that

educational decisions were made by the head of school. As an example, when asked about how the decision was made on which accreditation organization to use, Respondent 3D indicated that *“this is the decision taken by the head of school, and it’s purely theirs to make such a technical decision”*.

Other benefits referred typically to the board being a smaller group (because it did not entail wider stakeholder membership) to deal with which often resulted in more rapid decision making. When an owner is in daily contact with the head of school, as with Respondent 3D, it is clear that there is a potential for decision making to be quite rapid.

The disadvantages of this model

Some respondents felt that the governance model was *“not democratic”* (Respondent 18A). Given the likely fiduciary responsibility of the board, to protect the owner’s financial interests, there is a risk as Respondent 3A put it, that *“the board can be too slow, can be too careful (i.e. no risk takers)”*. Other disadvantages related to the way certain themes or mind sets can be established on the governing board which can then impede change. Respondent 19A felt that *“certain ruts of ideas can develop and change can be very difficult”*.

What can be an advantage can quickly become a disadvantage as Respondent 27A commented, there is *“only one person (the chair) to go to – if he doesn’t agree with something, there are no other people to lobby or discuss the issue, there is no fall back”*.

While Respondent 3D did not feel any weakness were present with this model, the respondent’s comments about the level of involvement and oversight has the potential for any of the above issues to come to the fore.

Suggestions for improvement

When asked how this model might be improved, the dominant theme expressed by the respondents was that this model has a place within international schools. The respondents clearly felt it to be educationally appropriate as Respondent 36A commented, *“I really do not know of a better way. The system in place is working very well”*. However, it is clear that the respondent is making a judgement on the relative good of a model based upon whether or

not it works. Whereas some respondents felt that having an Ownership – Not For Profit was positive by way of contrasting it problems within other models, as witnessed by Respondent 18A indicating that *“having worked with ‘democratic’ parent-elected boards, I understand the advantages and disadvantages. I am happy with our current arrangement”*. Others echoed this view, as respondent 3A indicated, *“the setup works, I am glad that there are no parents involved”*.

Only one respondent made a suggestion for improvement which was for more representation, a proposal that related to the lack of democratic participation which was voiced as a disadvantage. One can imagine having a feeling of a lack of democracy when, as Respondent 3D describes, all the board was made up of members of 2 families.

Certainly understanding the potential for opportunities for board micro-management or a lack of a clear separation between governance and management, it would be reasonable to consider the CIS guidelines (Appendix ‘G’) for the creation of an Advisory Board. One aspect, which I believe weakens its potential for positive change, is that these are clearly given, by CIS, as guidelines as opposed to being rules, which need to be followed.

Ownership – For Profit Model

Clear cut examples of the Ownership – For Profit model were more difficult to find in the data, and this lead, in part, to the inclusion of interviews with the owners of international schools, 3 of which own ‘for profit’ schools. As identified earlier it is possible for schools within this continuum of ‘ownership’ to move from being ‘Not For Profit’ to ‘For Profit’ or vice versa. However, within the second survey respondents (as noted in Figure 6) indicated that they worked in a school ‘operated to create financial profit’.

Constitution of the governing board

All the head of school respondents, of schools of this type, indicated that their school operated with a governing body. The number of governors ranged from 3 to 12 with the average being 7, which was the smallest average of all the models. While 63% of the schools included their head on the governing body this is slightly less than the 67% figure for all respondents to the second survey. However, while the percentage who were voting members was 25% for all

respondents, within only this model of governing 50% allow their head of school to be a voting member. This finding is quite significant. Arguably some might consider that heads of owned schools are mere 'puppets' and would be monitored under Cornforth's (2003) Principal-Agent model. Perhaps unsurprisingly, only 7% of the respondent schools had a 'fully elected' board in contrast to 30% within the whole survey. The majority of schools, 74%, were fully 'self-perpetuating', with a very few who operating under a 'hybrid' model with a mixture of both elected and self-perpetuating members.

In interviewing the 3 owners, who stated their endeavours were 'for profit', it became clear that the governance structure that they all had was some version of a 'self-perpetuating board', which is in line with the majority of the respondent comments, above. As respondent 1D commented, "*there is no governance outside the company itself*", which is a sentiment echoed by the 3 other owners.

It is noteworthy that 2 of the owners have companies which are fairly young, less than 10 years old, and both have a majority of their stakeholders as members of their extended family. The other 2 owners had companies which were both well over 30 years old; however, both these companies went through a substantial change where they started out as smaller 'family run' entities, as with the first 2 owners, but then after a period of time were bought out by a larger entity but with the family still remaining involved, often in the CEO role. The rationale for the addition of these new 'partners' appears to be, in part, to allow for an influx of new capital to allow for the company to grow and establish more schools.

The strengths of this model

Fifty six per cent of the head of school respondents working within this model of governing, with its structures and processes, felt it enabled appropriate governing, which was substantially lower than for the respondents of the whole survey. These respondents did not comment on the relative strengths of this model but arguably they would be similar to those of the Ownership–Not For Profit model.

A clear theme with the owners, also present with Respondent 3D and the 'not for profit' model, was that all of these companies desired, as at least one of their primary goals, to improve education within the region that, often, they lived

in. As Respondent 4D commented, that they wanted to have “*the best of the East and the best of the West*” combined within their schools.

The disadvantages of this model

Those respondents who felt that this model was not supporting appropriate governing had a variety of concerns. Respondent 5B indicated that the “*appointed members serve more in an advisory role rather than a decision making function*”, while Respondent 1B felt that the board was “*unable to fully understand the implications of running an educational institution*”. A more common thread was that there was too much “*micro-management*” as one respondent put it.

While not gathered from the data, a case for which I was involved indicates the impact of ownership on decision-making and a shift from *Not For Profit* to *For Profit*. In this instance the international school, in the Middle East, was ‘owned’ by a corporate body undertook an IPO (Initial Public Offering). The widespread uptake of shares created a ‘sea of shareholders’, literally overnight. From then on the decision-making perspective and standpoint shifted and the interests of parents and pupils had to make way for the interests of the shareholders. A similar case was also found with an international school, for which I was also Superintendent, in Asia. Actions such as this are clear examples of Cornforth’s *Compliance Model* enacted, in what may be described in a negative light, where the board is acting purely ‘in the best interests of the shareholders’.

An additional element to be considered relates to how the notion of ‘profit’ is defined. In Respondent 27A’s school it was publicly advertised that the school was ‘Owned’ but it was also vehemently denied by the board that the school was ‘*For Profit*’. The board would offer the school’s budget as witness to this fact, which identified clearly that neither a profit was generated nor that one was expected by the ownership. However, upon closer examination it was equally clear that some ‘fees’ paid to the ownership were beyond what would be considered reasonable for the services rendered. Given the significant rise in the number of schools being ‘bought up’ or started as ‘owned entities’, it is an open question as to whether this form of ‘creative accounting’ will become more prevalent.

When the owners were asked about the notion of 'for profit', there was unanimity that this was an acceptable form of ownership within education. As Respondent 4D put it, *"it is an option, they (parents) are not forced. We provide quality education for those who can afford it"*. While Respondent 4D's response was somewhat pragmatic, Respondent 2D had a more pragmatic approach as he explained that

"the problem I have with the term 'for profit' is that it implies that you're set up for the purpose of making profit, either exclusively or primarily, and we frankly do not see ourselves that way".

He went on to explain that

"we feel that our mission is an educational one, and our primary purpose is to provide a high level of education in this region, most of us are from this region, and we feel that we're contributing something very significant".

Suggestions for improvement

Arguably, a case can be made that the ways to improve an Owned – Not for Profit board would be similar for this model. What was a disadvantage can be made into a potential improvement as Respondent 11B who felt that transparency within owner style boards was an issue, where *"typical owners consider their management of schools as a "trade secret" and by virtue of that often forgo normal training and transparency standards"*. Additionally, comments were made that there needs to be less 'micro-managing' by the owners, and certainly the notion, as discussed above within Owned – Not for profit schools, of adopting the CIS Guidelines for proprietary schools would be a meaningful way to resolve any of these potential conflicts. I contend that with 'for profit' schools, this would be an even more critical consideration.

Community Not for Profit Model

As noted in Figure 6, the overwhelming majority of the respondents' schools were best described by this model. Within this large cohort there were subsets (Figure 7) formed along the lines of the type of governing body, whether it was fully elected, fully self-perpetuating or a hybrid of the 2.

Figure 7: Breakdown of the respondents' school types, within the Community – Not for profit model

Subset of Community – Not for Profit Model	%
Fully-elected Board	31%
Fully Self-perpetuating Board	37%
Hybrid of the above two Board types	25%
Special Situations	07%

A. Fully elected

Constitution of the governing board – fully elected

The size of the boards ranged from 5 members (Respondents 12B, 13B and 18B) to a maximum size of 35 (Respondent 10B), with an average per board of 11 members. A number of respondents indicated that those elected “*must be parents/guardians of students at school cannot be staff member or spouse*” (Respondent 22A). It was also indicated that there were some ‘conditions’ placed upon the formation of the governing body by nationality, either due to embassy connections or, as Respondent 10A commented, “*the only nationality specified is that a Filipino must be the Secretary (Corporation laws of the Philippines specify this) - we have to be registered as a corporation even though we are non-profit*”.

As one might expect, respondents within this model referred to “*a very democratic approach to decision making*” (Respondent 1A), as opposed to those within the *Ownership Models*, and that this model was “*more or less representative of the school community*” (Respondent 20A).

The strengths of this model – fully elected

There is a sense that this subset can potentially provide an environment in line with a combination of Cornforth’s partnership and stakeholder models as Respondent 16A comments that

“in theory the Board of Directors have a direct interest in the well being of the school since their children attend it, and ensure that all income generated is funnelled back into the school”.

These comments also seem to echo the ideals espoused in the NAIS Corporate Model of governing which leads one to consider its effectiveness in a non self-perpetuating board environment.

The disadvantages of this model – fully elected

While this subset of the model has some positive attributes there were a number of disadvantages. These disadvantages ranged from the high turnover of board members and the often relative difficulty trying to find committed members and ones who have talents which are needed by the board, due in part to the often transient nature of the expatriate community. Also, the nature of some school communities, with a diverse cultural mix, can create a situation whereby the minority population of the community ends up with the majority of the share of the seats on the board. As Respondent 4A lamented,

“I think most of us in the business know that parent elected boards are hardly ideal. Short term thinking, acting as elected representatives instead of ‘trustees’, high turn over, etc”,

which coincides with Respondent 7B who lamented that *“I worked on 2 boards, 1 elected and 1 self P. Self P is by far better in my experience”*.

Suggestions for improvement – fully elected

When asked for improvements, the respondents had a number; while most were very situational specific it is noteworthy that 3 commented specifically about having

“a balance between self-perpetuating seats and elected ones, this would bring stability and more long term thinking, giving us the best of both worlds” (Respondent 4A).

Of those who had a fully elected board, 74% felt that the best model was the ‘hybrid’. Something that is a clarion throughout all versions of the Community – Not for Profit was the need for more and on-going board training. Also, as Respondent 3B identified there is a need for the board members to ensure there is no ‘conflict of interest’ between their role on the board and as a parent.

B. Fully self-perpetuating

Constitution of the governing board – fully self-perpetuating

The sizes of the board ranged from as few as 3 members (respondents 22B, and 34B) to a maximum size of thirty-six (respondent 31B), with an average of 10 members. Just over 61% of the boards had their head of school as a member but only just over 32% allowed them to vote. A self-perpetuating board may have parents, examples range from the “*majority must be parents - split between diplomatic and non-diplomatic communities*” in Respondent 34’s school to where the board is

“elected by parents, but de facto self-perpetuating since Nominations Committee presents a slate of those candidates it wants elected; nominations from the floor (at the AGM) are not possible” (Respondent 34A).

The strengths of this model – self-perpetuating

Just over 78% of the respondents felt that the fully self-perpetuating model was a valuable one that enabled appropriate governing of their school. The positive feeling of these respondents can be best summed up by Respondent 31A who commented

“the self-perpetuating structure lends itself to continuity, stability, and institutional memory. This model minimizes the political nature of the Board and helps the Board to function optimally on the high level strategic work that is their primary charge”,

all strongly supportive comments which are in line with the NAIS Corporate Model. Respondent 21A stated that with a self-perpetuating board the school’s “*structure has stood test of time over 60 years, with only 7 school heads*” which reinforces the benefits of this model.

The disadvantages of this model – self-perpetuating

While those who endorsed the model did so with comments such as “none as yet, after 9 years here personally” (Respondent 21A), which was similar to that of 2 other respondents, to minor criticisms such as the possible perception of not being transparent enough or possibly lacking initiative, there were those who dissented. Respondent 4B felt that

“although self-perpetuating is an ideal model, if the wrong members self perpetuate it can lead to poor governance. In international schools there is a risk of getting a clique of parents on the board, even if self-perpetuating”.

Suggestions for improvement – self-perpetuating

While there was a resounding feeling that this was the model of choice, respondents did acknowledge a need for continued training for the board as well as on going effort to ensure transparency in how the board operates. Respondent 33A summed it up when asked about potential improvements,

“I don't think it can; basically a self-perpetuating Board who understands the role of the governing body. Who could ask for more than this?”.

It is noteworthy though that of those who identified this as the model their school utilizes, 64% of them felt it was the best model, while 28% felt the ‘hybrid’ was the best model and 4% the fully elected.

C. Hybrid of fully elected and self-perpetuating

Constitution of the governing board – hybrid

The ‘hybrid’ of the 2 aforementioned subsets has a ‘part elected and part self-perpetuating’ governing style. The size of the board ranged from only 6 members (Respondent 10B) to eighteen members (Respondent 23B) with an average of 11 members. Sixty-four percent of the boards allow their head of school to be a member but only 20% allow the head a voting membership.

This form of governing body was evident where individuals or groups who have been involved with the school since its inception or, as in the case for Respondent 30A, where governing involved dealing with various governments

who set up the school originally. Respondent 12A described his board's self-perpetuating members where *"5 are appointed by the Sustaining Members as their representatives"*.

The strengths of this model - hybrid

When discussing the strengths of this model there was a clear sense, by some, that this was the 'best of both worlds' as *"this arrangement allows for democratic participation but prevents takeovers by agenda-wielding parents"* (Respondent 12A). An overwhelming 96% of the respondents, whose school had this model, felt that this model allowed for the board to govern their school appropriately. A number of these respondents felt that this style also gave greater control over who comes onto the board, *"there is definitely more control over who becomes a board member and filling gaps in the three W's (wealth, wisdom & work)"* (Respondent 38A).

The disadvantages of this model - hybrid

The respondents whose governance model was in this category were generally pleased and offered no examples of disadvantages.

Suggestions for improvement – hybrid

In describing how best to improve his hybrid board Respondent 8A believed it would be best to,

"change to a self-perpetuating board, with similar guidelines for composition, but allowing for the board to secure longer periods of service and a composition that allows for diversity".

While some of the other respondents also suggested that the best move was to a complete self-perpetuating board, Respondent 22A felt,

"that a hybrid system should be the one that affords the best opportunity for good governance along with an accreditation requirement for external Board training and annual self-evaluation".

The other comments were to make the board smaller, a board which is too large makes for real difficulty in reaching consensus as well as the perpetual need for more board training, especially where the board has a number of host country nationals on it.

D. Special situations

There were respondents who had governing structures which did not 'neatly' fit into one of the 3 previously described subsets of the model. In reviewing their individual circumstances there were 4 minor subsets of styles: combination board and school administration (4 respondents), pure school administration (1 respondent), an appointed board (3 respondents) and religious affiliation (1 respondent). These governing types were, for the most part, situational specific. Interestingly what can be a strength for one of these models is seen as a disadvantage for another. Respondent 5A, who has a combination 'board and admin' structure felt one of its strengths is that there are "*clear lines of authority; integrated leadership responsibility close to the teaching level*". However, Respondent 7A felt that this same format was disadvantageous because there were "*No real benefits as little transparency e.g. Teacher rep, No Parent rep*".

Community for Profit Model:

While it is possible that a school could adopt such a model, there were no respondents who had any experience with this model.

5.3 Discussion

Rhodes (1996) identifies that "*governance is about managing networks*" (p.658) and this is no different within international schools where networks impact on the choice of how the school is governed. There are a number of external variables which affect the governing of these types of schools. As several respondents commented, the host country government, while often not wishing to be actively involved in the school, can often have rules and regulations which international schools must adhere to. This governmental influence can have the effect of ensuring a degree of conformity of international schools within a

common national context. As Fertig (2007) commented about the shift in Dubai, by the government, and other countries such as China, with its NCCT, there are some governments becoming actively involved in the accreditation process.

However, governments are not the sole agencies of influence. Those responsible for the accreditation of international schools play a significant role. Accreditation is done primarily, as outlined in Chapter 2, through either CIS, or one of 4 major US accrediting agencies, NEASC, WASC, MSA, AdvancEd (a new combination of 2 former organizations) or a combination of CIS and one of the US models. In addition to accreditation are those who are responsible for the authorizing of a school's curriculum, such as the International Baccalaureate (IB) or US Advanced Placement (AP). International schools are similar to independent schools where parents, who are paying for their child's education, will exert an influence upon the school. This influence can be heightened in situations where members of the governing body are also parents of students at the school.

In the review of the respondents' comments, the relative positive framework of those heading such schools had the Ownership Models. As acknowledged earlier it is often felt that 'for profit' and education are not compatible. None of the respondents identified the model as problematic but rather that of the governing structure; they went on to comment on how to improve the system rather than castigating the type of model. Given the significant increase in this type of school, nearly 15% of the pool of respondents are in schools which are owned, these are valuable insights.

The findings reveal a number of matters which require further investigation. There are issues such as the relationship between the governing body and the head of school and how this can affect the school; comments regarding interference were made by some respondents which could portend the possibility of negative relationships being detrimental to the well being of the institution. A number of comments were made about 'board training', which leads one to ponder whether the creation of models of governing for international schools would not streamline this and create the impetus for training specific to the unique milieu of international schools.

5.4 Concluding comments

This chapter has explored research question one which asked 'What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by heads of international schools?'. In order to effectively answer this research question, I examined the nature of the governing of international schools, analysed the models of governing and the heads of schools experiences of the various forms, in addition to those who own schools, and their considerations of the strengths and weaknesses of the different models and the way the models could be improved. While acknowledging that the governing of international schools is a challenge regardless of the model, there were outcomes that cannot be overlooked. With respect to the ownership models, both the not for profit and for profit, was the acceptance, by most respondents, that these models have a rightful place within international education. The Community not for profit model had a continuum of board types which I would describe as becoming better functioning, as gauged by the respondents, as the composition of the board moved from purely elected by parents to completely self-perpetuating to the hybrid of the 2.

In addition to the revelations regarding the manner with which certain models are regarded, by the heads of international schools, are the issues pertaining to the oversight of governing, within international schools. I believe the respondents identified a common theme acknowledging the need for better oversight of the governance of international schools in order for there to be appropriate governing within this type of school. I argue that regardless of the model of governing it was enumerated that there are challenges to governing international schools which transcend the governing type and point directly to the manner with which governing is addressed, specifically through accreditation.

Chapter 6.0 - Accreditation – one aspect of how governance is monitored

6.1 Introduction

If one accepts the premise that the effective governing of schools has the potential to impact the overall effectiveness of a school then how does one ensure that this happens? The answer is, at least in part, through the accreditation of a school.

The Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges has identified accreditation as:

“the affirmation that a school or educational service agency provides a quality of education that the community has a right to expect and the education world endorses” (MSA, 2010).

It is my assertion that this definition captures the essence of accreditation and that through the process of accreditation a school is able to seek validation of what it is engaging in as well as entering into a process of on going self-improvement.

As the Literature Review acknowledged, while national systems of education have government regulated oversight this is rarely the case for international schools. The role of oversight, therefore, falls to a select group of organizations that are invited, by the school, to accredit their international school. It is critical to this discussion to acknowledge that these organizations are only invited to accredit an international school as these schools are under no obligation to become accredited; the only exception, as identified earlier, is where local host country law mandates some form of accreditation. The choice to become accredited becomes more a necessity to ensure acceptance of a school's transcript, by post-secondary organizations, than by being mandated to do so. As Respondent 1D summed up, when asked about why his company would seek out accreditation, *“it would (be a) balance (of) educational soundness with local requirements”* but he added, on a more pragmatic note, that *“it wouldn't make sense either educationally 1, or 2 in the sense of being able to attract parents”*.

This chapter will analyse the state of accreditation within the international school environment. Using the analytical framework designed to examine

governing within international schools, I will then report the findings on accreditation from both the perspective of those who are running, as well the owners of, the international schools as well as those who are responsible for the accreditation organizations. While it is acknowledged that the initial choice of an accreditation organization may be done primarily in terms of geography, I contend that it is worthwhile to examine how accreditation is viewed through the lens of the governing models to discern if there are any differences. However, given the uneven distribution, of respondents, of the models within the questionnaires, I will review the findings through those who operate a school which is *owned* and those whose school is *community* based.

6.2 Who is accrediting international schools?

As the Literature Review chapter enumerated, there are 5 major players in terms of who accredits international schools. They are CIS, NEASC, WASC, MSA, and AdvancED, and as Figure 8 identifies, they are fairly evenly distributed amongst the respondents' schools, with the exception of CIS. It is noted that the sum of these schools is greater than 100%, this is due to the fact that some schools will be accredited by more than one organization.

Figure 8: Breakdown of accreditation organizations responsible for accrediting respondent schools

Accreditation organization used by a respondent school	%
Council of International Schools (CIS)	52%
New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC)	26%
Western Association of Schools & Colleges (WASC)	22%
Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS)	23%
Middle States Association (MSA)	23%
'Other'	41%

The results from the research enquiry questionnaire identified that, of those who chose one of the 5 listed accreditation organizations, CIS was the predominant organization. The 4 other accreditation organizations had a fairly even distribution. It is noteworthy that 41% of those who answered this question chose the 'other' category. The responses within this categorization ranged from one respondent identifying AdvancED to 6 respondents whose schools were not accredited. A number of respondents, twelve, identified the International

Baccalaureate (IB) as their source of accreditation. However, I would point out that it is a commonly held understanding that the IB does not accredit schools but rather only authorizes a curriculum or curriculum framework. That 14% of the respondents felt that the IB was ‘accrediting’ their schools is significant in what I must assume is their understanding of what this term means. In addition 17% of the respondents identified a national system of accreditation for their school. Some of these national systems were operated by the host country, such as NCCT within China, while some respondents identified US state or Canadian provincial accrediting bodies. As Respondent 4D commented, they felt that the “*Canadian system was the best in the world*” and therefore purchased the curriculum from the Canadian province of British Columbia (BC). With the curriculum also comes oversight, in terms of an accreditation process. Respondent 4D indicated he was aware that the BC education authority had “*200 (such schools) around the world*”.

6.3 The Findings – Heads of international schools

6.3.1 Trends across all models – Board Training

One of the issues which seemed to transcend the model type and was found, to varying degrees, within all of them dealt with board training. The issue of board training, or a lack thereof, has been identified by a number of respondents, both within the questionnaires but also the interviews, which will be discussed later in this chapter. With those schools with ownership models, only 56% of the respondents indicated that their school engages in annual board training. However, 100% of the respondents felt that annual board training should be mandated through accreditation. Respondent 3D’s comments echoed this sentiment when commenting that “*the training of the board is something that will definitely improve on better delivery and better governance*”.

Those respondents whose schools have a community governing model were similar to those with an ownership model, in terms of how many engaged in annual board training, with 57%. However, in a marked departure, from those with an ownership structure, only 65% of the respondents of the community models felt that annual board training should be mandated through accreditation. On the face of it, I find this somewhat confounding as I believe that a head of school would want its board to be trained and the training to be relevant and recent. Not surprisingly though, when the results were examined based upon

their board structure, it was those with a hybrid board which most felt that need for mandating, with 80% of respondents, to those with a fully elected board, with 72%, and finally those with a self-perpetuating board, with 62%. I would offer that this is logical given that a head of school would potentially feel more secure in a board not requiring annual training when it had the stability of being self-perpetuating versus the often 'revolving door' of fully elected boards.

6.3.2 Choice of Accreditation Organization

The choice of accreditation organizations within the governing ownership models was more predominantly with CIS, with 73% of the respondents. Interestingly, only 7 of the respondents, or just shy of 20%, identified their school as using other than the main accreditation organizations and none of them identified the IB as accrediting their school.

With community boards there was no predominant accreditation organization. While CIS was chosen most often, it was only for 49% of the respondents. In terms of the 4 remaining organizations their utilization was more uniform with 25% for SACS and NEASC respectively, 20% for WASC and 24% for MSA. Again, I hesitate to draw any inferences given the often geographic nature of the choice.

6.3.3 Accreditation under the different governing models

Ownership Models

When asked if the respondents felt that the accreditation standards are 'sufficient to ensure good practice in the governing of your school', 62% of them felt that this was the case, leaving a third who did not. With a majority feeling the standards are sufficient, this would appear to argue against the notion that the owners of schools would act in a manner similar to Cornforth's compliance model, where the owners are more focused on the task of control and profit than engaging their head of school in a manner which would espouse Cornforth's (2003) stewardship theories. However, I contend that with over a third of the respondents feeling the standards are not sufficient this is a potential reflection of the fact that there will be owners who view their educational endeavours in differing lights. As Respondent 2D indicated,

“we’ve seen situations where you know schools or individuals who are entrepreneurs, think that education is a big opportunity to make a lot of money, but they make mistakes that end up being poor decisions educationally as well as financially or as business decisions because as a business model education only works if you’re in for the long term”.

Respondent 2D is delineating the difference between those who look at a school, due to their very short term goals, in a more Principal-Agent, or compliance model, while those who own schools and see them as a longer term investment would more naturally espouse views inline with Cornforth’s stewardship and stakeholder theories of governing. Respondent 1D echoed this notion of a longer term vision to education as a profitable endeavour when commenting that *“certainly over time the schools are required to produce a profit or have a very good reason why not”* but *“not necessarily in the early stages if it’s a new school, the company provides for that”*. Of those who did not feel the standards are sufficient, there was a range of reasons from *“there is no true follow up”* (Respondent 6B) to one of the respondents, whose school uses another accrediting organization, who stated that the *“NABSS (National Association of British Schools in Spain) does not look at governance”* (Respondent 3B). One respondent felt that *“traditionally WASC and others pay very little attention to governance”* (Respondent 5B).

In a related question, respondents were asked if the procedures ‘for monitoring governing practice under accreditation standards are adequate’. In a reversal to how they felt about ensuring good practice, 69% of the respondents felt that the procedures for monitoring governance are not sufficient. However, I do not believe that these results are contrary to the aforementioned results, regarding to standards being sufficient. In fact, I argue that they strengthen the argument that, like any type of school, if the ownership is working within a compliance model framework, with the school’s management, then if there are problems the accreditation organizations are not seen as being able to effectively deal with the owners. I have asserted that given the nature of the relationship between accreditation organizations and schools, whereby the school is seen as a consumer, that it has to make it potentially more problematic for an accreditation organization to potentially ‘bite the hand that feeds it’ through challenging a board. This was a general feeling of a number of the respondents but was, I believe, best summed up by Respondent 7B who wrote:

“it depends on the protocol of the Agency and it depends on the courage of the Agency to take the board to task and possibly ‘lose a customer’.”

Respondent 5B was more diplomatic when commenting that *“accrediting agencies have to be, by nature, supportive of governance to assure their involvement”*. The other respondents made assertions along similar lines such as *“they can identify the areas of concern but they do not have real power to change things”* (Respondent 4B) or referring to the fact that accreditation teams are often *“inexperienced in evaluating different governance models, especially for proprietary schools”* (Respondent 1B). However, Respondent 2E, who has been a head of both the owned and community international school models felt that accreditation was more important for the board of an owned school because it wanted to ensure

“that the school was successful, and it was more important what the community’s perception was, and so accreditation was again important to that”.

While I concede Respondent 2E’s point, I would add that this is more in terms of rationale as I believe most boards would want to have their school successful too, but perhaps with differing motivations, profit as opposed to the reputation of being on the board of a strong community model school. Respondent 2E did, in agreeing that the monitoring was not sufficient, go on to suggest that

“it would be more helpful to the school, even though it would be a pain as an administrator, if we had to do a short annual report (for the accreditation organization)”

When respondents were asked about the notion of whether it would be desirable to have common standards and guidelines for governance amongst accreditation organizations the majority, 69%, felt that this would be positive. Both Respondents 1D and 2D echoed the majority sentiment. Of those who did not agree, there reasons ranged from the need for a competitive marketplace to Respondent 1B who felt that:

“If anything, accrediting bodies need to be less prescriptive on governance. Different governance models suit different schools. Good governance supports the delivery of educational outcomes and the long

term sustainability of the school, but there is no "one size fits all" governance model, and accrediting bodies need to take account of this".

Respondent 1B's comments express one point of view, but I would offer the contrary one, that accreditation organizations should not be less prescriptive but rather be more open to the various models of governing but continue to be prescriptive in terms of the standards expected. However, as might be expected, for every position there is often one which runs at least somewhat counter and Respondent 8B felt that there should be common guidelines, at least in terms of owned schools, where:

"Basics of policy governance principles to put some layer of minimal expectations on owner style schools. New money is coming into international schools every year in the form of new 'start ups'. Without accreditation standards relative to basic governance methodology, these 'start up' schools will squander resources that might otherwise provide for a sustainable organization".

In summary, most of the head of school respondents with owned schools seemed to feel that while accreditation had the potential for ensuring good governance in the initial accreditation period that its efficacy appears to wane.

Community models:

Significantly more community school respondents, 76%, than ownership school model respondents felt that the accreditation standards are 'sufficient to ensure good practice in the governing of your school'. This support of the sufficiency of the standards lends credence to the notion of community schools adopting models of governing which engender trust between the head and board. As such these board styles are less likely to create an atmosphere where a head would feel that an accrediting organization was not able to ensure good governing practices. In an interesting comparison, Respondent 13B felt with respect to accreditation standards that

"in a non-profit school they work fine, in a profit-type school where an owner or owners exist they are inadequate up to ridiculous".

While I believe Respondent 13B is oversimplifying and even perhaps stereotyping the 2 models, nonetheless it does identify the perception which I believe continues to exist within much of the education community. I refer back to Respondent 2D's comments about the 2 typologies of school owners, those who are in it for the 'quick return on the investment' as opposed to those who recognize that it needs a 'long term approach'. There was a similar range of responses, to those of the ownership models, as to why they fall short. Respondent 5B expressed similar sentiments to those within the ownership body in commenting that:

"the accreditation body should be strong enough to withdraw accreditation from those schools, and there are plenty of them, whose Boards do not practise good governance and impact schools negatively as a result".

In the same related question, respondents were asked if the procedures 'for monitoring governing practice under accreditation standards are adequate'. Respondents from community schools were more supportive of accreditation organizations being able to monitor governing with only 45% of respondents feeling that they were not able to monitor effectively. With a majority supporting the governance monitoring done by accreditation it again points to the trend that community schools, by and large, would have more collaborative board structures. From those who felt that the monitoring was not sufficient, their reasons were of a similar vein to those of the ownership models. As Respondent 5B was clear in the assertion that

"I do not believe that the accrediting agencies are strong enough often enough to tell Boards that they have to 'pull their heads in' and think of the school as opposed to serving their own interests".

Perhaps Respondent 28B put it most eloquently in surmising that the accreditation organizations are *"adequate but not exemplary, they serve to guide us, but not force us"*.

When respondents were asked about the notion of whether it would be desirable to have common standards and guidelines for governance amongst accreditation organizations a more significant majority, than the ownership model schools, of 84% felt that this would be beneficial. A number of respondents disagreed stating that the 'one size fits all' approach was not ideal within the

international marketplace, but again I think these sentiments are due either to the question not being asked clearly or their not understanding, as it certainly is not my intention to believe that by having common standards accreditation organizations are not able to also differentiate between governing models. However, a significant number of respondents echoed the sentiments of Respondent 39B who supports common standards and guidelines with the assertion that:

“Common standards and guidelines for governance amongst various accreditation agencies would be an excellent practice due to the fact that each agency is looking for sustainability, continuity, and good governance of the school. Boards should all make sure that strategic planning is in place, they have to make sure that strategic plan is first well understood by all schools’ constituencies, that is followed, and executed”.

6.4 The Findings – Accrediting Organizations

6.4.1 Historical Perspective on Governance

All the organizations indicated that their research, not surprisingly, into best practice for the governance standards comes from US models. These US models are drawn from a number of sources, both practical and theoretical. As Respondent 3C commented, in referring to the NAIS *International School Trustee Handbook*, that *“I give it to all my trustees and I think it is the bible for independent school governance”*. Respondent 3C went on to comment that their organization also draws upon US organizations which *“examine what makes the most effective boards in the non-profit world”*; it is noteworthy that this respondent commented on the use of the ‘non-profit world’ and I argue that this lends weight to the contention that accreditation organizations have still not fully come to terms with the reality that a significant number of international schools would no longer be described as having ‘non-profit’ status. Respondent 6C though drew attention to a shift from accreditation which in the past was primarily based upon *“easily measureable protocols”* such as *“the nature of facilities”* and *“the qualifications that the individuals who purport to be teaching”* to today looking at *“issues of the efficacy of student learning”*, which one would hope would mitigate the domination of the notion of international schools being a homogeneous group of non-profit community schools.

6.4.2 Accreditation Standards

The Accreditation-Respondents were asked some of the same questions (see Appendix 'F'), in an interview format, as those of the questionnaires. I questioned the respondents about the current accreditation standards. What follows is a description of the main themes to emerge from the categorization of the data.

When asked about whether or not the current standards for governance within the accreditation process are sufficient, Respondent 1C summarized that with the growth of proprietary schools *"the issue becomes more complicated and those models are not so...not so relevant"*. There can be no argument that the accreditation of international schools has become a more complex issue but as Respondent 1C acknowledged, when asked if the process has kept pace with the change the response was *"no I don't think it has"*. All the Accreditation Respondents felt that their standards for governance were not sufficient, Respondent 6C went so far to say that *"we're not completely satisfied at all with our current standards in terms of governance and leadership"*. Although it should be noted that Respondent 3C felt that they hope their new standards will be sufficient, but qualified it with *"so far we don't think they lack anything, but we haven't put them into practice yet either"*. The accreditation agencies did not always make a distinction between community and owned schools when discussing the sufficiency of their standards. Respondent 6C makes the salient point that

"in more times than we care to see, as a matter of fact in the majority of the cases, schools fail and become dysfunctional because of problems in your governance and leadership".

This sentiment was echoed by Respondent 4C who believed that accreditation organizations needs to do more to *"require some focus on the part of the board and the leadership team on the issue of continuity"*, something which is certainly a more prevalent issue with community schools, given their often elected boards.

6.4.3 Common standards for governance

Not surprisingly, there was no clear answer or consensus when the accreditation respondents were asked about consistency between their

organizations, other than openness to working towards something common. It was acknowledged that as almost all of the organizations are

“coming from the same educational evolutionary background in a domestic kind of way we’re all kind of on the same evolutionary path”
(Respondent 6C).

However, Respondent 6C went on to comment, when asked if it was likely that there could be a common set of standards for governance, that it was not likely that within 5 years they would all have an agreed upon common protocol, *“because each of the regional organizations still is driven by individual boards and the individual political nuances”*.

6.4.4 Governance from an Accreditation perspective

The accreditation respondents were asked a further series of questions (see Appendix ‘F’) pertaining to their views on the governing of international schools.

The accreditation organizations were consistent in their acknowledgement that achieving and sustaining good governance with international schools *“is a big challenge”* (Respondent 3C). The respondents identified some of the same challenges that the heads of schools enumerated such as the need for board training, and this would be germane regardless of the type of school. In fact many of the respondents saw training as critical to the success of a board. As Respondent 3C commented, within schools which are ‘non-profit’ the board training can be valuable to educate board members, often from profit making companies, what it means to operate on such a board-type. Respondent 6C went further in the belief that

“once an individual is elected to perform governance responsibilities in international schools, then they must periodically, once a year, receive training in terms of board structure”.

While this stipulation would typically pertain more often to community type schools, both Respondent 1C and 3C’s suggestion that owned schools set up an advisory board, as a condition of accreditation, would make this potentially valid for all school types. However, it remains a low priority, as Respondent 2C

lamented, *“a board’s put in place, money and a line item for staff development, but they never put anything in the budget for board development”*.

The other area which can create a challenge to good governance is the relationship between the head of school, and or the management team, and the board or owner. Respondent 1C summed it up when describing the importance of this relationship

“you can have it written down in policy, but it’s only as good and as effective as the Head of school and the relationship with the owner or the Board Chair”.

From the challenges to governing the respondents were then asked how often governance was an issue, post accreditation. Among the respondents there was a unanimous feeling that *“schools usually fail because of breakdowns in the governance and the leadership”* (Respondent 6C). Respondent 1C indicated that governance was more likely to become an issue post-accreditation, rather than during the accreditation process, for 2 reasons:

“first schools can change over quickly, and the ten year timeline for accreditation is too long...and you’ve got to look at why schools got into accreditation in the first place...some see accreditation as being a commercial care share for you so you will do what you’re required in order to get it and then ignore it afterwards”.

This breakdown in governance is most often related to the disintegration of the relationship between the head of school and the Board, as Respondent 6C’s organization has found, in *“60 to 70% of the instances in which schools fail, they fail because of breakdown in the relationship”* and the resulting loss of *“working effectiveness of the board and the CEO”*. This disintegration, whether on an owned or community school, can be symptomatic of a board, or owner, whose governing style equates to Cornforth’s principal-agent model. An owner can view a head of school simply as an employee and therefore not capable of the best interests of the stakeholders at heart just as a board, whose members may come predominantly from the for-profit sector, can potentially have little appreciation for the role of a CEO within a non-profit entity, or their role for that matter.

6.4.5 Monitoring and Enforcement of Accreditation Standards

In spite of the acknowledged importance and critical nature of governance in providing the basis for a successful school, all the accreditation organizations were clear in that the monitoring of governance standards were no different to any other standard. As Respondent 6C commented, *“the monitoring is generic”* which causes one to ponder why given the acknowledgement that if something does go wrong it is most often governance.

With respect to enforcement, I would argue that some of the comments of these respondents validate the concerns raised by the heads of schools, as enumerated earlier in this research. When addressing the question of how their organization enforced standards, Respondent 1C explained that

“we view accreditation as a means of improving learning outcomes. Generally speaking leaning continues within the classroom despite chaos at the top. Like politics”.

Respondent 1C went on to indicate, in terms of removing accreditation status, that its *“got to be particularly serious before that gets pulled”*. All the organizations have a variety of stages to dealing with dysfunctional situations. There are a series of warnings and can also include a ‘special visit’ by the accreditation organization. All the organizations acknowledged that it is possible to remove the accreditation from a school, which is unwilling or able to correct their deficiencies, but from the anecdotal comments of all the respondents the number of schools having their accreditation status removed was quite low.

6.5 Discussion

This chapter has examined the role of accreditation with specific reference to school governance and in doing so has addressed the latter 2 of this enquiry’s research questions. Namely, to better understand the experience of those most directly involved in the accreditation process, from both the school’s and accreditation organization’s perspective as well as to explore the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governance of international schools. While those from both the ownership model and community model schools felt that the accreditation standards were ‘sufficient to ensure good practice in the governing of your school’ it was not an overwhelming majority, with an average of 69%,

which I believe should be the case given the role accreditation plays within international education. An even more troubling statistic though dealt with the degree to which the accreditation process to monitor governing practice is adequate where nearly 70% of the ownership model schools and nearly half of the community model schools felt that it was not. However, these aforementioned results are not necessarily out of line with the sentiments of the accreditation organizations who acknowledged how significant the challenge is.

As Fertig (2007) concludes, the process of accreditation

“contains elements that are, at one and the same time, potentially empowering for faculty while constraining school processes towards a particular mould of experience and organization” (p.345).

For a ‘system’ of schools, albeit without having any real system in place, the process of accreditation can be the one commonality that can bind international schools. If this notion is accurate, which I assert it is, then it makes the notion of consistency and commonality, amongst the various accreditation organizations, even more imperative. The consistency is as much to do with the need for a ‘common currency’ for educators and governors, as many of them are very much ‘global nomads’ who will at one time be in Asia and then, potentially, a few years later being in Europe or elsewhere.

While again conceding that the pool of respondents is not sufficient to allow for generalizations across the industry, I do believe that there are trends that emerged here which are noteworthy. A theme that continues to emerge is the notion of training. The majority of the respondents felt, regardless of the type of school, that it was necessary that there be on going board training for governing boards. It was notable that all the respondents, from owned schools, endorsed this notion. However, the reasons for wanting this, I argue, would differ depending upon the model. Those within an owned school would view board training as important to ensure the owners understood the importance of the education and the delineation of authority while those within a community school would, I contend, be more focused on the issues of turnover, far greater within this model than the former, but also to ensure that there was a clear delineation of the lines of authority.

In terms of accreditation and its role in securing appropriate or good governing, the majority of respondents from both the owned and the community schools agreed it was possible. The reasons for those who did not agree are bound to be situational specific. Within an owned school the primary litmus test revolved around whether the owner is looking at education from a short term or long term perspective, but also there was discussion about the 'willingness' of accreditation agencies to 'take on boards'. While within the community based schools, those who felt that accreditation standards were not sufficient were inline with the latter argument of those from owned schools.

In terms of the ability for accreditation to be able to monitor governing, subsequent to accreditation the opinion of the respondents was divided. I contend that the reason that the majority of those from owned schools felt this way relates to the perception that accreditation organizations are not prepared and therefore not able to deal with this model which has come from obscurity to being a dominant player within international schools. It is noteworthy that all the accreditation organizations would concur with this majority. It is also logical that a dichotomy would exist between the aforementioned feelings of those from owned schools with those who were at community schools. The boards of community schools would be, I believe, more likely to respond to the authority of accreditation for the very fact that the board would not feel the same sense of ownership, and perhaps even entitlement, to run the school as they saw fit.

It was not surprising that the majority of both cohorts felt that a common set of standards would be beneficial, as this mirrors what the accreditation organizations themselves feel would be valuable. But, sadly, as in many areas of life, politics plays its part and this most likely signifies that while there will be continued movement amongst and between these organizations, it is unlikely to achieve total consistency between all of them, unless it serves the vested interest of each organization involved.

6.6 Concluding comments

In this chapter I have reviewed the current status of accreditation for international schools, surveying heads of schools, owners and those responsible for accrediting schools in terms of how governance is viewed and how it is adjudicated through the process of accreditation. Where practical, this audit of accreditation and governance was done in light of the overarching analytical

framework of school typologies. While there are areas where all the groups agree, namely that governance is key to the success of international schools, that accreditation organizations are the primary, at this time, body through which governance could be monitored and that this job is difficult. However, beyond these basic agreements, the groups diverged in terms of how to move forward to better ensure that standards which may lead to good governance are monitored.

Chapter 7.0 – Discussion

7.1 Introduction:

This chapter will examine the aim of the research enquiry through the analysis of the findings as they pertain to the research questions. These examinations will be undertaken through a systematic review of the findings of the fifth and sixth chapters, exploring the major themes that emerged in terms of both governance in international education and accreditation, both in terms of its role in international education as well as its ability to support appropriate governance within international schools. Throughout the discussion, where appropriate, I will also draw from the literature review.

7.2 What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by heads of international schools?

This enquiry has uncovered a number of clear themes in relation to what and how a head of school experiences governance within their school.

The first theme is that the governing of international schools is varied and its success is very much dependent upon the type of school and related board structure. To clearly understand this theme, and in fact all the themes, it is also important to put them in context, the context of an international school as opposed to a school within a national system. International schools are, by their very nature, singular entities, as there is no one unifying or overseeing body responsible for them. This singularity of international schools is a significant factor which resonates not only in terms of connections between schools on a superficial level, such as professional development, but a reality that it is the ultimate form of site-based management, where there is usually no government able to support the school in times of crisis.

In addition to the isolation of being the head of an international school, there is the realization that as a head of such a school you are part of a 'system' of schools, scattered throughout the world, which has grown from its humble and rather homogeneous beginnings in the early part of the 20th century, as Hayden (2006) and Hill (2001) contend, to a truly heterogeneous groups of schools numbering over 5,000. Not only are they heterogeneous in educational terms such as the curriculum offered or the predominance of a nationality amongst the

staff or students, but where there is no single common model of a type of school in terms of either governance or financial impetus. To a group of individuals, almost exclusively trained and educated within their own homogeneous national system, this is a paradigm shift which is not always easily achieved.

To more clearly understand and explain the topography of international schools, I developed the orthogonal grid, as described in Chapter 3, to illustrate the typologies which I believe most accurately encapsulates the types of international schools which exist today. I concede that this structure does not take into consideration the educational components that make up a school. This decision was a deliberate choice as I believe that in doing so it allows the focus to be properly placed on the aspects of a school which relate to governance, agreeing with Brewer et al (2008) that all things flow from the relationship between the school and how it is governed. This analytic framework is based on the premise that school types can be 'identified' through 2 parameters, 'ownership' and 'financial impetus', in order to understand the types of schools. As a result, I offer 4 models of international schools: *Owned – Not for profit*, *Owned – For profit*, *Community – Not for profit* and *Community – Not for profit*. I argue that the definitions of these models are sufficiently robust as to allow for the inclusion of most, if not all international schools. With this analytical framework, it is now possible to better understand how heads of international schools experience governance within their particular type of school.

This leads to the second theme for this research question, that regardless of the type of governing body there is a general view that those responsible for governing are not receiving appropriate and on going board training. Within the organizations responsible for accreditation, only one of them has an indicator within their governance standards for accreditation that directly relates to board training. WASC indicates in their Indicator No. 2, that there is pre-training for potential board members (WASC, 2010). It is my contention that the issue of board training is the symptom rather than the cause. Board training allows for the head of school and the board, and especially the board chair, to have time to gain a more clear understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities as well as to allow the development of a healthy and positive relationship. The relationship between the head and the board chair cannot be underplayed. As some of the respondents commented, that the relationship between the board chair and the head of school is a vital piece of the puzzle and it is entirely feasible to bring down a good school from an unresolvable governance issue. As

discussed in Chapter 6, a potential route to mitigate this, and other governance issues, is the notion of annual reporting by international schools, a formative assessment of governance, to the accrediting bodies.

The third theme associated with this research question is the identification of the fact that regardless of the governing model, each has its own inherent weaknesses that requires a more robust system of oversight than is presently in place. I will explore this theme through the lens of ownership used in creating the analytical framework of governing models. The choice to use this lens is based upon the findings, in as much as the issues relating to the financial impetus only have relevance with the ownership model as it does not, in practice, have application within the community models of schools.

As a premise to outlining the weaknesses of the owned schools, it is germane to acknowledge the degree to which owned schools are held within a generally positive light by the heads of international schools, something which will be commented on again with respect to the second research question. The results are, I argue, counter intuitive to what many educators would think that owned schools have the potential to be as successful a model as the community owned.

What may be a strength for some, can become a weakness for others. While respondents commented on the strength of the owned model in terms of often having dedicated owners who had a vested interest in the school can be manifested in a governing body which may be non-democratic as well as not being prepared to be progressive in their decision making. A way to support this model of governing would be to insure there is an advisory board in place between the owners and the management of the school. This intermediary group could serve to ensure that educational decisions are made in the best interest of the students and without the potential interference of an owner who may not totally understand the educational process. The advisory board structure would, however, allow the owner the 'peace of mind' in potentially having decisions on finance, often a critical element of control for owners, within the owner's prevue.

For this governing model, these last 2 themes are, I assert, connected. The weaknesses of the model are often related to either a lack of understanding or will, on the part of the owners. Through education, to wit board training, an

international school has a better chance of the relationship between the management and the governing body being productive and positive.

For the community model of governance it is realistically only the 'not for profit' model as the 'for profit' model is theoretically possible but within the scope of this research there were no examples of this model. As acknowledged, in an earlier chapter, there were no respondents who had ever experienced such a model.

The community model of governing is somewhat more complex due to the variances in the type of governing bodies that are found. However, the NAIS only fully endorsed model of governance, the corporate model, most closely resembles only the 'self-perpetuating board' model. This is due, I believe, to 2 facts relating to the 2 forms of schools, within the US. Within the US public school system there is direct government oversight, on any number of levels, negating the need for, or ability to have, parental oversight. For the independent school system, for which the NAIS offers this model, there are rarely, if ever, elected boards, only the corporate model. The 'fully elected' model, a subset of the community model, has numerous weaknesses attributed to it. As a number of respondents commented, international education is, by its very nature, filled with transient individuals, both on the board and management team. As such, it is difficult if not impossible to have strong succession planning with an elected board where there is a high turnover of personnel. Also, as NAIS point out, this model is ripe for having board members elected who wish to serve a single issue or represent only a portion of the community. The 'Hybrid' board, a board comprised of both elected and self-perpetuating members, while inherently more stable than the 'fully elected', it too was seen to not be as advantageous as the 'self-perpetuating' board. The 'self-perpetuating' board's weaknesses related to a possible perception of a lack of transparency, because there are often no parents on the board, as well as the possibility of having a board constituted with people who were 'not right for the job'. Both of these weaknesses can be easily mitigated, respectively, through better and more open communication between the board and the parent community and ensuring a strong vetting process that the board utilizes when selecting new board members.

7.3 What is the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by representatives of organizations that accredit international schools and the owners of international schools?

One of the most significant themes to emerge from the representatives of the accreditation organizations is the changing landscape with respect to governing models and the types of schools which embrace them. Without exception, all the respondents for these organizations acknowledged that their organization's current standards for governance were not sufficient. This lack of sufficiency is due, almost exclusively, to the growth of the types of international schools and their related governing models. I believe that this is a critical theme for this research as it goes to the heart of the realization, as highlighted within an earlier theme, that there is not central oversight of international schools and therefore these organizations must be prepared to meet the needs of the varying models of governing which are not going to go away and, in fact, are increasing in number. Comments, earlier in this research, made about the lack of relevance of the accreditation models, with respect to proprietary schools is, I argue, a cautionary tale of what must change, and quickly, if the overall reputation which international schools enjoy is to be maintained. We continue to see examples of where there is dysfunction within an international school and the responses to them seem, at best, anaemic.

The second, and related, theme is the acknowledgement by these organizations that the governance of international schools is a significant challenge. However, it is more than that governance within international schools is simply a challenge but the realization that it is almost always the reason that schools fail or become dysfunctional. This theme, however, would not be limited to this respondent cohort as it was present in the comments of the survey and interview respondents as well. This theme also has a correlation with the theme, by the heads of international schools, of the need for board training; these themes are interconnected as the lack of one, namely board training, can either lead to or fail to mitigate failings with the governance of a school. A related aspect of this theme was the confirmation that in post accreditation situations, it is again almost always issues of governance that are at the heart of the dysfunction. The preponderance of the evidence gathered, through this research, clearly supports the notion that it is dysfunction within the relationship between governance and leadership that most often leads to schools failing.

The final theme for the accreditation organizations is an amalgamation of the previous 2 themes into one, namely the perceived inability of the accreditation organizations to deal with the monitoring and enforcement standards for governance. As some respondents argued there appears to be, on the part of accreditation organizations, either an unwillingness or inability to view the importance of governance in fostering an environment where excellence in education can take place. If, as I argue it is, taken as axiomatic that governance is a critical precursor to a school's overall effectiveness then it is imperative that accreditation organizations embrace this in a cooperative development of standards.

While there were only 4 owners interviewed, they represented as many schools as all the respondents from the research enquiry surveys. Though not directly related to governance, but would likely influence it, is a theme which emerged from the interviews with these owners of a similar pattern with respect to the history of their organizations. While Respondent 1D and 2D were responsible for organizations which were significant corporate entities, they both started as family-run operations which after a period of approximately 10 years were then bought out by a larger group. However, in both cases the 'founding fathers' remained in the position of CEO. Respondent 3D and 4D were responsible for younger organizations but again both were family-run, with the CEO also being a senior member of the family. Cornforth (2003) would argue, I believe, that this would be fertile grounds for these organizations to operate within a compliance model, for where else if not within a family business would the owner not suspect an outsider's, in the form of a manager, motives being different than that of the family's.

The first theme with respect to the owners and the governance of their international schools was that they all utilized some form of a self-perpetuating board structure. There were no elected members on their governing bodies and, as Respondent 1D was quoted earlier, they include no one from outside either the family or, in the case of the 2 larger organizations, the company. Also, none of the owners included their heads of school within the governance structure although, as Respondent 3D commented earlier, when needed they can be invited to attend board meetings. It is these statements which lend credence to the notion, as Cornforth (2003) and Gill (2005) outline, that within this type of governing model it is likely to see elements of the Compliance or Management Model, with its inherent level of ownership control.

The second theme for the owners relates to the *raison d'être* for their organizations. They all, in some form, made comment of the desire to provide a quality educational alternative for students within the geographic region where they were predominantly based. This is also noteworthy as they, obviously I would argue, believe that it is possible to have an international school where the majority of the students would be either host country nationals or that it would at least be aimed at them. I contend that Respondent 4D's comment of their desire to provide an education which is the "best of the East and the best of the West" surely acknowledges desires which would be consistent with a definition of an international education.

The third theme which emerged from the interviews with the owners, in relation to governance, relates to the notion of 'for profit' and education. Only one respondent indicated that they wished to operate not for profit schools, although the respondent did comment on the notion of 'for profit'. All the owners were clear that 'for profit' was a reasonable alternative, within the international education marketplace. As respondent 4D explained earlier, if for no other reason than that it is a matter of choice for parents. With the rise in numbers of international schools which are owned, and often 'for profit', I think that this theme, and the comments explaining it, is one of the most significant of this research enquiry. I believe that the comments help delineate the issues with respect to how to view these entities. As the respondents commented, it is not the system of education, to wit for profit education, which is inherently flawed it is those who enter into this arena of education without a clear understanding of the necessity to first allow the school to become established before attempting to garner any profits from its operations. I further argue that this information is also critical to the accreditation organizations as they continue to come to terms with the variants in international schools. The accreditation organizations, I argue, can learn from the 'successful' owners how to mould their guidelines and monitoring practices to support those who are enhancing this model of education as opposed to looking to quickly profit from it.

7.4 What is the potential of accreditation for securing the appropriate governing of international schools?

In advance of discussing the findings it is worthwhile to acknowledge what is meant by the term 'appropriate' in relation to 'appropriate governing of international schools'. As numerous respondents have commented, there is a tendency, within

international education, for the lines between governance and management to become blurred. Fundamentally, I argue that the term of 'appropriate governance' refers equally to both the relationship between how a school is managed and governed, and the clear delineation between the two; in addition to ensure a school adopts a mode of governing which suits the type of school, whether it is owned or community. This analysis of the meaning of 'appropriate' is rooted in my synthesis, as outlined in Chapter 2, of the works of Board Source (2005) and NAIS (2007) to create principles of governance. To illustrate what is meant, by appropriate, and the two meanings ascribed to it, are some hypothetical scenarios. An example of governance which is not appropriate would be where the governors attempt to cross the line between governance and management by, for example, trying to influence the decisions on who a school should hire; within international education, the only position for which governors are responsible is that of the head of school, all other employment decision are management ones. Where governance would be appropriate, would be where a school's governors work strategically to ensure the institution has financial security for the future.

In reviewing the findings, the first theme relating to the potential of accreditation for securing the appropriate governing of international schools is that it has to have the potential, or if not then to find it. Whether the organizations which offer accreditation services appreciate it or not, they are, through the process of accreditation, the 'last line of defence' in terms of ensuring, as Fertig (2007) outlines as one of the stated aims of accreditation, on-going school improvement for international schools. As has been clearly demonstrated within this research enquiry, international schools are unique, in contrast to their national system cousins, in that they truly epitomize site-based management and have no single governing body with oversight responsibility. In fact, even in terms of something as comparatively mundane as professional development, for educators of international schools, it is only offered on a globally regional basis. It is also clear that while there are some national systems, such as China and the United Arab Emirates, which are beginning to require some form of accreditation for international schools, they are, at best, sporadic and there is also no attempt to create any consistency within these national organizations. Accreditation organizations, I contend, have a 'duty of care' to the stakeholders of international schools to provide a consistent, or common, set of guidelines and ongoing support for the appropriate governing of all types of international schools.

The second theme related to this research question is the realization that achieving this potential will require a multi-faceted approach. As Respondent 4E

commented, “*accreditation is a useful but not the only vehicle for doing what one can to mitigate those (governance) problems*”. It will also require a willingness on the part of the organizations responsible for accreditation to be able to both embrace the various models of governance while implementing a system of mandates which allow for the organizations which are affected to adhere to them and then those who are not, can ignore them. A practical example of this concept is the mandating that owner schools have an advisory board, to form a separation between ownership and school management, a community model school would not have to adhere to this tenet.

With the previously identified theme of the isolation of international schools, as the backdrop, the third theme for this research question is that a common set of guidelines and standards are requisite for the sustainable health of international education. As has been commented on earlier in this enquiry, is that, as Respondent 4E commented, there is an issue of

“the transience of both the international school head and the potentially even shorter tenure of board chairs, everybody moves around in the international community and therefore your constantly having to reinvent the wheel somewhat”

which results in the reality that “*you are always building the governing edifice on shifting sands, so to speak*” (Respondent 4E). This acknowledgement raises 2 related concerns. The first is that if the key players in an international school are moving on, in potentially quick succession, who will underpin the foundations of governance, for those left behind? The second is that these mobile players, both in terms of heads of international schools and governors, are most likely moving to other international schools. Both these pieces, I argue, point to the necessity of the accreditation organizations being the overseeing body to ensure consistency with the individual school, through its guidelines and standards, and also within the whole of international schools, so that these mobile players can bring their prior skills and knowledge, in terms of how to make governing appropriate for an international school, from one school to the next and find consistent accreditation frameworks to operate within.

7.5 Summary:

In reviewing the totality of the identified themes, I argue that a clearer picture of the nature of governance within international schools has emerged. The canvass of international education is a kaleidoscope of types of international schools and the governing models that pertain to them. As a number of respondents effectively argue, the success or failure of any specific model is less dependent upon the model as it is the personalities involved. Further, that accreditation can and should be able to realize its potential for securing appropriate governing for international schools. However, this will require the willingness of those within the accreditation organizations to both come together to support a common set of guidelines and mechanisms to ensure compliance as well as to listen to those within the most problematic governing models, at least for the accreditation organizations, which are the owners.

Chapter 8.0 – Concluding comments

8.1 Introduction:

This final chapter will summarize the salient points of this research enquiry and in doing so provide a clear understanding of what has been accomplished through doing so. In addition, this chapter will also examine this research enquiry from a reflective standpoint, to acknowledge what areas could have been managed in a possibly different way, were it to be done again.

8.2. The background details

8.2.1 The Rationale and context

This enquiry was born out of a genuine desire to better understand the nature of governance within the international education milieu as well as what part accreditation does, and could, play in terms of securing appropriate governing for international schools. This interest led to the formulation of the aim of my research enquiry being to '*analyse the nature of the governance of international schools and the potential of accreditation for securing appropriate governing*'.

In order to effectively investigate the aim of this enquiry, I formulated 3 research questions which I believed would allow me the scope to examine the germane issues. These questions sought to better understand: the experiences heads of international schools have with the governing of their schools, the experiences of those who accredit and also those who own international schools, and finally to understand the degree to which accreditation has the potential to secure appropriate governing for international schools.

Before moving on with the research I acknowledged, within the literature review, that it was first necessary to have a working understanding of some of the terms included within this research, namely those of international education and international schools. Certainly it was necessary to delineate the meaning and understanding of governance and the theories relating to governance in general and governing of schools, but the issues related to international were more unique. I argued, as many have done (Hayden 2006, Hill 2001, Thompson, 2001), that the terms relating to international are nebulous at best and are subject to a

wide variation in how they are interpreted. I contended that an acceptance of the meaning of international schools based primarily upon their governing structure has the benefit of allowing a structure which embraces all schools seeking to offer an international education. Capturing the essence of the work of Thompson (2001), as well as Matthews (1988) and Gellar (1993), I put forward the understanding, at least for the purposes of this research, that international education is one where the school would not only foster but actively encourage concepts of internationalism and ensure that they had opportunities to occur organically.

8.2.2 The Research

With the understanding of the terms relating to international secure, I then set about to examine the meaning of governance, both the theories pertaining to it and the models of governing in general, and in particular as they relate to education. I drew upon the works of a number of theorists as this approach addressed the acknowledgement that Kjaer (2005) made that

“there is not one coherent body of governance theory, and it is difficult to get a clear picture of what governance theory is about” (p.2).

I drew from the works of Cornforth (2003), Macnamara (2005) and Gill (2005). With a clear appreciation and understanding of the theories, and their related models of governing, I turned my attention to better understand what constitutes good governance. I acknowledged that this arena too is replete with those who have their notion of what good governance is. However, I felt that settling on Board Source (2005) and the NAIS International Trustee Handbook (2007) offered guidance which was relevant to international schools. I also examined the current state of accreditation in relation to international schools, understanding the organizations involved and their parameters for adjudicating governance within the accreditation process.

Armed with a better understanding of all the aspects of this enquiry, I set about to plan the most appropriate methodology for examining the research questions.

I determined that to answer the research questions, I would need to collect data from those who were most directly connected to, and affected by,

governing within international schools, in addition to those who were connected to the accreditation of international schools. Based upon these parameters, I made the decision to survey the heads of international schools, in addition I would also seek to gain access to those who were responsible for the accreditation of international schools and, as a final group, those who own international schools.

As I mentioned earlier within this enquiry, there were some significant obstacles to gaining ready access to some of the stakeholders within international schools. By their very nature international schools, and their heads, are spread literally around the globe. In addition to the geographic challenges that this presents is the realization that there is no single body of oversight or coordination for all these disparate schools. While this was not the case for those who were responsible for the accreditation organizations and the owners of the schools, this still presented a logistical challenge.

I considered that the utilization of a mixed methods approach would be the most appropriate to gain access to the various stakeholders and, ideally, to gain access to the relevant information in order to inform my research. I made the decision that to gain access to the heads of the international schools I would utilize a survey questionnaire, first within a pilot enquiry and then followed up with a more robust one for this research enquiry. This method, I argue, has the benefit of allowing me to gain information, in an efficient and effective manner, from stakeholders who are spread around the world. In addition, I asked potential respondents if they would be willing to consent to a follow-up interview, which a number did. Given the smaller respondent pool, and in the case of the owners more delicate questions, I chose to interview those responsible for the accreditation process as well as a sampling of owners of international schools. Once all this data was gathered, I was then able to use the data to answer the research questions and in doing so uncovered a number of themes.

Informed by the literature review, I worked to create an analytical framework for the governance of international schools. This framework (Figure 5) had 2 parameters through which analytic distinctions were made. These 2 parameters were the 'ownership' of the schools and their 'financial impetus'. The resulting orthogonal grid allowed me to place the international schools within this framework to better understand their potential motivations, in terms of the type and choice of governing structure. This analytic framework also allowed for

further delineation, as witnessed by the various governing structures within the 'Community – not for profit' model. I then proceeded to understand and further refine these models based upon the survey respondents' data, in addition to the comments from all the interview respondents.

The second phase of analysis was to examine the issues related to the accreditation of international schools. After presenting a clear picture of the current state of accreditation, for international schools, I then focused on examining the governing models, as created through the analytical framework, to understand their relationship to accreditation. These findings were generated again utilizing both the survey respondent data and information from all the interview respondents.

8.3 The findings

8.3.1 The emergent themes

Themes, relating to the research questions, emerged from the findings.

Research Question 1

With respect to the first research question, understanding the nature of the experience of the heads of international schools. In the governance of their schools, there were 3 significant themes. I argue these themes are interconnected. The first theme identified the notion that the governing of international schools is not static, success is very much dependent upon the type of school and its related governing structure. This first theme is connected to the discernment, of the third theme, which argues that these governing types have inherent strengths and weaknesses requiring a robust system of oversight but would also, relating to the second theme, benefit from ongoing and meaningful training for the governing body.

Research Question 2

In terms of the second research question, the nature of the governance of international schools as experienced by those who accredit them, and the owners of some of these schools, the themes here too are interconnected. One theme to emerge was that the accreditation organizations have acknowledged that they

have not been able to keep pace with the growth in the types of international schools, and their related board structures. I contend that this first theme is inextricably linked to the third theme which identifies the current inability of the accreditation organizations to systematically deal with the monitoring and enforcement of the standards of governance. The second theme has the capacity to mitigate the other themes' weaknesses for accreditation with the creation of a common set of standards.

Research Question 3

The final research question, examining the potential of accreditation to secure appropriate governing for international schools, generated 3 themes. These themes again are all nested one within the other. The first theme outlines both the lack of current ability as well as the potential of accreditation to support the acquisition of appropriate governing. The second theme adds to the first in identifying the need for a multi-faceted approach to address the complexity of governing within international schools. The final theme identifies a common set of guidelines and standards for governance for international schools. I contend that these guidelines and standards give the best opportunity for securing appropriate governing.

Summary

I believe that through this research a number of clear overarching themes have emerged. At the outset is the acknowledgement that international schools are a kaleidoscope of typologies, based upon their governing model. There are clear indications, based upon this research, that all these typologies have a place within international education and within a positive framework. Special attention is drawn to the concept of 'owned' schools, which hitherto have been considered, by many within education, as not synonymous with education; I believe there is clear evidence that this is not the case. What is also clear, as many respondents commented, is that both community and owned schools have the same potential to be 'less than successful'. Additionally, personalities play a key role in the dynamics of governing. The success of any of these models of governing is predicated on the personalities, especially in terms of the relationship between the head of the international school and the board chair. Time, energy and training have to be cornerstones to the on going success of a governing structure. Finally, in terms of the accreditation of international schools, and of

accreditation's place in securing appropriate governing, these organizations are truly the 'last line of defence'. It is therefore incumbent on these organizations to set aside any political differences and to work both in a continued air of collaboration but also to remain open to seeking the benefit of the wisdom of those who are involved with the various governing models.

8.4 The next steps

It is my desire that this research both inform the discussion surrounding the governing of international schools as well as to provide potential paths for the debate to move forward. As someone who has spent a significant, and ongoing, part of my professional career within international education, it is also my genuine aspiration that this research is able to enhance the quality of international education and the lives of those charged with heading the international schools that make it up. I can bear witness to both the positive and detrimental types of governing within international schools and it is also my ambition that this research will ultimately lead to systems which mitigate the latter. To achieve this final ambition, I hope to be able to ensure the dissemination of these results through writing for scholarly journals about this research

8.5 Some reflections

It is just as critical to learn from the areas where this research could potentially have been improved as to learn from its findings. I have identified 5 areas which are worth noting as I reflect upon this research.

The first consideration is whether or not the sample sizes were sufficient to draw meaningful conclusions or inferences. This research drew on information provided by the heads of international schools, owners of international schools and finally those who are responsible for the accreditation of international schools. A total of 155 respondents took part in this research; 145 were heads of international schools who participated in the questionnaire-based survey, 6 representatives of accreditation organizations who along with 4 owners of international schools were interviewed. Four heads of international schools were also interviewed (Respondents 1E, 2E, 3E & 4E) and were part of the 145 who had also completed a questionnaire. In the various forums where I attempted to collect survey data I had the potential of approximately 500 respondents; however, the reality is that many individuals may have the best of intentions but

forget or neglect to follow through on answering questionnaires. All the major accreditation organizations were canvassed so this area, I argue, was replete. With respect to the owners of international schools, this is a very difficult group to gain access to. I was only able to gain access to these 4 through personal connections, most owners do not advertise that they own schools, given the already stated preconceived views on the subject. As such, I believe that the number and type of both respondent numbers and their connection to the debate was sufficient to support the themes which emerged.

The second potential for concern would be the possibility that the data was skewed by the type of sampling that took place. It could be argued that the sampling was opportunistic. It was never my intention to map all of international education, but rather to examine international education, and the schools within the 'system', to look for possible emergent themes. While there are other stakeholders, such as the governing bodies and parents, these groups are far more difficult to gain access to.

The third area of possible concern arises from the decision to utilize heads of international schools to gain their input, as opposed to including parents, teachers and, perhaps most importantly, members of the governing boards. However, I believe that this choice is defensible given that only the head, and the board members, have direct knowledge in relation to governing. The decision then to not include the governors was mitigated by my level of comfort in the ability of the heads of the international schools to be professionals and offer a balanced perspective.

While I acknowledge that the remit I undertook, looking at both governance and accreditation, was significant in scope I do not believe I was being overindulgent. It is my assertion that to more fully understand the dimensions of governing within international schools it is critical to understand the relationship that accreditation plays, given the uniqueness of international education, at least in terms of the lack of any single body for statutory oversight.

The final area of comment is in terms of the stakeholders who benefit from international education. As Respondent 4D commented, this type of education is often marketed to 'those who can afford it'. The majority of students who benefit from an international education fall into 2 broad categories, students who are expatriates and their fees are being paid, most often by their parents'

employer, or those who are from the host country whose family can afford the tuition fees, which are most often significantly more than within the national system of education. I would argue that all children deserve to have their system of education benefit from academic enquiry, to ensure that they are getting the best possible educational opportunities. Children who are growing up abroad often have challenges, and admittedly benefits too, which other children do not, so I believe it is reasonable to examine this form of education and how it is governed.

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Chapter 10.0 – Appendices

Appendix 'A':

Version sent to EdD students:

I hope this email finds you well. For those that I have not met, I am an international school head, having been a head of school in: Canada (my native home), Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and China. Having just finished my time in China, I have decided to take a self-funded sabbatical. I'm studying here, at the University of Bath, full time - so if you're taking EdD units in January and at summer school, it's be good to link up. I am currently undertaking the Pilot research enquiry unit for my EdD at Bath into the governance and governing arrangements of international schools which is being supervised by Prof Chris James, along with both Mary Hayden & Jeff Thompson, who you may know. I am contacting you and other participants on our EdD programme who we understand to be (or have been) in senior leadership positions in international schools with a request for your thoughts on the governance arrangements in your school.

It would be very helpful if you could email me brief answers to these questions.

- 1. What are the governance arrangements in your school?**
- 2. What are the strengths/benefits of such arrangements?**
- 3. What are the disadvantages/problems associated with these arrangements?**
- 4. How could the governance arrangements be improved?**

Please feel free to make any other comments about the governance arrangements. **All the replies will of course be completely confidential.** There will be no attribution of any individual comments in my assignment.

It'd be very helpful if you could let me have your replies by the end of the week - if possible - the 30th October. Apologize profusely for the tight timeline, but have just returned from an overseas' trip, as a finalist candidate for my next headship, in August 2010.

As you may know Chris is currently researching school governing in the UK and elsewhere, so I'm hoping my research will feed into a study he's undertaking with Prof Steve Brammer in the School of Management which is looking at school governing arrangements world-wide. The governance of international schools will be an important theme in that study.

Again, thank you for the time it will take you to consider this request, and I will be certain to keep you apprised of the progress and outcomes!

Appendix 'B':

Version sent to AISH Members:

I hope this email finds you well. For those that I have not met, as well as being on the board of AISH, I have been an international school head, having been a head of school in: Canada (my native home), Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and China. Having just finished my time in China, I have decided to take a self-funded sabbatical year. I'm studying here, at the University of Bath, full time. For those of you who are not aware, the University of Bath is also home to the CEIC (Centre for Education in an International Context), and offers study centres around the world for its MA programme and is looking at this for the doctorate as well. I am currently undertaking a Pilot research enquiry as part of my research for my doctorate at the University of Bath into the governance and governing arrangements of international schools which is being supervised by Prof Chris James, along with both Dr. Mary Hayden & Professor Emeritus Jeff Thompson, who you may know.

It would be very helpful if you could email me brief answers to these questions.

- 1. What are the governance arrangements in your school?**
- 2. What are the strengths/benefits of such arrangements?**
- 3. What are the disadvantages/problems associated with these arrangements?**
- 4. How could the governance arrangements be improved?**

Please feel free to make any other comments about the governance arrangements. **All the replies will of course be completely confidential.** There will be no attribution of any individual comments in my assignment. It'd be very helpful if you could let me have your replies by the end of next week - if possible - the 13th of November.

As some further background to this, Professor Chris James is currently researching school governing in the UK and elsewhere, so I'm hoping my research will feed into a study he's undertaking with Prof Steve Brammer in the University of Bath's School of Management which is looking at school governing arrangements world-wide. The governance of international schools will be an important theme in that study.

Appendix 'C':

April 30, 2010

Over the past two years you have been involved in at least one module of the ECIS Sustainable International School Governance Program. We hope that you found the experience to be beneficial to your role as a Board Trustee. I invite any comments or suggestions that you may wish to share with me to improve the program. This would be in addition to any of the evaluation comments you completed at the conclusion of each module.

Paul Sheppard, a doctoral candidate at the University of Bath, is doing his research on international school governance. If you could find a few minutes to complete the survey below, it would be a help to this doctoral student. Paul already has data from school heads but board members will add another perspective to the study. The conclusions of his research will be shared with ECIS members.

Thank you again for choosing ECIS as part of the professional development for your school. ECIS has launched a consultancy service to meet the many needs of international schools. You can learn more about this service by going to the following link: <http://www.ecis.org/consultancy>

Regards,

Jean Vahey

Executive Director/CEO

Appendix 'D':

Dear Colleagues;

Yes, that's all it will take you! Just 15 minutes! First, to those of you who have, and continue to, supported me in my doctoral research I wish to thank you!! I am starting to see the end of the tunnel in terms of this sabbatical and preparing for my next journey, as the new Director of the American School of Yaounde (Cameroon), which I will start in August.

I have been to the AAIE and ECIS conferences and worked to get my questionnaire administered to as many of you as possible. I especially appreciate both Elsa Lamb's, at AAIE, and Jean Vahey's, at ECIS, support! It has been invaluable! However, in spite of the above, I am rather 'light' on feedback!

I am therefore asking for only 15 minutes of your time! It is my hope that my doctoral research can do some good in the arena of governance within international education! Hope springs eternal, as they say! Whether you are a current head or previously was one (you can answer based upon your last posting), your input will help!

If you have answered this survey, at either of the aforementioned conferences, then there is no need to again, and thank you! If you did not, or were not at these, could you assist now? **If you can fill this in within the next 10 days, it would be greatly appreciated!** I will promise to ensure that your time is not for want, and will work to publish the results when it is all done! I have already had interest from some of our accreditation organizations in this! Here is the URL:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/J23YVNS>

Appendix 'E':

1. Governance Survey

Dear Participants; My name is Paul Sheppard, I am an international educator, who has been a Head of School, for 12 years, in Canada, Asia and the Middle East. I am currently on a self-funded sabbatical, at the University of Bath, UK. The 'working title' for my doctoral thesis is "Creating a meaningful set of guidelines and standards to allow for consistency and good practice for the governing of international schools". Your assistance will form part of what I hope will be a meaningful contribution to this area. It is my intention to share the results with not only my colleagues but also the accrediting bodies who are often charged with being the 'gatekeeper'. All data gathered in relation to this research will be treated as confidential and no identifying information will be used. I know how busy you are and I thank you, in advance, for your support!

1. How many years have you been in international education?

2. How many years have you been a head of school?

3. Your current position is?

- Head of School
- Principal
- Board Member
- Teacher
- Retired
- Other please specify

4. Your school is located in which country?

5. Your school's student population is?

6. Is your school operated to create financial profit?

- Yes
- No

7. Does your school have a governing board?

- Yes
- No

8. How many members are on the board?

9. Are you a member of the board?

- Yes or No

10. Are you a voting member of the board?

- Yes
- No

11. Your board is best described as?

- Fully elected
 - Fully Self-Perpetuating
 - Combination of elected & Self-perpetuating
- Other (please specify)

12. Do you feel your board structure and processes enable the appropriate governing of your school?

- Yes
- No

If 'No', please explain why.

13. Based upon your experiences, which of the following board types do you feel is best suited for an international school?

- Fully Elected
 - Fully Self-Perpetuating
 - Combination Elected and Self Perpetuating
- Other, please specify

14. Does your board engage in annual training?

- Yes
- No

15. Do you feel that Annual Board training should be mandated through accreditation standards?

- Yes
- No

16. Do local 'host country' laws affect how your board is either structured or operates?

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', please explain why?

17. Your school is accredited by (tick all which apply)?

- SACS

- NEASC
 - WASC
 - MSA
 - CIS
- Other (please specify)

18. Do you feel that the accreditation standards for which your school is accredited are sufficient to ensure good practice in the governing of your school?

- Yes
- No

If 'No', please explain why?

19. What do you see as the challenges, if any, to achieving and sustaining good governing? Feel free to draw on any of your past educational experiences.

20. Are the procedures for monitoring governing practice under accreditation standards, in your experience, adequate?

- Yes
- No, If 'No', please explain why?

21. In your view, is it desirable to have common standards and guidelines for governance amongst the various accrediting agencies?

- Yes
- No

Can you explain your answer?

22. Are you willing to be available for a follow-up survey or interview?

- Yes
- No

If 'yes', can you please put your email address?

Appendix 'F'

Questions for Interviews with Accreditation Organizations:

- 1) What prompted your organization to become involved in the accreditation of international schools?
- 2) How long have you been doing this?
- 3) From what sources did you draw upon in the creation of your accreditation standards for governance?
- 4) Do you believe that the current standards for governance, within the accreditation process, are sufficient? If not, where or how would you wish to strengthen them?
- 5) Is there any consistency between accreditation organizations with respect to having common standards for an area, such as governance? If not, would you be in support of this?
- 6) In general terms, what do you see as the challenges to achieving and sustaining good governance, within international schools?
- 7) Can you recall any specific cases, confidentiality assured, where governance was an issue in determining accreditation? How often, as an approximate % has this been an issue?
- 8) How often has governance become an issue, post accreditation? Compared to other educational issues within a school?
- 9) What 'enforcement' tools does your organization have when dealing with a school whose governing body which is no longer meeting the standards for governance?
- 10) How does your organization monitor the governing of schools you have accredited? Is this any different to how you monitor other aspects, such as curriculum or H&S?
- 11) Would I be able to contact some of your accrediting team members, to get further information from them about what they have experienced in terms of the governance component?

Appendix 'G':

Questions for owners of schools:

1. Can you please describe the core competencies of your company?
2. How long has your company been involved in international education?
3. Can you please describe the number, type, & location of your schools?
4. Does your company have expansion plans for more schools?
5. Can you please describe the ownership structure for your schools?
6. Can you please describe the governing structure for your schools?
7. Are your school's governing boards SP, FE, or Hybrid?
8. Can you describe the relationship between the head office and the local schools, in terms of governing?
9. Do your school boards engage in annual board training?
10. Are your heads of schools members of its GB?
11. Are your heads of schools voting members of its GB?
12. What do you see as the challenges, if any, to achieving and sustaining good governing? Feel free to draw on any of your past educational experiences.
13. Do all your schools seek accreditation?
14. Which organization(s) do you chose to accredit your schools and why?
15. What is(are) the reason(s) you chose to have your schools accredited?
16. Should board training be mandated through accreditation?
17. Do you feel that common standards, between all accreditation organizations, for governance would help?
18. Are the procedures for monitoring governing practice under accreditation standards, in your experience, adequate?
19. Are your schools required to have a surplus generated from a budget year?
20. Does your school submit and fees to the head office?
21. How would you answer the comment that 'for profit or owned and schools are not compatible'?

Appendix 'H'

Approved 20th Feb 2005 by CIS Board for the 7th Edition.

The CIS Guide to School Evaluation and Accreditation 7th Edition Interpreting Section C - Governance and Management

The "Outcomes" Approach

Rather than concentrating on "structure", the school evaluation process should concentrate on "outcomes" or "how things work in practice". That is to say that the over-riding concern should be whether the school's governance and management serves, at present and in the foreseeable future, the best educational interests of the school community.

Nevertheless, certain features are deemed to be absolute requirements, whatever the school structure:

The school's Educational Leader must:

- a) have appropriate qualifications and experience in education
- b) be the final arbiter in curriculum matters (design, delivery, assessment and review)
- c) appoint, allocate, appraise and if necessary terminate the contracts of academic staff
- d) have power to manage the educational budget, once approved
- e) not be subjected to "micro-management" by the Governing Body
- f) be able to contribute to Governing Body deliberations
- g) maintain effective communication with the Governing Body
- h) delegate appropriately to colleagues, and maintain effective working relations with them

The Governing Body must:

- a) appoint, appraise, and where necessary terminate the contract of the Educational Leader
- b) be so constituted that there is reasonable and informed debate on school issues, hence ensuring that those making final decisions receive good advice (debate must involve the Educational Leader)
- c) not micro-manage, concentrating instead on broad strategy and policy (i.e. longer-term issues)
- d) have its modus operandi and major decisions in writing
- e) assume trustee status for finances, to ensure that the law is obeyed and that the school is secure
- f) be trained as an entity
- g) operate effective processes for appraisal of its own performance

The Governing Body and the Educational Leader must:

- a) ensure that the essential features of their respective roles are clearly written down
- b) maintain a co-operative working relationship

SOME PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF PROPRIETARY SCHOOLS

These guidelines are designed to help proprietary schools to respond to the Standards for Accreditation in Section C of the CIS Guide to School Evaluation

and Accreditation (7th Edition) and the ideas described on the first page of this document. They should also prove useful to accreditation visitors to such schools. Being "guidelines" these are not hard and fast "rules". It should be remembered that all Standards for Accreditation should be interpreted in the light of the school's philosophy and objectives as well as the school's current state of development.

Although the Governing Body must comply with all Section C Standards, Standards C1, C2, and C3 (with their corresponding Indicators) are probably the most difficult to interpret in a proprietary school. Hence the guidelines shown below:

STANDARD C1

The following is considered reasonable for the composition of Governing Bodies/Advisory Councils in proprietary schools:

- a) a Governing Body/Advisory Council of at least five people.
- b) a combination of people from inside and outside the "ownership group".
- c) the people from outside the ownership group may be from within the school itself or from outside it -
 - i. Governing Body/Advisory Council members from inside the school may be members of one or more of these groups: parents of students or ex-students from the school, personnel employed at the school (academic or support staff), students, or ex-students
 - ii. Governing Body/Advisory Council members from outside the school should be nominated for their expertise so might be lawyers, bankers, doctors, architects, educationalists, etc.
- d) The overall composition of the Governing Body/Advisory Council should ensure that the broadest and best advice on governance matters is heard before decisions are taken. Advice should always be sought from the Educational Leader
- e) Governing Body/Advisory Council members from outside the "ownership group" should be nominated for a set time (e.g. two or three years) and the possibility or otherwise of extending that mandate should be clarified from the outset

STANDARDS C2 AND C3

These standards cannot be met if the Governing Body/Advisory Council and the top Management/Administration are effectively one and the same thing. Compliance with Standards C2 and C3 requires a certain "separation of powers". Therefore no one person should be both the Educational Leader and the sole School Proprietor. Neither should one person be both the Educational Leader and the President/Chair of the Governing Body/Advisory Council.

