BUILDING MONTESSORI PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®
education that transforms lives

A Panel Presentation from the AMS International Task Force
Moderated by Joyce Pickering
Panelists: Dorothy Paul, Marlene Barron, Paige Geiger, Maureen Harris and Anna Perry

OUTLINE OF TODAY'S SESSION

1. How does one start a school abroad?
2. How does one start a Teacher Education Program internationally?
3. How can we recruit qualified teachers?
4. Q & A

STARTING A SCHOOL CASE STUDY: TANZANIA WITH MAUREEN HARRIS

Challenges:
• Student attendance
• Montessori Training
• Teacher resources

Lessons Learned:
• Materials and resources
• Accredited TEPs only
• Long-term commitment
• Montessori will work

STARTING A SCHOOL CASE STUDY: UGANDA

• Two siblings, Christine and Lanam Kijange, received certifications at AMS programs in the USA then returned to Uganda and started schools
• One urban school and two rural schools
• They cite their experiences and internships and years in the USA as key to their success

STARTING A SCHOOL CASE STUDY: CHINA WITH MARLENE BARRON

Positive influences
• Expanding early childhood population
• Strong parent interest in Montessori education
• Expanding middle class willing to pay for early childhood education
• Private financial support to start a school is available
STARTING A SCHOOL CASE STUDY: CHINA WITH MARLENE BARRON

CHALLENGES

SCHOOLS
• Lack of credentialed teachers
• Most schools are private and overly responsive to parent pressure
• Program quality
• Educational policies/requirements differ in each district [e.g., 18 districts in Beijing]

Teacher Education Programs (TEPs)
• Applicants to TEPs have little background in history, education, science…
• Internship challenges
• Chinese teacher educators versus foreign teacher educators who are not familiar with Chinese culture…
• Translation issues, English terms cannot be translated into Chinese, e.g., initiative

STARTING A SCHOOL CASE STUDY: SLOVENIA WITH ANNA PERRY

Timeline of the Project:
• 2001 Melita Kordes attends Early Childhood at Seton Montessori Institute
• Returns home to start a program within a convent
• 2002 - 2004 several Slovenians come for certification in Chicago
• 2004 Melita attends Infant Toddler certification
• 2006 Melita founds the Montessori Institute in Ljubljana for Early Childhood with Seton’s support

Timeline continued:
• 2008 Infant-Toddler courses added
• 2011 Melita begins Elementary certification at Seton and starts offering Elementary to students at her school
• 2013 Montessori Institute in Ljubljana begins offering Elementary certification in Slovenia
• Now Slovenia has over 10 Montessori schools serving 500+ children

RECRUITING QUALIFIED TEACHERS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY

Considerations:
1. Sponsored work visa
2. Housing – stipend included? Free?
3. Medical requirements such as shots – paid?
4. Social and cultural transition support
5. Relationship with an AMS teacher education program

AMS’ website offers these services:
• Information on hiring credentialed teachers
• Information on hiring credentialed teachers
• AMS members can post employment opportunities and all can search

RECRUITING QUALIFIED TEACHERS TO WORK INTERNATIONALLY

Considerations continued:
1. Annual trip home with paid leave
2. Medical Insurance
3. Clearly communicated job responsibilities and requirements

STARTING A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM CASE STUDY: CZECH REPUBLIC WITH DOROTHY PAUL

• June 2010, Moved to Prague to support a preschool with informal training
• An elementary and high school were acquired that summer
• 2010-2011, Opened a 2nd preschool
• 2011-2012, Wrote the self-study for EC, EL-I with others,
• Established a Montessori elementary for grades 1-5
• Hired an EL-I Director who mentored all
• Held teacher training cycle (EC, EL-I), became an AMS affiliate/ACIE accredited

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STARTING A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM CASE STUDY: CZECH REPUBLIC WITH DOROTHY PAUL

- 2012-2015, Added EL-II training (AMS/MACTE)
- Began Secondary I-II training for 30 teachers
- Invited international speakers
- New facilities, established a Montessori Gymnasium for students grades K-12
- 2015-2017, Hired full time Program Coordinator
- Invited to speak at European conferences
- Included in leadership by the European community

STARTING A TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM CASE STUDY: BRAZIL WITH PAIGE GEIGER

What Helped:
- A hungry market for Montessori education
- Local participation: small administrators group, participation in local conferences, participating as speakers for professional development
- School leadership participating in training => bring a team!
- Internet: as multiplier and qualifier requires participation, verification, providing feedback

Opportunities and Challenges:
- Sustained program quality and outcomes takes time
- Internship challenges
- Demonstration classes
- Commitment to consultations for supporting school start up
- Initial costs for start up

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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THANK YOU

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