Making the Difference

Acknowledgments

The writing, printing and distribution of this manual were made possible thanks to a grant from the Overseas Schools Advisory Council (OSAC). All activities connected with this project were administered and supported by the Office of Overseas Schools, the Association of International Schools in Africa and the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools.

The following OSAC members* and other U.S. corporations and foundations contributed funds for this project:

Abbott Laboratories
***AOL**
Atwood Oceanics, Inc.
***Caterpillar Foundation**
***Citigroup Foundation**
***ConocoPhillips**
Deloitte & Touche
***EADS North America Defense**
***E.I. duPont de Nemours and Co.**
***ExxonMobil Corporation**
Fluor Corporation
***General Motors Foundation**
Hunt Consolidated, Inc.
***ING Financial Advisers**
Maersk
***MasterCard International**
McDonalds
***Microsoft**
Lockheed Martin Foundation
***Pfizer**
***PricewaterhouseCoopers**
***Procter & Gamble Company**
The Boeing Company
TRW Automotive

There were many people who contributed to this book – knowingly and unknowingly. The single largest group has been the students that it has been our privilege over the years to teach. We can only hope that they have learned half as much from us as we have learned from them.

We are most grateful to the individuals who took time away from their busy teaching schedules and administrative duties to contribute important chapters to this book: Patsy Richardson, Coordinating Librarian at the International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL); Susan Napoliello, the Elementary Principal at ISKL; and David Suarez, Middle School Math teacher at Jakarta International School.

We are also grateful for the inspiration and support of the late Frances Hoffman, former Coordinating Librarian at the International School of Kuala Lumpur, whose laughter and insight continue to guide us still.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to the individuals that read portions of the manuscript in draft and made valuable comments and criticisms. These included Dr. Nancy Robinson, Professor Emerita of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science from the University of Washington; Dr. Phyllis Aldrich, Coordinator for Gifted Education, Saratoga Board of Cooperative Educational Services; Karen Moreau, Coordinator of Professional Development at Taipei American School; Kristen Pelletier, Coordinator of Special Needs Education, International School of Brussels; Rob Mullen, School Psychologist, International School of Kuala Lumpur; and Rose White, Curriculum Coordinator at Kaohsiung American School .

We are grateful to the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development for permission to reprint “Using Observation to Improve Instruction” (Chapter Sixteen) which originally appeared in the February 2005 issue of *Educational Leadership* and to the Council of International Schools for permission to

reprint “Knowing Ourselves: the Student Perspective” (Chapter Four) and “Differentiating for Girls and Boys” (Chapter Ten) both of which originally appeared as articles in *International Schools Journal.*

We owe a debt of gratitude to the Executive Directors of the regional associations of international schools who have been enthusiastic and active supporters of our work: Miffie Greer at the Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA); the late Bob Sills and his wife Linda at the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS), David Chojnacki at the Near East South Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (NESA), Dick Krajczar at the Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE) and Paul Poore at the Association of American Schools in South America (AASSA).

We also extend our sincere thanks for the continued support of the Office of Overseas Schools at the U.S. Department of State, especially to Connie Buford and Keith Miller; and to Joe Carney, who saw us through the early part of this project.

There have been many, many individuals who have contributed ideas and moral support. From ISKL, these include: Esther Moo, Gary Blanton, Susan Napoliello, Michael and Diana O’Leary, Michael O’Shannassy, Marie-France Blais, Hisae Ubl, Grant Millard, Alex Smith, and Bill’s long-standing Cognitive Coaching partner, Naomi Aleman. From elsewhere around the world, we are grateful to Laurie McLellan, Head of the Overseas School of Colombo in Sri Lanka; Areta Williams, Superintendent of the International School of Kenya; Kevin Bartlett, Director of the International School of Brussels, and Colette Belzil and Anne Brennan, also from ISB; Walter Plotkin, Director of the American School of Dhaka; Mark Jenkins, Coordinator of Professional Development at Jakarta International School; Michael Fox, Coordinator of Professional Development at Taipei American School; Oscar

Nilsson, Head of Bandung International School; Matthew Parr, Secondary School Principal at St. Maur International School, Yokohama; Nancy Holodak, Curriculum Coordinator at the American School of Rio de Janerio; Nick Bowley, Head of School, International School of Tianjin; Rhona Bowley, Middle School teacher, International School of Tianjin; and Jon Nordemeyer from Shanghai American School.

Finally, we want to express a debt of enormous gratitude to the finest teacher we know, our friend and mentor, Bob Garmston, to whom this book is dedicated.

William Powell and Ochan Kusuma-Powell
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
June, 2007

To Bob Garmston

friend, guide and mentor par excellence

PREFACE

International school educators have long understood that students entering our schools represent great diversity in culture, language and educational experience. More recently, we are also recognizing a growing diversity in the range of student learning needs in our populations. We see more frequently than ever before newcomers to the English language, children with special learning needs, including learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders with and without hyperactivity, children on the autism spectrum, and students with special gifts and talents.

Consequently, *differentiation* is a word that has entered our vocabulary with increasing frequency over the last 10 years. Teachers are recognizing that a broader range of learner needs has to be met within the context of the regular classroom, accrediting agencies are requiring schools to do it, parents are demanding it.

Educators from Yokohama to Rio de Janeiro are asking, *"What is differentiation, and how do we do it?"*

The purpose of this book is to address those questions, specifically:

- What is differentiation?
- Who is it for?
- Why is it important? and,
- How do teachers (and schools) set themselves upon the journey of differentiating instruction?

Our thanks to the Office of Overseas Schools for making this project possible.

Bill and Ochan Powell
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
June, 2007