International Education Services

万科双语学校

We hope to see you again at our
2026 Visible Learning Conference
with ***John Hattie***
in Shenzhen on April 24-26, 2026.

---IES Team

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Recruitment & Workshops

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2025 CONCEPT-BASED LEARNING CONFERENCE

25-26 Oct
Shanghai

www.iespg.com

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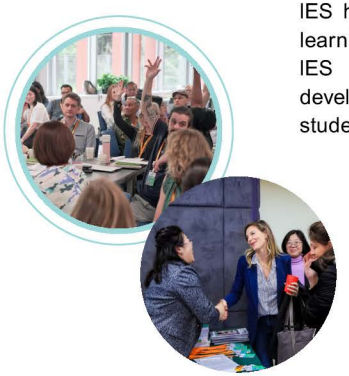
About IES

International Education Services (IES) is a fast-growing firm in education, partnering with 200+ schools and connecting with 85,000+ educators.

Its primary focus is personalized recruiting, ensuring schools find the right educators to make a meaningful impact. By fostering strong relationships, the company places top talent in roles where they can best support student success.

While recruitment is its core mission, International Education Services also offers professional development to support educators' growth. Committed to safety, inclusion, and integrity, the company helps schools build diverse, thriving communities that guide students to become well-rounded, lifelong learners and global citizens. To find out more, please visit www.iespg.com.

85,000+	200+	30,000+	100+
Candidates	Network Schools	Social Media Followers	PD Events



IES has successfully held more than 100 professional learning events, benefitting 5000 educators since 2020. IES is committed to offering various professional development events for the benefit of educators and students in China and beyond.

IES Partners with IB to elevate the international education

- IES partnered with IB Asia-Pacific in November 2024
- Extending support to both IB and non-IB schools
- Jointly organizing conferences and seminars

Welcome Remarks

Xuemei Liu

Director
International Education Services

A warm welcome to all of you at the 2nd Concept-Based Learning Conference!

Following our successful first conference, we are excited to bring together a vibrant community of educators once again, this time in Shanghai. The next two days are packed with inspiring ideas and practical strategies at the forefront of conceptual teaching and learning.

We have curated this experience to ensure you leave feeling energized, equipped, and more connected to a global network of peers. Dive in, engage deeply, and let's co-create the future of education.

Agnes Cheng

Executive Principal
Vanke Bilingual School

Agnes Cheng, a Master of Arts, majoring in English language and literature, has been working in international education for more than twenty years, with plenty of experiences in international curricula, i.e. IBDP, IB PYP, A-level. Ms. Agnes excels at integrating the Chinese National Curriculum and international curricula, and finding balanced growth paths for Chinese students. Her rich experience with teachers from primary- to university-level teachers and school administrators has fostered a broad vision and practice to her school management practices.

Vanke Bilingual School (VKBS) has only a 10-year history, but it has distinguished itself as a high-quality bilingual education provider and PE as its characteristics. As VKBS's principal, Ms. Agnes is dedicated to cultivating students' academic ability together with their physical and mental health development. By adopting different teaching and learning approaches, especially inquiry-based learning, concept-based learning, project-based learning, interdisciplinary learning and so on, VKBS students have shown strong academic ability and diversified interests as well as excellent problem-solving skills, which will help them to become future lifelong learners.

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Pre-Conference Workshop

Friday, Oct. 24th

Exploring a Concept-Based Inquiry Approach

Workshop Overview:

This one-day workshop lays the foundation for understanding Concept-Based Inquiry. In this interactive session, Rachel will begin with a model lesson that allows you to experience a concept-based approach firsthand, where both factual and conceptual questions drive the exploration of diverse case studies.

You will be introduced to a seven-phase model of Concept-Based Inquiry. Photos and video clips of classroom practice will showcase the kinds of thinking that emerge at each stage of the model. You will also have the opportunity to try different strategies yourself and reflect on how you can apply them in your own classroom context.

By the end of the workshop, you will have a clear framework for designing learning experiences that foster meaningful conceptual understanding and support ongoing assessment for learning.

Workshop Schedule

7:30-8:00	Registration	Black Box(1F)
8:00-9:00	Session 1	Black Box(1F)
9:00-9:30	Break	
9:30-11:00	Session 2	Black Box(1F)
11:00-12:00	Lunch	Canteen (2F)
12:00-13:00	Session 3	Black Box(1F)
13:00-13:30	Break	
13:30-15:00	Session 4	Black Box(1F)
15:00-15:30	Break	
15:30-16:30	Session 5	Black Box(1F)

Keynote Speakers

Rachel French

Founder of Professional Learning International and an accomplished international educator, workshop facilitator, consultant, and author, Rachel has been leading innovative curriculum design and transforming how educators teach, and students learn for over 12 years.

Mentored by the founders of Concept-Based Curriculum themselves, Dr. H. Lynn Erickson and Dr. Lois A. Lanning, Rachel was entrusted with the exclusive worldwide rights to be the sole provider of the Erickson and Lanning Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction (CBCI) Trainer Certification Institute — the certification that kick-started her journey into Concept-Based Inquiry.

Rachel has presented numerous workshops and conferences on Concept-Based Learning globally.

This conference is dedicated to bringing together passionate CBI educators from around the globe.

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Keynote Speech

Keynote 1:

A Model of Concept-Based Learning that Promotes Depth and Transfer

8:10-9:40, Oct 25, Theatre (B1)

How can we design learning that fosters true understanding and empowers students to transfer their thinking to new contexts?
In this keynote, Rachel French introduces a clear, actionable model of Concept-Based Learning that shifts the focus from facts and procedures to constructing deep, transferable understanding. Grounded in the Erickson & Lanning framework, this model equips educators with the tools to design learning experiences that prioritize thinking, connection-making, and meaning. Through practical examples and classroom stories, Rachel unpacks how an inductive approach, paired with guiding questions, case studies, invites learners to uncover conceptual understandings and apply them beyond a single unit, subject, or setting.
Join us to explore how Concept-Based Learning can be the foundation for deeper thinking and authentic transfer in any classroom.

Keynote 3:

Beyond the Launch: Building a Lasting Culture of Concept-Based Inquiry

8:00-9:30, Oct 26, Theatre (B1)

What happens after the launch of Concept-Based Inquiry—the pilot units, the buzz, the workshops? How do schools move from dabbling to deeply living CBI as part of their everyday teaching and learning culture?
In this inspiring keynote, international educator and consultant Rachel French takes you beyond the introduction phase to explore what long-term, embedded implementation really looks like. Drawing from years of school-based partnerships and global action research, Rachel unpacks the key ingredients that help schools sustain Concept-Based Inquiry over time, through leadership, collaboration, and classroom practice. You'll hear real stories of transformation, straight from school leaders, teachers, and students, about how CBI has evolved their thinking, reshaped pedagogy, and become an integral part of their educational identity. From building professional learning frameworks to navigating cultural shifts, this session is rich with practical insights and tested strategies. Whether you're just getting started or looking to deepen your school's CBI journey, this session will challenge and inspire you to think long-term, act systemically, and lead with vision.
Discover what it takes not just to implement Concept-Based Inquiry, but to make it thrive.

Keynote Speakers

Jessica Humble-Crofts

As a certified independent Erickson and Lanning Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction Trainer, Jessica has led workshops across the world, presented at conferences and facilitates a global professional learning community dedicated to cultivating best practices in Concept-Based Inquiry.

She is one of the lead curriculum developers of the CBI Mathematics Project and has been involved in development, implementation, professional development and support of the project.
Jessica is the science specialist for the CBCI Institute and has successfully developed and led professional development courses for Professional Learning International. Leaning on her extensive classroom experience in both middle and high school, Jessica is passionate about designing transformative learning experiences in the science classroom.

Keynote 2:

Integrating Curriculum with a Concept-Based Inquiry Approach

15:40-17:10, Oct 25, Theatre (B1)

How can integrating curriculum help students make connections that truly matter - to themselves, to others, and the world around them?
In an age where knowledge is interconnected and learners have to navigate complexity with agility, the curriculum must reflect the needs of our learners. Does that mean that all learning should be integrated? This keynote explores different models of curriculum integration and how Concept-Based Inquiry can empower educators to create richly integrated learning experiences that foster deep understanding and meaningful transfer. Join Jessica and gain practical insights into how integrated curriculum design can deepen learning and support transfer far beyond the classroom.

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Keynote Speech

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Emily McCarren

Executive Head of School
Keystone Academy

Emily McCarren, Ph.D., is the Executive Head of School at Keystone Academy in Beijing, China. Previously, she was the Academy (High School) Principal at the Punahou School in Honolulu Hawaii, the largest single campus K-12 independent school in the United States. During her distinguished 16-year tenure at Punahou, Emily McCarren taught all levels of Spanish, traveled the world as head of the Wo International Center, and championed the aspirations of nearly 2,000 students, faculty, and staff as Academy Principal. She led consequential initiatives guided by her creativity and passion to forge meaningful educational experiences aimed at helping students reach new heights. McCarren began her career teaching Spanish and Geometry at Swiss Semester, a program for American students in the Swiss Alps. Next, she worked at The Thacher School in Ojai, California, where she taught, coached, and served as a residential advisor for six years before joining the faculty at the Punahou School in 2006.
With Yong Zhao and other collaborators, McCarren is a co-author of the three-book series Take Action Guide to World Class Learners (Corwin, 2016). She has also served on the Board of the Global Online Academy and the Mastery Transcript Consortium. McCarren speaks to audiences globally about her passion, leadership, and action towards educational change and the moral imperative to provide our students with the schools they deserve, and our world needs.

Keynote 4:

Care at the Core: Hopeful Leadership for Humans and Our Planet
以仁为本：通往希望的教育领导之道

13:10-14:10, Oct 26, Theatre (B1)

In an era of breathtaking technological acceleration, the most vital task for school leaders is to reaffirm what makes us fundamentally human. In uncertain and complex times, hopeful leadership that places genuine care and human connection at the center of our institutions, especially our schools, is a non-negotiable. This session will explore student-centered practices that move beyond narrow metrics to celebrate a broader definition of success—one that values well-being, empathy, and civic engagement as part of academic excellence, not just add ons to it.
As leaders, we must harness technology as a tool for enhancement while being intensely focused on building resilient, authentic communities. This requires leaders who model vulnerability, foster collaboration, and prioritize relationships, proving that leading more humanly is not the opposite of excellence—it is its very foundation. By championing systems that see and nurture the whole person, we can create environments where both people and our planet can thrive, ensuring that progress never comes at the cost of our humanity or our fragile planet.

Schedule

Saturday, Oct. 25

	What	Who	Where
7:30-8:00	Registration		
8:00-8:10	**Welcome Remarks**	**IES & Vanke School**	**Theatre (B1)**
8:10-9:30	**Keynote Speech 1**	**Rachel French**	**Theatre (B1)**
9:30-10:00	Coffee Break		The First Floor Hall (1F)
10:00-11:30	Breakout Sessions		Room 102-107
11:30-12:30	Lunch Break / School Tour		Canteen (2F)
12:30-13:30	**Panel Discussion**		**Theatre (B1)**
13:40-15:10	Breakout Sessions		Room 102-107
15:10-15:40	Coffee Break		The First Floor Hall (1F)
15:40-17:10	**Keynote Speech 2**	**Jessica Humble-Crofts**	**Theatre (B1)**

Sunday, Oct. 26

	What	Who	Where
7:30-8:00	Registration		
8:00-9:30	**Keynote Speech 3**	**Rachel French**	**Theatre (B1)**
9:40-11:10	Breakout Sessions		Room 102-107
11:10-11:40	Brunch		Canteen (2F)
11:40-13:10	Breakout Sessions		Room 102-107
13:20-14:20	**Keynote Speech 4**	**Dr. Emily McCarren**	**Theatre (B1)**

Panel Discussion

Topic:
From Philosophy to Practice: Leading Deep Implementation of Concept-Based Learning

EN 12:30-13:30 at Theatre(B1)

Min Cheng
Executive Principal
Vanke Bilingual School, Minhang

Carly Shanahan Buntin
Primary School Assistant Principal & PYP Coordinator
Hong Kong Academy

Dr. Justin Zhang
Assistant Professor, Director of IBEC
Namseoul University

Keryn Dowling
International Education Consultant (ECIS)
Elementary Principal, Dipont Education

Leda Cedo
Head of Primary
Shenzhen Foreign Languages GBA Academy

Neil Bunting
Principal
Shanghai United International School, Hongqiao Campus

Rachel French
Director of Professional Learning International

This roundtable moves beyond the theoretical appeal of Concept-Based Learning to address the critical challenge of its deep implementation.
We will bring together school leaders and practitioners to share concrete strategies, actionable models, and lessons learned from the front lines. Our discussion will focus on the pivotal role of leadership in cultivating a culture of deep thinking, designing impactful professional learning, and embedding conceptual inquiry into the very fabric of our schools.
Join us for a practical dialogue focused on turning the powerful “why” of Concept-Based Learning into the actionable “how.”

DAY 1 Oct 25, Saturday

10:00-11:30 Breakout Sessions

Neil Bunting
Principal
Shanghai United International School (Hongqiao Campus)

Approaches to Learning in the Age of AI

This session rethinks and revitalises the IB's Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills and the IB Learner Profile through an AI lens. Participants will engage in purposeful, practical, hands-on activities to explore and reinvent the specific ATL sub-skills and the Learner Profile attributes required for the effective and ethical use of AI. The session will enable educators to design real life, ready to use, learning experiences that explicitly teach and practice these future-ready skills. Attendees will leave with a digital toolkit of takeaways including practical strategies and resources to implement in their own classrooms, fostering responsible and powerful student use of AI tools.

ROOM 102

Leda Cedo
Head of Primary
Shenzhen Foreign Languages GBA Academy

Enhancing Learners' Conceptual Thinking through Graphic Organizers

In this workshop, we will explore the role of graphic organizers as essential tools for fostering conceptual thinking in the classroom. We will look into various examples that demonstrate how thinking organizers can help students unpack complex ideas into digestible and engaging learning experiences. Let's plan practical strategies to create a thinking classroom where students can visualize their thoughts, make connections, and develop a deeper grasp of challenging concepts.

ROOM 103

Annika Chen
Head of Primary Mandarin
Dover Court International School, Singapore

Reconstructing Chinese Language Teaching: A Concept-Based Approach to Language, Culture and Understanding

This session will explore the transformative potential of concept-based learning in teaching Chinese, particularly Chinese as a foreign language. Through practical examples covering key elements of curriculum design—including learning objectives, materials, learning engagement, and assessment—with AI supporting the planning process to optimize learning experiences—we will develop an understanding of how a concept-based approach fosters language proficiency, connects language and culture, and encourages deep thinking.

ROOM 104

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DAY 1 Oct 25, Saturday

10:00-11:30 Breakout Sessions

Breakout Sessions

Beyond the Story: Unlocking Big Ideas through Children's Literature

How can a single picture book explore identity, responsibility, or change? This 90-minute, hands-on workshop empowers K-5 educators to strategically use children's literature as a portal to conceptual understanding. We will move beyond basic comprehension to explore how books like The Dot (creativity), Stone Soup (cooperation, community), or The Great Kapok Tree (interdependence) serve as perfect vehicles for deep, conceptual inquiry. Learn a practical framework for selecting texts and framing essential questions that turn read-alouds into vibrant discussions about life's big ideas. You will practice designing a mini-lesson sequence that uses a book's narrative to help students grapple with abstract concepts, transferring their understanding from the story to their own world. Leave with concrete strategies to ensure your literacy instruction builds not just skills, but also wise and empathetic thinkers.

ROOM 105

Keryn Dowling
International Education Consultant (ECIS)
Elementary Principal
Dipont Education

Empowering Student Thinking through Concept-Based Inquiry Mathematics

This session will help educators build their confidence in facilitating concept-based inquiry in mathematics lessons that promote collaborative exploration, meaningful discussion, and deep conceptual understanding. Discover how to design learning experiences that drive learning towards conceptual understanding while still supporting the development of mathematical fluency. Educators will leave with practical strategies to spark curiosity, invite rich thinking, and bring joy to mathematics classrooms.

ROOM 106

Jessica Humble-Crofts

Beyond the Syllabus: Concept-Based Learning in IBDP English B & TOK

This interactive session explores how concept-based learning (CBL) empowers students in IBDP English B and TOK to think beyond content and build transferable, interdisciplinary understanding. Moving past rote memorization, CBL invites students to engage with big ideas like identity, power, and communication through inquiry, language, and reflection. With real classroom models, participants will examine how conceptual frameworks strengthen linguistic fluency, critical thinking, and cross-curricular ATL skills. Attendees will experience scaffolded strategies that integrate English B and TOK through concept-driven units, Socratic questioning, visible thinking routines, and student-led formative assessment. Participants will leave with practical tools to design or refine conceptual units and discussions that truly engage DP learners at higher levels of abstraction. Ideal for teachers seeking to push the boundaries of traditional instruction and reframe learning as meaning-making. Session ends with a structured Q&A for collaborative insight and exchange.

ROOM 107

Dr.Candice Zhang
IBDP English B Teacher
One World International School Singapore

DAY 1 Oct 25, Saturday

13:40-15:10 Breakout Sessions

Carly Shanahan Buntin
Primary School Assistant Principal & PYP Coordinator
Hong Kong Academy

Inclusive Concepts: Fostering Diversity, Equity, and Access in Learning

In today's diverse educational landscape, fostering a sense of belonging is more crucial than ever. Join us as we explore effective strategies for unpacking complex concepts related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access.
Participants will engage in collaborative discussions and hands-on activities that will deepen their understanding of inclusive practices and their significance in international contexts.
Participants will leave with a bank of learning experiences and strategies designed to facilitate classroom discussions about inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. You'll learn how to adapt these concepts for primary-aged learners in engaging and meaningful ways.

ROOM 102

Agnes Cheng
Executive Principal
Vanke Bilingual School, Minhang

Concept-Based Learning Empower Transition from Kindergarten to Primary School

The transition between kindergarten and primary school may be challenging for some students, not only academically, but also mentally. Trying to find solutions to bridge the gap between kindergarten and primary school is a problem that teachers have been trying to solve, either through curriculum design, instruction methods or other educational approaches.
This session will introduce how the concept-based approach helps to empower students as they transition, covering curriculum design, conceptual thinking formation, as well as governance procedures,

ROOM 103

Dr. Justin Zhang
Assistant Professor, Director of IBEC
Namseoul University

From Inquiry to Insight: An AI-Powered Recipe for Inquiry and Conceptual Learning

Ready for a new recipe for deeper learning? This session introduces the PIE PIE model, a memorable framework that unifies two of education's most powerful ideas. We'll show how the first PIE—the inquiry process of Provocation, Inquiry, and Exploration—is the perfect way to build the second PIE —the conceptual thinking skills of Pattern-seeking, Idealizing, and Evaluation. You'll discover how Artificial Intelligence (AI) is the essential ingredient that binds these two PIEs together, supercharging every step. This practical session moves beyond theory to provide concrete strategies and AI tools that empower students to think deeply and build lasting knowledge. Walk away with a clear, unified model that will transform how you approach teaching and learning in your classroom.

ROOM 104

International Education Services
万科双语学校

DAY 1 Oct 25, Saturday

13:40-15:10 Breakout Sessions

Leading A Culture of Concept-Based Learning School

This session is designed for school leaders who aim to cultivate a thriving culture of concept-based learning (CBL) in their institutions. Participants will explore practical strategies to embed CBL into curriculum design, teaching practices, and school-wide initiatives, ensuring students develop deep understanding, critical thinking, and interdisciplinary connections. Key topics include aligning CBL with institutional vision, empowering teachers through professional development, and fostering collaborative learning environments. Leaders will also examine assessment approaches that prioritize conceptual mastery over rote memorization. Through case studies and interactive discussions, attendees will leave with actionable steps to lead sustainable CBL implementation, driving meaningful and transformative learning experiences for all students.

ROOM 105

Chuhong Chen
Principal
Concordia School Ningbo

Writing Understandings to Support Skills-Based Learning

Are your current understandings primarily focused on knowledge or content? Does skills-focused learning feel repetitive or mechanical? Would you like to enhance student understanding of skills within your discipline? This session will present a concept-based approach to developing process-oriented (skills-based) understandings across various disciplines. By using concepts and following a step-by-step process, we will create skill-based understandings that reinforce the most essential learning outcomes in your content area.

ROOM 106

Nyssa Brown
International Arts Education Curriculum Consultant
Music Ed Forward

Why Should I Go There - Using Walking for Transdisciplinary Learning

Understanding the value of walking and exploring one's surroundings. Exploring our surroundings and unvisited destinations through virtual and actual movement. Discover the value of collaborating with physical education specialists to deepen understanding through transfer of ideas and concepts.
Experience the lesson as students do through learning the importance of preparation and what to expect from the culminating assessment.
Understand the vertical alignment of this thought-provoking lesson to enable you to implement it in any grade level.

ROOM 107

Dr. Meaghan Wilson
PE Teacher
BASIS International School

DAY 2 Oct 26, Sunday

9:40-11:10 Breakout Sessions

James Smith
Lecturer
Education University of Hong Kong

Leading Concept-Based Curriculum Development in a VUCA world

Traditional change leadership models require leaders to predict the impact of their strategy on future outcomes when they are applied to the important task of reforming the curriculum. However, in our contemporary world - which is characterised by Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity ("VUCA") - such traditional approaches often fail, because one can no longer assume that the future is predictable or that the impact of transformational leadership will be straightforward. This session will explore why this is, and the alternative approaches that we as educational leaders can take to leading concept-based curriculum development amid the complexities of modern schools and society. It will provide a number of tools that leaders can use to help navigate VUCA in their schools while maintaining the focus on what students need from the curriculum in order to thrive.

ROOM 102

Fabienne Brown
Elementary Principal
Western International School of Shanghai

Rethinking Concept-Based Learning in the AI Era

How must educators adapt concept-based learning as the world transforms at lightning speed? This session explores how our foundational understanding has evolved—from static, subject-bound frameworks to dynamic, integrative approaches shaped by complexity and context. We'll examine data on adaptive learning's proven impact—86% of recent studies show positive outcomes—and dive into the roles educators now must play in concept design and curation. Participants will explore cutting-edge AI tools—from ChatGPT's new Study Mode promoting Socratic questioning to Google Gemini's Guided Learning offering step-by-step conceptual support—discovering how they can strengthen, not replace, deep conceptual understanding. Through case-study-driven discussion, we'll revisit educators' roles as curriculum leaders, facilitators, and co-designers of learning. Together, we'll envision what concept-based learning looks like in the 21st century—integrated, responsive, and AI-enhanced—reshaping our own professional concepts and practice.

ROOM 103

Eva Li
Executive Principal
Vanke Bilingual School Pudong

Deepening Conceptual Understanding Through Interdisciplinary Learning in the Age of AI

This workshop guides educators to explore the core ideas of concept-based learning and how interdisciplinary connections can deepen student understanding. Participants will learn to identify key concepts, craft understanding statements, and design conceptual inquiry questions that promote transfer and deeper thinking. Through collaborative tasks and reflection, participants will leave with practical strategies and adaptable designs to use in their own contexts.

ROOM 104

Breakout Sessions

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DAY 2 Oct 26, Sunday

9:40-11:10 Breakout Sessions

Aligning Questions with Learning Concepts for Maximum Impact

Aligning questions with learning concepts is essential for maximizing student engagement and understanding. When questions are thoughtfully crafted to directly connect with key concepts, they guide learners to deeper comprehension and critical thinking. This session will explore strategies to design questions that not only assess knowledge but also promote meaningful exploration of the subject matter. Participants will learn how to identify core learning objectives and create questions that reflect those goals clearly and effectively. This session will provide practical tools and examples to help educators foster meaningful interactions and improve student outcomes through well-aligned questioning techniques. Join us to discover how powerful questioning can transform your instructional practices.

ROOM 105

Chantelle Parsons
Head of Primary
Utahloy International School Guangzhou

Teaching with the Brain and Mind, Building Better Learners

What makes a better student—and how can teachers help shape one? Imagine teaching in a way that reflects how the brain actually learns – where every strategy and learning experience taps into cognition, emotional engagement, and lasting understanding. This engaging session invites educators from all grade levels and subjects to explore the science behind learning and discover practical strategies to unlock student potential. Dive into fascinating topics like brain plasticity, memory, stress, attention, and motivation, and learn how these elements influence learning and performance. You'll also explore the essential stages of concept-based inquiry that cannot be overlooked, as each of them plays a crucial role in learning to happen. Whether you're new to neuroscience or looking to refine your teaching practice, this session offers tools and inspiration to help every learner thrive.

ROOM 106

Helen Safronova
MYP English Language Acquisition teacher
World Foreign Language Academy Middle School

Integrating Social-Emotional Development, Multilingualism, and Sustainability in Concept-Based Learning: A Holistic Framework

Concept-based learning excels at fostering interdisciplinary connections, but its true potential emerges when educators weave social-emotional growth, linguistic diversity, and sustainability into a cohesive pedagogical approach. This session synthesizes three critical themes—social-emotional development, multilingual inquiry, and sustainability education—into an actionable framework for cultivating empathetic, globally minded learners. Drawing on school case studies and evidence-based strategies, we explore how these pillars intersect to create transformative learning experiences.

ROOM 107

Sean Freston
Grade 5 Educator
Vanke Bilingual School, Minhang

Breakout Sessions

DAY 2 Oct 26, Sunday

11:40-13:20 Breakout Sessions

Meredith Phinney
Head of Secondary
Beijing International Bilingual Academy (BIBA)

Teaching to Lead: Why Great Leaders Still Teach- a case for leaders to teach, co-teach or plan with their teachers

In a concept-based learning environment, this active involvement is even more critical. Leaders who teach are better positioned to:
· Model concept-based approaches to curriculum and assessment.
· Coach teachers in designing inquiry-based and transferable learning opportunities.
· Share responsibility for student learning and curriculum innovation.
· Develop credibility as educators who face the same challenges and opportunities as their faculty.
This session will invite participants to examine case studies, share experiences, and explore practical models of how leaders can balance leadership responsibilities with meaningful teaching engagements. Together, we will consider how this practice may cultivate a stronger professional culture, enhance instructional credibility, and sustain concept-based learning as a school-wide endeavour. The session will conclude with time for questions and collaborative discussions.
ROOM 102

Jacob Huckle
Head of Multilingual Learning & Language Development
Dulwich College Suzhou

Multilingualizing Concept-Based Learning: Leveraging All Languages to Scaffold and Extend Learning

Students' languages are rich resources for learning that we can leverage intentionally through our lesson and unit design. Multilingualizing learning means making space within our lessons and units for students' various languages, designing learning so that students are enabled to use all of their language resources to scaffold and extend learning. We will explore concepts like pedagogical translanguaging and linguistic repertoire to develop an understanding of what it means to multilingualize learning, why it is so important, and how we can do it intentionally though our learning design. We will inquire into the essential role concept-based approaches play in driving this shift towards inclusive, multilingual learning for all, exploring each phase of the concept-based inquiry cycle through the lenses of translanguaging and multilingualism. This session will include an opportunity to work collaboratively on planning a concept-based lesson or learning experience that is intentionally multilingual.
ROOM 103

Jessica Humble-Crofts

Interactive Integrated Curriculum Lesson: Feeding a Hungry Planet

This interactive, integrated curriculum lesson will highlight the Concept-Based Inquiry Model and demonstrate how thoughtfully designed guiding questions can lead students toward deeper conceptual understanding and transferable learning. Join Jessica to examine the environmental, social, and personal impacts of food production systems, explore ways to improve these practices for greater sustainability, and apply systems thinking to connect local actions with global consequences.
ROOM 104

International Education Services
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DAY 2 Oct 26, Sunday

11:40-13:20 Breakout Sessions

Tools and Perspectives for Data Analysis: Before, During, and After

Data is a massive concern in education, demanding attention from those who want to know how well the status quo is working and those who want to know how to juggle increasing requirements for data analysis on top of everything else they have to accomplish. This session walks through the concepts and perspectives needed for an intentional and productive data cycle, introducing tools through which one can deepen one's understanding and the work that results from it. After each phase is discussed, there will be breakout groups to discuss the perspectives and tools while applying them to each member's own work. This will be followed by a whole-group sharing of questions, insights, and experiences.
ROOM 105

William Franks
Head of Middle School English
Vanke Bilingual School, Minhang

Making Learning Last: Implementing Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction

This session explores how concept-based inquiry enhances student understanding, retention, and transfer of knowledge across disciplines. Through an interactive mini inquiry cycle—Engage, Investigate, Organise, Generalise, and Transfer—participants will experience how conceptual learning moves beyond memorisation to develop deep, transferable understandings. Using international case studies, we examine how schools have shifted from traditional, content-driven models to integrated, inquiry-based approaches that promote student agency and critical thinking. By connecting research-informed pedagogy with practical classroom tools, this session empowers educators and leaders to foster classrooms where curiosity, rigour, and relevance drive learning. We'll also explore change models to support whole-school transformation towards a more conceptually rich curriculum.
ROOM 106

Dr. Tania Blatti
Head of Upper Primary
Wellington College International Shanghai

When Standards-Based Meets Concept-Based

Join us for an insightful panel discussion on the integration of standards-based and concept-based curriculum design. Explore how these two models can inform innovative approaches to teaching and learning, particularly for Chinese language learners in international schools. Set against the backdrop of Shanghai American School, two passionate educators with diverse cultural and educational experiences will facilitate the conversation. By the end of the session, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of curriculum development and practical strategies to foster collaborative learning in their own educational contexts.
ROOM 107

Aggie Huang
Director of Chinese Programs

Yinnan Zhang
Head of Middle School Global Languages

Shanghai American School

Breakout Sessions

My Schedule

Saturday, Oct. 25

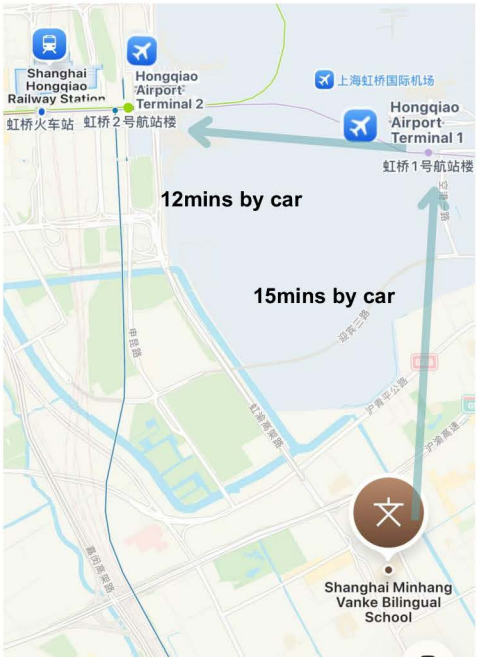
	What	Who	Where
7:30-8:00	Registration		
8:00-8:10	**Welcome Remarks**	**IES & Vanke School**	**Theatre (B1)**
8:10-9:30	**Keynote Speech 1**	**Rachel French**	**Theatre (B1)**
9:30-10:00	Coffee Break		The First Floor Hall (1F)
10:00-11:30	Breakout Sessions		
11:30-12:30	Lunch Break / School Tour		Canteen (2F)
12:30-13:30	**Panel Discussion**		**Theatre (B1)**
13:40-15:10	Breakout Sessions		
15:10-15:40	Coffee Break		The First Floor Hall (1F)
15:40-17:10	**Keynote Speech 2**	**Jessica Humble-Crofts**	**Theatre (B1)**

Sunday, Oct. 26

	What	Who	Where
7:30-8:00	Registration		
8:00-9:30	**Keynote Speech 3**	**Rachel French**	**Theatre (B1)**
9:40-11:10	Breakout Sessions		
11:10-11:40	Brunch		Canteen (2F)
11:40-13:10	Breakout Sessions		
13:20-14:20	**Keynote Speech 4**	**Dr. Emily McCarren**	**Theatre (B1)**

Logistics

Conference Venue:
Shanghai Vanke Bilingual School, Minhang Campus
No. 3586 Qixin Road, Minhang District, Shanghai
学校：上海闵行区万科双语学校
地址：上海市闵行区七莘路3568号



Accommodation:
The following hotel offers group pricing for our IES Conference participants:
-Hotel: HOLIDAY INN Shanghai Hongqiao
-Address: No.169 Xingzhan Road, Minhang District, Shanghai, China
-Distance: 5mins walking distance to the school
酒店名称: 上海大华虹桥假日酒店
地址: 上海市闵行区星站路169号
距离学校5分钟步行路程

Free Bus
IES has arranged free shuttles at the following times and locations:
Sunday, Oct 26
☐ 14:30- 14:45- 15:00pm School→ HongqiaoAirport → Hongqiao Train Station
学校→ 上海虹桥国际机场→ 上海虹桥火车站
☐ 15:30-15:45- 16:00pm School→ HongqiaoAirport → Hongqiao Train Station
学校→ 上海虹桥国际机场→ 上海虹桥火车站

If there are any questions, please feel free to contact us at info@iespg.com

IES Upcoming Conferences

IES Upcoming Workshops

Improving Your Skills with Assessment, Differentiation, and Teaching the Craft and Process of Writing

Nov 14-15, 2025
Shenzhen, China

Carl Anderson

Strengthening Reading, Spelling, and Vocabulary through an Inquiry- based Approach to Word Study

Nov 14-15, 2025
Shenzhen, China

Fina Hamilton

Empowered Learners Through Project-Based Learning Workshop

Dec 6-7, 2025
Beijing, China

Kyle Wagner

Designing to the Edges: Leveraging UDL for Engaging and Accessible Learning

March 13-14, 2026
Shenzhen, China

Beth Stark