The Business of Schooling:  
Marketing in Canadian Independent Schools

by

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for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Doctorate of Philosophy, 2014

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Abstract

This study explores the response of school administrators to the rapid infusion of marketing and business ideals and practices into the Canadian independent school system. As a mixed-methods study, a survey of CAIS schools (Canadian Association of Independent Schools) provides an environmental scan of marketing approaches across the country, while three in-depth case studies provide specific detail about how administrator responses play out at specific school sites.

Five approaches to school marketing emerge from the survey, ranging from strongly welfarist to strongly new managerial. An exclusively business-oriented approach exists opposite to welfarism on the continuum, but was not observed in this study. School placement along the continuum is largely determined by the school’s local competitive market. Schools in markets characterized by low levels of competition tend to encourage a welfarist approach to school leadership while highly competitive markets tend to support a new managerial approach. Case study schools were selected to represent different marketing approaches, and findings support the correlation between market competition and continuum positioning. The professional
biographies of school administrators, in particular Heads of schools, were also found to correlate with the observed marketing approach.

The existence of a continuum of approaches to independent school marketing, and in particular the placement of competitively-based schools along this continuum, likely has implications for stakeholders. This study raises questions about the consequences for students, parents, teachers and administrators resulting from the shift from welfarism to new managerialism observed in highly competitive markets.
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On a personal note, since beginning this study, my two beloved children, Shannon and Aidan were born. I have since begun to appreciate the parenting challenges of navigating the education market. This is a journey I will share with my husband, Doug Parker, who has been a never-ending source of support for me. Through our discussions, he has challenged my assumptions and pointed out my inconsistencies, and because of him, this dissertation has been enriched. Finally, I would like to thank my mother, Kathy Elliott, for always encouraging me to challenge myself and for always believing in my ability to meet and exceed any challenge I might set.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

I began my teaching career overseas, in an international school that followed the International Baccalaureate curriculum. Our students were truly international; roughly a third of the student population came from the host country, while the remaining two-thirds represented a wide variety of European, Asian and North American countries. Out of the five international (English language) schools in the country, the closest school was almost 600 km away. Students came to our school because there was really no other choice. That is not to say that the school was not of high quality; the IB scores of the graduating students often surpassed world averages. But in many ways, this was a happy coincidence for the families that joined the school. School administrators did not have to worry about competition from nearby schools; change was slow to come to the school, and was typically initiated by curriculum changes at the level of the IB organization. When I returned to Canada in 1999, I joined the faculty of an independent school offering the IB program in a major urban center. I was about to witness first-hand an intense period of change that would strongly affect independent schools nationally. Nor was this change limited to independent schools; public schools in Canada and the United States were demonstrating the same phenomenon: the marketization of schooling. Parental choice is not new; the existence of private/independent schools is a direct consequence of parental choice. What was interesting however, was the speed and intensity with which market ideals were permeating school systems. Brief comments from school administrators in my first few years at the school introduced me to the powerful effect the market was having:

‘We will be the first school in Canada to offer all three IB programs.’

‘We began considering the IB diploma program when [one of our most prestigious competitors] decided to adopt the program.’

‘Our parents pay [faculty] salaries.’

‘If all faculty contribute to our annual campaign, it sends a powerful message to parents about our commitment to the school and its students.’
Each of these statements surprised me in their own way, but taken together, they suggested a pressure perceived by school administrators to compete successfully in the local market, responding to parents as valued consumers and providing desired credentials while differentiating an educational product.

In the years that followed, I realized that this phenomenon was not unique to my school. Widespread systemic changes were taking place, as well as more intangible changes in understandings related to the role of administrators and, to a certain amount, teachers. For example, over the next 5 to 10 years, many Canadian independent schools redefined the role of Director of Admissions. Prior to the turn of the century, most Admissions directors were teachers who sought an administrative role. They were generally quite successful in securing sufficient mission-appropriate students for the school through word-of-mouth promotion and anecdotal understandings of what parents and students were looking for in a school.

After 2000, the ‘old guard’ of Admissions directors began to retire, and many school administrators recognized an opportunity to respond to changing school needs. New Admissions directors tended to be more business-oriented, often with a background in marketing or post-secondary school recruitment. Occasionally, separate marketing positions were created in response to heightened competition. Similar changes were observed in Heads of Schools. Increasingly school Heads either possessed a business background, or recognized the need to adopt a business orientation when leading an independent school. The transition at my own school saw a pedagogically- and community-focused matriarch replaced with a market-oriented leader concerned with meeting consumer needs and wants.

I found all these changes fascinating; even more so because they mirrored changes at other Canadian independent schools. Ultimately I came to realize that this phenomenon was larger than Canadian independent schools, as there were public schools responding to market forces in similar ways. For my dissertation research, I decided to explore this transition from a pedagogical approach to school administration to one that is more market-oriented.
Problem Statement

In recent years, Canadian schools have had to face increased competition for students, largely due to a general decrease in the number of school-age children. In 2007, Statistics Canada predicted a 3.5% decline in the school-age population (from 18.7% to 15.2% of the total population) over the next 15 years based on a medium population growth scenario. Four years later, the school age population had followed predictions, decreasing by 3.2%, with only a mild recovery predicted by 2016 (2.7% below 2006 numbers). As a proportion of the total population, the school-age population declined from 18.7% (2007) to 17.5% (2010) with a further decrease to 16.3% predicted for 2016 (Statistics Canada 2010a, Statistics Canada 2007). Numbers are projected to remain relatively low (below 17% of the total population) for at least an additional 2 decades, which will continue to challenge schools to meet their quotas based on per pupil expenditure (Statistics Canada, 2010b).

Increased competition for students accompanies an increase in the number of specialty schools in North America. Charter schools, magnet schools and independent/private schools all compete to attract students and the number of these schools has increased quickly. From 1850 to 1950 in Ontario, an average of 1.3 new independent schools were created every 10 years; from 1951 – 1999, the average increased dramatically to 9.3 new schools every 10 years (CAIS, 2011). For the purposes of this study, independent schools are defined as those not-for-profit schools that have a Board of Governors overseeing the school and operating at arm’s length from the school administration, that offer a curriculum that prepares students for higher education, and that are members of the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS). School administrators are also experiencing pressures for increased accountability for student results. Public reporting of literacy and numeracy test results, coupled with government accountability initiatives (e.g. the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 in the United States), provide the opportunity for students and families to select schools based on these results (Sunderman, Orfield & Kim, 2006; Zimmer, Gill, Razquin, Booker & Lockwood 2007). As a result, standardized testing indirectly requires schools to compete for students on the basis of test scores.
Just as schools are changing, so are the consumers of education. Middle-class parents are increasingly knowledgeable about the education system and are more informed about available educational options. The research relating to parental choice in recent years suggests that choice has become an essential element of schooling in North America for middle-class parents. Some parents have come to believe that advocating for school advantage is a parental obligation (Brantlinger 2003). Choice options currently available include tax credits for private school education, charter and magnet schools, independent neighborhood schools, and home schooling (For a general overview of school choice options see such examples as Edwards & Whitty 1997, Elmore 1986, Goldring 1991, Gorard 1999, Kafer 2005, & (the US) Office of Educational Research and Improvement 1987.). The rhetoric of school choice, standards and competition reflects a desire on the part of middle-class parents to secure a competitive advantage for their children by providing high-quality credentials for university applications. Increasing parental choice allows parents and students to pursue individualistic goals, thereby increasing the level of social competition relating to education (Olssen, Codd & O’Neill 2004). Researchers argue that there has been an ideological shift from a meritocratic education system, where students function within an equal and open context, to a market-based system, characterized by exclusion and advantage based on social class. According to Brown (2000), the increasing importance of market rules reflects a growing neo-liberalism in Western education. Market rules that consider education to be a private good legitimate individualistic, competitive strategies that advantage middle-class students (Labaree 1997, Lauder & Brown 2002).

The existence of middle class strategies to create school advantage is not a new phenomenon. For example, in the United States during school desegregation, middle-class whites migrated from urban to suburban areas in a ‘white flight,’ attempting to maintain educational and social advantages for children of their class. There is recent evidence of renewed white flight in the U.S., partly in response to poor, minority children in the education system (Fairlie and Resch 2000). The reason for this resurgence of white flight may be due in part to the increase in global credentialism and prevalence of market rules for education, factors that would be equally prevalent in Canada. Labaree
(1988) argues that since public high schools address both public and private interests, they have always faced market pressures, and in particular, pressures from the middle class seeking advantage.

Some researchers suggest that globalization drives intensified competition for advantage in the education market, encouraging program differentiation, an increasing hierarchy of credentials and greater socioeconomic inequality (Daun 2002, Field & Fegan 2005; Harrison & Kachur 1999). This inequality is based in large part on the uncertainty surrounding global market returns on educational investments (Brown & Lauder 1996). Rapid economic changes and large-scale unemployment in the 1990s, compounded by free trade agreements, further intensified this fear for parents whose path to desirable jobs and the accompanying privileged lifestyles were tied to education (Dehli 1996). Middle-class parents striving to secure advantage for their children are no longer certain as to what credentials carry the most weight in an evolving global market, or how to ensure their children receive the knowledge and skills required for the ever-changing labor market (Daun 2002). This uncertainty generates intense class anxiety (Reay 2004).

Responding to the neoliberal rhetoric of choice, some school administrators feel the need to market their schools differently, to clearly articulate what their product provides; product differentiation is critical. Public schools increasingly adopt specialty programs or philosophies in an attempt to differentiate themselves. For example, in 2007, the Toronto District School Board advertised 35 alternative schools, and offered 20 specialized programs such as the International Baccalaureate and Arts programs at the secondary level (Toronto District School Board, 2007). By 2011, TDSB included 19 alternative elementary schools, 22 alternative secondary schools, and had increased the number of secondary schools offering specialized programs to 24 (6 International Baccalaureate schools, 14 Arts schools and 4 Sports schools) (TDSB, 2011). Arts programs, programs for elite athletes, co-op programs, business partnerships, Gifted/Talented streams, Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate programs (IB), are some common ways in which national schools can differentiate their education product from those of their competitors. French immersion
programs have long been a mechanism for parental choice and school differentiation. TDSB French immersion programs at the elementary level (SK entry) have dramatically increased from 26 schools in 2006 to 56 schools in 2013 (TDSB 2012, TDSB 2006). School administrators recognize intuitively, or more deliberately through the analysis of data from surveys and focus groups, changes that will be appeal to their target population while differentiating them from their competition (Hannaford, personal communication, September 4, 2006; McMahon, personal communication, August 28, 2006). Ball (2003) describes the government-initiated proliferation of gifted/talented programs in the US and the UK as a response to, or in anticipation of, middle-class parental expectations. Woods, Bagley and Glatter (1998) described how schools continually assess their position with respect to their competition, a process that they call 'scanning'. The objective is to identify ways in which a school can address parental expectations in a unique and attractive way.

Private and independent school administrators have also begun to market their schools in earnest. During the 1990's, school administrators increased both student numbers and program offerings. As previously discussed, after the turn of the century, demographic trends began to demonstrate a general decline in the school-aged population. In order to maintain enrollment numbers, school admissions personnel began offering admission to a wider range of students; in order to support this new population, increased staffing and student services were required. This challenge for admissions personnel was compounded by the fact that student retention rates in Canadian independent schools have declined. From 2002 to 2007, the median retention rate dropped form 95% to 88% (Christopher 2007). As a result, admissions personnel in many schools had to further widen the definition of the mission appropriate student as they struggle to meet admission quotas. Due to increased staffing and the higher cost of operating these schools, fee increases are on average more than three and a half times the rate of inflation, and the ratio of applicants to available spaces continues to shrink (Christopher 2007). Many school administrators are therefore incrementally pricing their schools into a smaller and smaller niche market as evidenced by the rapid increase in the closing of small, special purpose schools and the noticeable shrinking of waiting lists for many mainstream institutions.
In conversations with me over the past few years, Heads of Schools and Directors of Admissions have consistently described significant changes to school marketing. Marketing budgets have grown substantially, and school marketing has become increasingly systematic and formalized (M. Andrews, personal communication, August 29, 2006, S. McMahon, personal communication, August 28, 2006). Independent schools in Canada are acting progressively more as a quasi-market system, demonstrating an intensification of marketing strategies including school branding (H. Hannaford, personal communication, September 4, 2006). Common areas for independent school differentiation include structural qualities (location, facilities), the philosophy of education (experiential, Montessori, Waldorf, etc.), gender (single-sex vs. coed), boarding or day school, school size (student population, class size, teacher to pupil ratio), available extra/co-curricular activities (arts, athletics, community service, Round Square programs, etc.), the use of technology, and academic programs (International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, bilingual schools).

As an example of an academic differentiation strategy, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program sends a powerful signal to middle-class parents about status and advantage, and thus becomes an effective method of social targeting. The rate of growth of the IB program is impressive, both worldwide and in Canada. In 2007, the diploma program (DP) was offered to nearly half a million students in 1895 schools, in 124 countries worldwide (International Baccalaureate 2007). By 2013, there were 2400 IB World Schools offering the diploma program, with an average of 10 new IB DP schools authorized each month (International Baccalaureate 2013). In 2007, 225 Canadian schools (public, private and independent) offered the IB program. By 2013, the number had increased to 323 schools offering one or more of the three IB programs (International Baccalaureate 2013). The IB organization assures prospective families that the IB diploma program enhances opportunities for graduates at tertiary institutions (International Baccalaureate 2007). The attention to achievement, specialization in a university-prep curriculum, and global recognition of the diploma program all signal a program that can provide an elite credential for students. The program is intended to give university-bound students a huge advantage in the form of admissions,
scholarships, and first-year credit. The IB diploma program is an example of the general phenomenon of the ascendancy of market rules in education and the responses by both schools and middle-class families.

**Study Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to examine the increasing competition schools face as a result of globalization and neo-liberal pressures, and to analyze the response by school administrators to these pressures. It explores the extent to which school administrators attempt to establish a market niche attractive to middle class parents and students, and the means by which they do so. At a more fundamental level, it analyzes factors that influence the philosophical shift by school administrators from pedagogical leaders to school-based business managers.

Throughout this study, I use market language to describe and evaluate educational phenomena. Describing school systems as ‘quasi-markets’, educational programs as ‘differentiation strategies’ and families as ‘consumers’ reflects one approach for conceptualizing education in an increasingly globalized world. In his discussion of international education policy, Ball (1998) proposes a relationship between the global market and the marketization of education. In this study, I build on Ball’s market-based framework while analyzing current trends in Canadian independent school education.

The IB diploma program is used as a specific instance of a class-specific differentiation strategy occurring in the Canadian independent school marketplace. In doing so, this study attempts to develop a greater understanding of the larger phenomenon of school marketing. The central purpose of this study was to explore three central research questions:

1. How do Canadian independent school administrators market their schools?
2. What changes (if any) are administrators making to attract the desired consumers?
3. What factors appear to influence the extent of observed changes (if any) to school marketing practices by administrators?
Ultimately this study is an inquiry into the shifting marketing practices observed in certain Canadian independent schools and the factors influences these changes. In order to explore the changing marketing practices and philosophies demonstrated by school administrators, data collection was guided by the following research sub-questions:

A. (How) do administrators determine what is attractive to middle-class parents and students?
   i. How do administrators interpret this information?
   ii. How does this interpretation impact the evaluation, selection and implementation of programs such as the IB diploma program?

B. How do administrators understand their school's relationships with individuals and organizations?
   i. How do administrators understand their relationship with competitors?
   ii. How do administrators understand their relationship with consumers (parents and students)?
   iii. How do administrators understand their relationship with other outside organizations such as the IB organization?

**Study Significance**

Due to recent changes in the Canadian educational marketplace, independent school administrators are becoming increasingly aware of pressures to market their schools in different and more business-oriented ways. The evolution of marketing decision-making and the impact of these pressures on school leadership are examined within the context of this study. While marketing research suggests that many industries have progressed through the various eras of marketing and are now predominantly considered market-oriented, there has been no study of how independent school educators approach marketing decision-making. The impact of competition on enrollment, the importance of tradition, and the philosophical perspective of the administrative team are all expected to play a significant role in determining the marketing approach at a school. This study will therefore work towards developing a
greater understanding of current independent school marketing practices and philosophies.

From the results of this study, educational researchers will gain an understanding of how markets may affect school marketing practices and program delivery, as well as knowledge of the potential evolution and origins of any underlying changes in the philosophical approaches of school administrators towards marketing. Educational administrators will benefit from the overview and analysis of changing marketing practices across Canadian independent schools. Potential implications for stakeholders will be outlined, along with suggestions for future research.

**Study Outline**

Chapter 2 begins with a comprehensive review of those areas in the literature relevant to this study. School choice literature demonstrates the pervasive influence of neoliberalism and the power of middle-class choosers. The basis for middle-class choice is explored and the importance of credentialism is highlighted. Next, the response of school administrators to middle-class choice is considered. In particular, the ways by which school administrators engage in social targeting and differentiation based on the desires of the targeted consumer population. The IB is considered to be a desired credential, and hence an example of niche specialization.

Choice in independent schools reflects and intensifies processes observed in public education. Recent trends related to choice in independent schools are reviewed, including increasing awareness of consumer needs and wants, and the personalization of education.

Literature relating to the market-driven adoption of a managerial approach to educational leadership is described, focusing on the increasing adoption of business practices, values and ideologies. The growing prevalence of new managerialism in education is discussed, along with the resulting change in the role of senior school administrators.

The literature review concludes with a brief summary of independent school research, illustrating opportunities for further study.
Development of the conceptual framework for this study begins with a discussion of welfarism and new managerialism. The basis for this framework stems from the work of Gewirtz & Ball (2000), who describe a discursive shift among school Heads from welfarism to new managerialism and identify four key mediating factors; the market position of the school, professional biographies of school administrators, micropolitics of the school, and existing institutional forms, strategies and relationships. Market position and professional biographies are seen as having powerful influence over the welfarist – new managerial tension in this study, and as a result form the basis of study analysis. In fact, these two factors appear to largely determine micropolitics and existing institutional practices, and are therefore treated as outcomes of welfarist – new managerial positioning rather than as mediating factors.

This notion of a shift from welfarism toward a more business-oriented approach is adopted and subsequently used to explore marketing changes in Canadian independent schools. New managerialism, which balances welfarist (student-centered) and business concerns, is taken to be the midpoint of the continuum. Three idealized school types are proposed; one that is predominantly welfarist, one that demonstrates a balanced mix of the two approaches, and one that is predominantly new managerial.

The final link for the conceptual framework involves a description of marketing theory from business and industry. Four sequential marketing eras are identified and linked to schools positioned on the welfarist – new managerial continuum.

Chapter 3 describes my methodological approach to this study, beginning with the strategy of inquiry. As a mixed method study, survey data is collected from a significant proportion (40%) of Canadian independent schools, and three in-depth case studies are carried out. Survey data will provide an environmental scan of marketing practices and philosophies across Canadian independent schools. Three case studies will deepen this analysis by exploring schools located in different marketing environments. Sample selection is described for both survey and case study schools in Chapter 3, and key characteristics of the case study schools are identified. Research methods, ethical considerations, data collection techniques (including data collection instruments for both survey and case study data) are described, and the methods of data analyses are summarized.
The welfarism – new managerialism continuum framework adapted from Gewirtz and Ball (2000) is described as a primary mechanism for data analysis, but is expanded to include a business orientation at the opposing end to a welfarism. Finally, themes from case study interviews are summarized and are developed throughout the analysis and linked with the previously identified research questions and sub-questions.

In Chapter 4, the survey data is presented and analyzed. Five groups are proposed, each experiencing a different level of competition (Minimal Competition, Low Competition, Moderate Competition, Moderate-to-High Competition and High Competition). Each of these groups demonstrates characteristic marketing practices and hence a different position on the welfarist – new managerialism - business continuum. The initial analysis of survey data is based on the following themes; marketing expenses, marketing personnel, marketing strategies, decision-making, and marketing induced program changes. Following a review of the four theoretical marketing orientations in schools, the reported marketing mix in Canadian independent schools is analyzed. The emphasis or de-emphasis on a production orientation by school administrators is of particular interest. The analysis of survey data demonstrates some support for the proposed existence of five different approaches to school marketing in Canadian independent schools. The marketing mix characteristic of each of the five school groups is described in detail.

Chapter 5 begins with the positioning of the three case study schools within the continuum framework. Long Island School falls within the Minimum Competition group, demonstrating an exclusively welfarist approach to school marketing, Mountain Heights Academy is member of the Moderate Competition group based on its mixed marketing approach, and Goodwin College demonstrates the new managerial approach to school marketing characteristic of schools in the High Competition group. For each of the three case study schools, I consider in detail school market and professional biographies of key administrators, two of the four aspects of the educational environment as defined by Gewirtz and Ball (2000). Micropolitics of the school and existing institutional forms, strategies and relationships are considered as outcomes of market and administrator biographies, and are therefore dealt with as aspects of these two key factors. Next, the marketing strategies of each case study school is explored, considering the marketing
mix. The marketing mix is determined by the extent to which strategies are based upon the four marketing orientations; product orientation, sales orientation, market orientation and relationship orientation. Each case is summarized briefly by characterizing their position on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum. Long Island School demonstrates certain aspects of new managerialism but maintains a predominantly welfarist approach to marketing. Mountain Heights Academy demonstrates a balance in their marketing approach between welfarist and new managerial strategies. Finally, Goodwin College exhibits a marketing approach that is predominantly new managerial.

The cross-case analysis is presented in Chapter 6, based on the four environmental indicators of Gewirtz and Ball (2000). The exploration of the market position of the schools analyzes school differentiators, competitors and target markets as the three factors for comparison. An inquiry into the professional biographies of school administrator considers the heads of schools, members of the senior administrative team, and significant changes in the administrative team. Also considered here are micropolitical aspects including the roles of teachers, parents and the context of IB diploma program implementation. Other factors of note include market-driven communication practices, the use of data, and observed discourse.

Marketing outcomes are revisited, drawing conclusions related to the marketing mix and the relative prevalence of the four marketing orientations. Finally, case study conclusions are reconsidered and confirmed.

As the concluding chapter, Chapter 7 outlines significant findings and relevant implications for independent school marketing practice and research. Study limitations and future research directions are explored.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Canadian independent school administrators are becoming progressively more aware of the need to establish a market niche and effectively market their schools in increasingly competitive educational arenas. In order to analyze this phenomenon, this study is grounded on two main bodies of research; the literature on class-based choice in education and the marketization of schools, and the literature on independent school education. Building on these research fields and addressing a gap in the literature, I explore and characterize how independent schools negotiate an increasingly market-oriented educational system, and to what extent they actively differentiate and market their programs and services in an attempt to attract middle-class choosers.

The Question of Choice

School choice debates have tended to focus on the effects choice has on such issues as parental involvement, student achievement or school efficiency (Hallett 1986, Oplatka, Foskett & Hemsley-Brown 2002, Schneider, Teske, Marschall & Roche 1997, Sexton 1994). Neoliberal proponents of choice argue that each of the above areas is universally enhanced when choice options are available to parents (Bagley 2006, Sexton 1994, Scott 2013). When parents are able to select schools, threats of lower enrolments and government intervention may provide powerful incentives for weaker schools to improve educational programs and efficiencies (Lorenz 2012, Windle 2009). Furthermore, by encouraging competition and specialization, choice produces diversity that addresses the differing needs and wants of heterogeneous student populations (MacKenzie 2010). In contrast, inequitable social, economic and academic resources have been shown to consistently advantage middle-class families and reinforce social exclusion when school choice is encouraged (Giles 1995, Lee 1993, Lee, Croninger & Smith 1994, Miron 1996, Reay, 2004). Choice opportunities are unevenly distributed, with middle-class parents having better chances to choose (Bernal 2005, Lubienski 2005b, McDermott, Bowles & Churchill 2003, Parsons & Welsh 2006, Scott 2013, West 2006). Factors including geographical segregation and the selective admission policies of schools determine which choice options are available to parents, further exacerbating

In order to analyze middle class advantage in education, it is important to identify what is meant by the term ‘middle class’. This category is elusive, as no one has been able to conclusively define the middle class. Based on sociological and economic criteria, Rodriguez (2000) defines the middle class by three components; income, occupational status and education (See Levy & Michel 1983, and Coleman & Rainwater 1978 for similar definitions). He delineates the upper middle class as the social class most shaped by formal education. This group of individuals is characterized by high income, possession of a university degree, and authority and independence at work. It is this group that is able to take advantage of their education and income to secure educational advantages for their children. For the purpose of this study, I use the term ‘middle class’ to refer to that section of the population composed of highly educated professionals, earning at or above 150% of the median national income (but not considered upper class), experience professional autonomy and demonstrate characteristic values and attitudes, in particular towards education. As discussed above, is these middle class parents who most frequently take advantage of choice programs in an attempt to advantage their children. As a result, this group of parents and children represent the principle focus for schools when establishing a market niche and marketing that niche effectively. In this study, I explore how schools identify and respond to this target group of educational consumers.

**Class-based choice in education**

Middle-class parents are not simply seeking a school which will maximize their children’s academic achievement. Throughout the history of formal schooling, different
classes and social groups have been provided with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to take their place in the established social order. Bourdieu (1974) first described this idea of social and cultural reproduction in schooling, and maintained that families and schools indirectly transmit to children a certain cultural capital and a certain ethos. The dominant cultural capital becomes that which is valued by the school system, and those who possess it are consistently rewarded. Desirable educational credentials encompass a range of cultural, social, economic and political attributes, and members of the middle class “parentocracy” search for schools capable of providing advancement in each of these areas (Brantlinger, Majd-Jabbari & Guskin 1996, Harrison & Kachur 1999).

Recognizing that meritocracy is unable to ensure student advantage and subsequent success, middle class parents select public and independent schools capable of providing their children with the desirable cultural capital. The socioeconomic status of the school, and in particular that of its student population, is a key factor for parents when selecting a school for their child (Fossey 1994, Holme 2002, Yang & Kayaardi 2004). For example, when the Australian government began to subsidize private schooling, school choice opportunities resulted in significant increases in private school populations (Cambell 2005, Windle 2009). Other reasons for choosing a particular school include religion (Denessen, Driessena & Sleegers 2005), student ability, family background, school type, school location and the general ideology of schooling (Glazerman 1998, Le & Miller 2002, Morgan, Dunn, Cairns & Fraser 1993, Schneider, Marschall, Teske & Roch 1998, Shujaa 1992).

Middle class parents have been shown to seek high status schools, regardless of the quality of instruction, in an attempt to garner elite credentials for their children (Ball, 2003, Labaree 1997). Windle (2009) demonstrated that when these high status schools charge tuition, as in the case of independent or private schools, the attractiveness of the school to middle class parents does not appear to adhere to classical market logic. Instead, private schooling behaves as a luxury commodity or ‘Veblen good’ (Veblen & Mills 1970), where a school’s attractiveness is dependent on its exclusively high price and accompanying status (Windle 2009). Middle class parents make a neoliberal cost-
benefit analysis, and determine that the advantage conferred by high status schooling is well worth the financial cost (Peterson & O’Flynn 2007).

A further advantage is gained by parents when elite schools are oversubscribed. In these schools, school administrators are able to choose who to admit, and as a result, the student population will tend to be higher-performing academically and, if the school is private/independent, relatively affluent (Windle 2009). This exclusivity allows middle class parents to monopolize high status schools and thereby confer further advantage on these schools as they enact these ‘strategies of closure’ (Ball 2003, Ball, Bowe & Gewirtz 1996). In general, the predominance of credentialism, an overemphasis on educational credentials, appears to be affecting parental educational expectations. It is the reputation of the school, the composition of its student body, and the specialized programs it offers that are increasingly important to parents when determining where their children will go to school (Brown 1990, Daun 2002, Peterson & O’Flynn 2007).

School administrators actively respond to parental choice in a variety of ways. First, Woods, Bagley and Glatter (1998) demonstrate that public schools have a tendency to try to attract students who are easy to teach and likely to perform well. While private schools have always had the ability to select for desirable students, public schools serving middle class families are increasingly responding to market influences. Many now actively compete for students by publishing exemplary examination results and unusual co-curricular opportunities: in doing so they signal to families the status of the existing student population, providing a subtle invitation to families of similar status and a notice of unsuitability to all others (Windle 2009). Woods, Bagley and Glatter (1998) describe this ‘social targeting’ as “attention to the school’s achievement, specialization in a ‘strong’ curriculum area, downplaying at the level of rhetoric at least of the caring, pastoral side of schooling; and generally sending signals indicating what sort of parents are made most welcome.” Given that public schools attract students on the basis of reputation and exam performance, in a climate of school accountability, middle-class students tend to be more desirable due to their success in these areas
As a result, schools are experiencing heightened competition for desirable students, in turn escalating the need for these schools to market effectively.

Second, it appears that in light of the need to effectively market to middle-class parents, public schools are increasingly focusing on image management and product differentiation (Woods, Bagley & Glatter 1998). Both teachers and administrators are increasingly aware of the requirement for ‘impression management’ (Webb 2006) in order to attract desirable families to the school (Windle 2009). A school’s image, however, goes beyond favorable publicity. The importance of word-of-mouth marketing by the school community requires that all stakeholders develop and maintain positive opinions of the educational product on offer. As a result, administrators must consistently strive to meet the needs and wants of the families they serve to sustain a positive school image (Lumby 1999, Oplatka et al. 2002). The public image of the school is of critical importance, and school administrators are spending increasing amounts of time and money to ensure the use of effective marketing strategies.

Third, in order to attract and retain middle-class students, school administrators have been shown to alter policies and processes in an attempt to make their schools more marketable. Administrators must demonstrate that their schools represent a multitude of desirable characteristics, from the composition of the student body, to specialized programs and academic achievement, to educational ideology and the reputation of the school (Goldhaber 1999, Jackson & Bisset 2005).

School administrators in both public and independent schools are increasingly aware of the need to offer specialized programs, differentiating themselves from their competition while attracting elite students. As a competitive strategy, differentiation “is an attempt to create the impression that the company’s product or service is different from that of other products or services” (Solomon, Stuart, Carson & Smith 2001). Differentiation among competing organizations can be accomplished through performance or operational efficiency; differences in the services and/or products provided by an organization with respect to its competitors, or differences in the effectiveness or efficiency of these services (MacDonald 2007, Porter 1996).

Differentiation allows an organization to distinguish itself in a competitive market with the goal of more successful competition; however consumers also benefit from
Differentiation within a market. Differentiation within an education market advantages students by increasing the probability that students will have their particular educational needs and wants met. Furthermore, by potentially reducing direct competition between schools, differentiation could allow administrators more time to focus on improving the student educational experience rather than devoting energy to school marketing and promotion (MacDonald 2007). As van Zanten and Veleda (2001) point out, differentiation may occur as direct responses to middle class pressures or as anticipatory responses to middle class preferences (Reay 1998). School administrators differentiate strategically through the design of a school uniform or through student participation in such elite co-curricular activities as rowing or horse riding (Kenway & Bullen 2001).

Informal modifications to official policy in an appeal to demanding middle class parents can be significant, and may also include ability grouping, specialist foreign language classes, enhanced funding for gifted/talented programs, reduced support for special education, adoption of IB or AP programs, and a focus on traditional academic subjects (Ball 2003, Bowe, Ball & Gold 1992, Brantlinger 2003, Fitz, Halpin & Power 1997, van Zanten & Veleda 2001). The outcome of this program differentiation is twofold. Differentiation based on high-status activities, programs and practices signals to parents the values of the school and ensures the status-quo with regard to the desirable student population (Windle 2009). Differentiation also allows middle class students to “acquire cognitive, emotional and communicative skills that open the doors to high status jobs” and provide the prerequisites for high-status jobs in the global market (Resnik 2009). Increasingly this high-status differentiation is occurring in private/independent and international schools, where parents attempt to reproduce their advantages for the next generation (Resnik 2009, Wagner 1997)

Choice and the International Baccalaureate

The IB diploma program was first developed in the 1960s as an experiment in international education (Peterson 1972). Committed to providing a well-rounded education to students, the IB diploma program (IB DP) requires students to pursue courses of study across six disciplines; literature, second language learning, the
humanities, the sciences, mathematics, and the arts. Additional requirements of the IB DP include a 4000-word essay in a subject of the student's choosing, participation in ‘CAS’ – creativity, action and community service pursuits – and completion of the ‘Theory of Knowledge’ course. In addition to the breadth of study that the above requirements produce, the entire curriculum is committed to promoting ‘international mindedness’, differentiating it from the more local focus of national curricula (Doherty, Mu & Shield 2009). This rigorous university-preparatory curriculum is now offered in over 3500 schools in 144 countries (IB 2013).

One of the advantages of the IB DP curriculum is that its structure offers some flexibility for implementing schools, allowing for easier adoption based on school characteristics and integration with national curriculum requirements (Doherty 2009). Given the international reputation of the IB program, neoliberal education policies further encourage the program's global spread. Adoption of the IB program represents one way that schools can effectively differentiate, improve and/or specialize in response to competitive market pressures (Doherty 2009, Resnik 2012). The IB program readily accommodates middle class neoliberal strategies seeking a high status, high quality education credential through its pedagogical development, academically demanding curriculum, rigorous accreditation process, and above all, global post-secondary recognition (Resnik 2012).

In addition to, and perhaps because of, global recognition of its academic excellence, the IB program has become associated with high status educational opportunities. IB graduates represent an elite group of students, and the program has increasingly come to symbolize vertical mobility and economic supremacy (Bunnell 2008, Cambridge 2000, Doherty 2009). Curricular choices such as the IB program carry symbolic meaning relating to the reproduction of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984), and therefore choice of an IB education reflects the self-image and aspirations of middle class parents (Wells & Crain 2000). When these parents select the IB program for their children, they are actively choosing a high status credential, in the hopes that this credential and its associated advantages will provide the associated economic and social success.
As a desirable credential, the IB program is a niche program that represents a clear brand of distinction for its graduates (Doherty 2009). Parent perception of the IB program centers around social advantage. Increasingly middle class parents see national education systems as inadequate to the challenge of preparing students for the global marketplace (Phillips 2002). As a result, they want alternatives that provide academic excellence and global status credentials that will ensure global competitiveness for their children, and the resulting financial and social security (Resnik 2009). Studies by Whitehead (2005) and Bagnall (1994) in Australia and Canada confirm that the IB program represents social advantage to many middle class parents. Many of the schools studied portrayed the IB as a high status credential in the education marketplace, where parents were aware of the cultural capital provided by the IB (Bagnall 1994, Whitehead 2005). Bagnall maintains that for parents, “the selection of the IB program is more than a casual choice made the year before beginning the program. The advantages offered by this international diploma are likened by Bourdieu to trumps in a card game.” (Bagnall 1994:3) In the United States, news agencies such as Newsweek and US News & World Report use IB program delivery as an important consideration when ranking top high schools nationally (Culross & Tarver 2011). Schools, parents and students are very aware of the tangible advantages the IB offers. This awareness is facilitated by the IB organization itself, which makes available detailed information regarding university recognition for IB graduates, including acceptances, scholarship money, and advanced standing (Cambridge 2010, Coates, MacMahon-Ball & Rosicka 2007, Culross & Tarver 2011, International Baccalaureate 2003). In addition to the rigorous, standardized academic excellence provided by the program, symbolic values such as internationalism and multiculturalism also contribute to its university recognition and value (Cambridge 2002). This treatment of education as a consumer good suggests the market-based appropriation of the IB diploma program by schools (Cambridge 2010).

As in the case of elite schools, not all students have the choice of pursuing the IB program. In private/independent schools, enrollment rests on financial capability. In public education, IB programs are often high subscribed, and as a result selection processes privilege middle class students most likely to succeed on high stakes
examinations. As with so many neoliberal market-based realities, the program and school effectively chooses the student (Doherty 2009).

Just as parents recognize the strategic advantage of an IB education, school administrators recognize the strategic advantage of offering the IB diploma program. There is little doubt about the pedagogical merits of the program, but administrators are deciding to adopt the program for pragmatic, market-driven reasons as well as for its strengths as a university preparatory program. Many schools recognize, and choose to exploit, the marketing advantage provided by program adoption (Bunnell 2008, Resnik 2012, Resnik 2009). Some school administrators adopt the IB to carve out a distinct identity, differentiating from competitors, while others adopt the program in response to parental pressure for a higher quality of educational product or product of distinction (Evans & Burson 2005 Doherty, McGee 2003, Mu & Shield 2009). Public schools in Australia, Canada and the United States, appealing to middle class parents, adopt the IB to slow the occurrence of 'white flight' to the private sector by creating an exclusive 'school-within-a-school' (Doherty 2009, Tarc 2009)

**Independent schools and the implications of choice**

Despite some suggestions as to why middle-class parents make the decisions they do regarding private/independent school choice, this aspect of choice remains generally under-researched (Jackson & Bisset 2005). Given the significant diversity within the independent school sector (Thomas B. Fordham Foundation 1999) and the increase in competitive ideologies among the middle class, there is a need for independent school administrators to understand how and why middle class parents engage in school choice, in order to compete and market their school most effectively. Engelhardt (1985) argues that the ability of private schools to attract families directly reflects their fitness. In order to attract desirable students in an increasingly competitive market, schools with high fitness will effectively anticipate and respond to the desires of parents and students. Administrators need to identify and understand what aspects of their schools are attractive to parents; this understanding, coupled with an analysis of competitor schools, is necessary to develop a strategic marketing focus (MacDonald 2007).
Almost two decades ago, James & Phillips (1995) described independent schools as demonstrating a general lack of coherent marketing practices. School administrators had anecdotal evidence regarding what parents were looking for in a school, but little, if any, systematic data collection occurred. Marketing efforts tended to be ad hoc, lacking any strategic focus and generally limited to infrequent advertising. Since this time, the marketization of private education has intensified, and the response required by schools to remain competitive has not been investigated.

One of the most significant changes in education is the onset of personalization, a concept drawn directly from marketing theory (Miliband 2005). When school choice began parents were able to choose a school from a number of options, with certain constraints or limitations. Choice has since developed considerably, especially for middle class parents empowered by cultural and financial capital. Increasingly private/independent education is characterized by personalization, where, rather than passively accepting an educational product, parents and students actively shape the education they select (Hartley 2008, Miliband 2005). Personalization of education is a marketing strategy adopted by schools in an attempt to demonstrate responsiveness to the needs and wants of their student-customers. By adapting to the needs of their consumers, school administrators work towards creating long-term relationships with students and families (Hartley 2008, Pine, Peppers & Rogers 1995, Victor & Boynton 1998).

Clearly there is a need to examine the relationship between private/independent school offerings and neoliberal philosophies of parental choice. Building on existing choice literature, this study extends our current understanding of responses by school administrators to choice policies and practices. School administrators increasingly must understand the changing needs and wants of the families they hope they attract and retain in order to market effectively. A school's position with respect to its competitors is also an essential element influencing market strategies. By examining how school administrators determine and evaluate their customers and competitors, this study provides a deeper understanding of the marketing context of schools and how this has resulted in the current intensification of marketing activities in independent schools.
For many school administrators, the intensification of marketing over the past decade has had significant implications with regard to their role. Increasingly administrators have to balance educational and economic demands, a shift that has added considerable complexity and challenge to their professional responsibilities (MacDonald 2006). Economic demands will vary based on the local market context and intensity of competition, and as a result, some school administrators must focus on operational effectiveness issues or strategic decision making, while others will able to be more focused on educational leadership (MacDonald 2007). Regardless of the required focus, all private/independent school administrators will have to integrate the business of education with pedagogical leadership to some degree, and the ease with which this new balance is reached may vary considerably (MacDonald 2007).

Neoliberalism, choice and the business of education

Increasing administrative focus on the business of schooling is a clear indicator of the growing impact of neoliberalism on education. Morrow and Torres (2000) observed that much of the current educational restructuring and reform is based on the neoliberal belief that progress and efficiency in education are achieved when schools are market-driven. The increasing predominance and acceptance of an economic (market) agenda in school leadership follows the belief that quality is achieved by responding to the demands of the market. (Clarke 2012, Engel & Rutkowski 2008). This increasingly market-driven focus has resulted in the adoption of business practices, techniques, ideologies and values (Brancaleone & O'Brien 2011, Deem 2001, Farrell & Morris 2003).

The growing acceptance of business practices as a requirement for excellence in education has been demonstrated in many ways. Managerial discourse has shifted to focus on such concepts as ‘best practices’, ‘effectiveness’, and ‘accountability’; certain practices, such as the adoption of standards and high-stakes testing are increasingly widespread; and the assumption that competition will improve performance remains unchallenged (Clarke 2012, Deem & Brehony 2005, Hood 2000). New managerialism is a concept that refers to this transfer of private sector business objectives to the public sector, and identifies underlying assumptions in the way that public institutions such as

One of the more notable consequences of the neoliberal/new managerial belief that market-based competition increases performance is the development of international educational indicators. Quantitative measurements of educational quality have prompted the creation of self-proclaimed ‘experts’ in educational evaluation. One such intergovernmental initiative is the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), managed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). PISA measures student performance in reading, mathematics and science literacy through established assessment frameworks, clear learning outcomes and standardized performance indicators (OECD 2010). Beyond providing an assessment of student performance, these learning outcomes hold schools accountable to the prevailing neoliberal education and economic standards (Brancaleone & O’Brien 2011).

Through marketization, education develops a focus on quality assurance and performance accountability, where standards regarding effectiveness and efficiency are clearly communicated and performance against these targets are measured (Kotler & Armstrong 1999, Oplatka et al. 2002, Walsh 1994). As education becomes more quantifiable, standardized and ideally more efficient, a global trend towards the privatization of education has been observed (Engel & Rutkowski 2008). Privatization renders education more highly dependent on market forces for survival, and according to market logic, performance-based comparisons ultimately lead to higher efficiency, greater cost-effectiveness, and generally increased performance. (Engel & Rutkowski 2008). It is not a surprise therefore, that administrators in private/independent schools
feel a considerable push to follow the neoliberal demands of marketization, focusing on accountability and consumer responsiveness (Oplatka et al. 2002).

Prior to the introduction of neoliberalism/new managerialism in education, administrative leadership reflected a commitment to welfarism, an approach characterized by an ideological obligation to the student and his/her education (Gewirtz and Ball 2000). Greater competition in educational markets and the increasing prevalence of neoliberalism required school heads to adapt to the ideology of an educational market in order to ensure the survival of their schools (Grace 1995, Hall & Southworth 1997, Murphy & Hallinger 1992, Power, Halpin & Whitty 1997). As a result of dedicating more time and energy to new managerial aspects of school leadership (strategic planning, public relations, fundraising, marketing, etc.), those school heads adopting a neoliberal approach to leadership became more removed from teaching and learning. More successful heads are now often observed to have little direct involvement in instructional leadership, acting like ‘chief executive officers’ and entrepreneurial managers rather than principals or master teachers (Odden 1995, Oplatka et al. 2002). Heads of schools therefore have to make a decision as to how they will balance their time; to what extent will they shift their traditional focus on instructional leadership to prioritize marketing and other new managerial concerns (Ball 1994, Wylie 1994).

To complicate matters, many senior administrators have minimal experience of marketing practice and as a result are challenged to form a coherent marketing ideology or strategy (Bell 1999, Foskett 1998b, Oplatka et al. 2002). Not surprisingly, many administrators are uneasy about the implications of new managerialism in education, and many school heads report greater tension, stress and frustration regarding their new managerial role (Bennett, Bryk, Easton, Kerbow, Luppescu & Sebring 1992, Evetts 1996, Gewirtz, Ball & Bowe 1995, Grace 1995, Hall & Southworth 1997). The conflict that head of schools face following marketization and the introduction of neoliberalism in education may represent an intrinsic conflict between new managerial (business) and welfarist (professional) approaches to administration (Bell 1999, Oplatka et al. 2002).

The extent of this conflict will depend in part on the intensity of competition the school faces, and the head of school’s professional and ethical beliefs and values
(Gewirtz et al 1995). Grace (1995) suggests three main response types to this conflict; head teacher-managers, head teacher-professionals, and head teacher-resistors. Head teacher-managers tend to be strongly new managerialist in professional orientation, and are able to adapt to the market-induced changes with regard to their administrative role with relative ease. Head teacher-professionals, in contrast, struggle with being distanced from the classroom as well as other changes in professional relationships. The values and beliefs of these head teachers are more closely aligned with welfarist assumptions of educational leadership, and the transition to a more business-oriented model is slow. Finally, head teacher-resistors are so strongly entrenched in welfarist beliefs that they actively resist the introduction of new managerialism in educational leadership (Grace 1995).

With these responses occurring within public education, it will be useful to examine the extent to which the neoliberal shift from welfarism to new managerialism in education is occurring in the Canadian independent school sector. Presumably the private sector nature of these schools would require administrators to respond more quickly to market forces, but as previously discussed, the nature of the local education market and administrative biographies will play important roles in mediating any transition to new managerialism.

**Independent school Research**

Student enrollment in Canadian independent schools has been steadily increasing, with an annual growth rate of 3.85% over the past decade (CAIS website 2007). Despite the continued growth and development of the independent school market, academic research on independent schools and their particular concerns has been sparse. Even with the increasing focus demonstrated by independent school administrators on school reputation and specialized programs such as the International Baccalaureate, little research has been done as to the development and effectiveness of market strategy, or the extent to which market demands encourage transition from a welfarist to new managerial approach to school leadership. Those studies which do exist tend to be descriptive in nature, for example explaining the purpose and organization of community service programs (Council for Religion in Independent
What information is available is primarily in the form of practical guides produced by the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) in the United States, or as anecdotal reports describing independent school practices. Such reports, the large majority of which appear in the journal *Independent Schools* produced by the NAIS, tend to lack rigor, being neither empirically based nor peer-reviewed in the manner of an academic journal. Other written information on independent schools include school websites and publications intended for marketing purposes, and third-party reviews, such as the “How to Choose a School” guide and the “Our Kids go to School” brochure produced by The Globe and Mail in Canada.

A prominent researcher who compares many aspects of public and independent school culture is Arthur Powell, including learning conditions, teacher commitment, school climate, and teaching conditions (Powell 1990, 1996, 1997). He discusses how independent schools, in particular elite preparatory schools, can provide useful lessons for public school education (Powell 1996). In discussing how general social changes such as increasing governmental intervention, the changing American family, and cycles of educational reform impact independent school education, Powell lays the groundwork for using independent schools as a model for public school reform, arguing that the study of independent schools can provide valuable information regarding mechanisms and trends in public schooling (Powell 1979). Although Powell maintains that independent schools act as precursors or testing grounds for public school reforms, he leaves unanswered the question of what stimulates independent school reform. The mechanisms by which independent schools identify and implement systemic change remain unknown.

Valerie Lee is another well-known researcher who compares public and private school culture, demonstrating the relationship between socioeconomic status and educational outcomes. She suggests that school characteristics and policies may be predominantly responsible for student outcomes (Lee & Bryk 1989; Lee 1986). Given the competitive approach to education demonstrated by middle class parents, it would follow that schools producing desirable student outcomes (as measured by a combination of academic achievement and socio-cultural capital gains) are in high
demand from middle class parents. Similar to Powell, what Lee leaves unanswered is mechanism by which these school characteristics are formed. It is important to determine the extent to which independent schools are conscious of neoliberal decision making on the part of parents. Following the recognition of desirable characteristics, schools will determine suitable reform strategies with the ultimate goal of marketing themselves more effectively. The extent to which school administrators alter or develop their marketing strategies will be largely determined by the prevalence of new managerialism in the local school context.

Following Powell’s assertion that the study of independent school can have important implications for public education, it is my hope that an exploration of the intensification of school marketing in independent schools also reveals key aspects of public school marketing. If independent schools experience amplified market forces, the manner in which school leadership is transitioning between welfarism and new managerialism could have important implications for public schools as competition for students increases. I address the gap left by both Powell and Lee regarding the mechanism for change, in particular the adoption of neoliberal beliefs and a new managerial approach to school leadership.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Welfarism & New managerialism

The paradigmatic shift from welfarism to new managerialism in education became a focus for research in the mid to late 1990s as the effects of globalization became increasingly prominent. Prior to this time, school administrators were teachers first, and espoused a “public service ethic” with the primary goal of providing “quality educational opportunities for students” (Dearing, 1994). These administrators were guided by a deeply held “democratic ideology underpinned by a commitment to a student-centered pedagogic culture” (Elliott, 1996). Stemming from their experience as front line teachers, these administrators demonstrated the “primacy of student learning and the teaching process, a concern for academic standards, and a management ethos based on collegiality and professional autonomy” in all aspects of their decision making (Randle & Brady, 1997).

This approach can still be seen in school administrators, where school-based policies and procedures are “characterized by … client-centered, professional and public service values, such as equity and care”, however it more commonly co-exists with new managerialist practices (Simkins, 1998). In its pure form, new managerialism represents a “pervasive market ideology”, with an “emphasis on business systems and efficiency” (Dearing, 1994, Elliott, 1996). While a welfarist approach to education is concerned solely with meeting the needs of the student, new managerialism recognizes that in order to serve the needs of the student, the needs of the organization must also be met. As a result, the new managerialist school administrator is concerned with achieving “an acceptable balance between efficiency and effectiveness. Quality is assessed on the basis of outcomes [and school] management is based on performance indicators and surveillance, controlled by managers and the market” (Randle & Brady, 1997).

New managerialism is not incompatible with welfarism, as it is “characterized by a commitment to the overriding values and mission of the organization” (Simkins, 1998). New managerialist schools that demonstrate a student-centered mission based on pedagogical quality may therefore have outcomes similar to those of a welfarist school.
The underlying philosophical paradigm will, however, likely produce significantly different practices and policies characterized by the values and discourses of the existing paradigm. In contrast, a purely business oriented approach to school leadership would prioritize the needs of the organization over the needs of the student. This lack of regard for student needs may be fundamentally incompatible with schools and the quasi-market system in which they operate; no business-oriented schools were observed in this study.

A paradigmatic shift is rarely an easy or quick transition. Since the introduction of the new managerialist paradigm, certain Canadian independent school administrators have begun to shift away from a purely welfarist approach to education. To varying extents, this shift has been necessitated by global, national and regional changes in the education market. As a result, the ideological approach to school administration for many of these administrators today is somewhere on the continuum between the welfarist to the new managerialist perspectives.

In order to determine the extent of the ideological transition in educational administration, Gewirtz and Ball (2000) explored the discursive shift from welfarist languages to those of new managerialism. This study focused on a sample of individual heads of schools in the UK, and found that, for these administrators, “the new languages of enterprise, quality and excellence grate against existing and embedded welfarist languages” (Gewirtz & Ball, 2000). Despite varied levels of administrator resistance, changes in discourse were evident, and were “embedded in and brought about by the replacement of one dominant discourse (welfarism) by another (managerialism)” (Gewirtz & Ball, 2000).

As the global shift to a new managerialist discourse becomes more entrenched in certain local school markets, there is a need to examine the relationship between changing discourses and administrative practices. For Canadian independent school administrators, school marketing continues to experience significant changes in philosophy and intensity. These changes can be understood as both reflecting and shaping the increasing prevalence of a new managerialist approach to education, characterized by a progressively more customer oriented focus within an increasingly competitive market place.
The Educational Environment:  
Market Position & Professional Biographies

The positioning of school administrators on the welfarist - new managerial – business continuum is mediated by a number of factors at the level of the individual schools. Gewirtz and Ball (2000), in their model of institutional change, suggest that four key factors mediate a shift between welfarist and new managerial languages and practices; the market position of the school in the local competitive arena, the micropolitics of the school, the professional biographies of key school administrators, and existing institutional forms, strategies and relationships within the school. They argue that together these factors can be used to explain the extent to which both discourse and the resulting administrative practices have shifted along the continuum from those of welfarism toward new managerialism.

While market position and professional biographies appear to have considerable influence over the welfarist – new managerial tension, this study suggests that micropolitics and existing institutional practices are not independent factors. Rather they appear to be largely determined by a combination of the school market and the biographies – and hence leadership approaches – of key school administrators. Micropolitics and institutional forms, strategies and relationships are therefore treated as outcomes of welfarist – new managerial positioning rather than as mediating factors.

Outcomes of the Educational Environment

IB Diploma Adoption

One of the ways that the welfarist-new managerial positioning of an administrative team manifests itself is the manner in which the IB program is adopted. The role of parents/students, faculty and administration in the decision to adopt the IB program, and subsequent implementation decision making is highly indicative of administrative positioning on the continuum. The adoption process will therefore be used to reflect local market demands as well as the values and beliefs of administrators at each of the case study schools.
Discourse

The shift between the welfarist and more business-oriented discursive paradigms can be used effectively to explore the observed changes in Canadian independent school marketing. The way in which school administrators speak about programs and school promotion, leadership and strategic planning reveals not only the welfarist or new managerial nature of administrative beliefs and practices, but also how these beliefs and practices align with norms from the national community of schools. In doing so, not only can administrative teams be situated on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum, but philosophical tensions and/or agreements may be suggestive of potential shifting along the continuum.

Marketing Strategies

Examining existing school marketing practices and the accompanying discourse will demonstrate not only the magnitude to which market ideologies have been assimilated by certain school administrators, but also the impact of this shift on school policies and practices. Since marketing practices is one of the more salient indicators of a new managerialist or business approach, these practices will be taken to be representative of the wider policy arena in schools. The relationship between the key mediating factors (hereafter referred to as the “educational environment”), and the shift in discourses and marketing practices is represented in Figure 1 on the next page.

Marketing practices are a tangible manifestation of administrative values, decision making, agendas and norms. The iterative interaction between administrative discourse, school-based and national independent school culture and practices, and the local education market results in conditions unique to a particular school. The local educational environment both reflects and influences the extent of the discursive shift between welfarism and new managerialism, which in turn impacts school-based marketing practices.
Figure 1: The mediation of the shift between welfarism and new managerialism by the educational environment.
Examining the educational environment of schools will allow for a better understanding of current Canadian independent school marketing practices. In this study, the interrelationship between the educational environment, IB adoption, administrative discourse and marketing practices is explored in detail using three case study schools. In each case, changes in marketing practices are analyzed as a function of the educational environment of the individual school, and ultimately consider their relationship with shifting educational discourses.

While the educational environment of each school is unique, there exist certain similarities between schools on the basis of these key school characteristics. As a link to the wider Canadian independent school community, survey data is used to identify national trends in school marketing. As with the case studies, the relationship between marketing, discourse and the educational environment is explored.

An exploration of the connection between marketing, discourse and the educational environment reflects the continuum of discourses and marketing practices that currently exist in Canadian independent schools. Since most administrative discourses are neither purely welfarist nor new managerialist, instead comprising aspects of both ideologies, they can be used to demonstrate and characterize any shift from the earlier, universal, strictly welfarist approach to education. As discourses are increasingly incorporating new managerialist languages and practices, so too are marketing practices demonstrating a shift in response to increasingly salient and pervasive market forces. Linking changing discourses to changing marketing philosophies and practices provides a potent explanation for the rapid and widespread changes in Canadian independent school marketing. Furthermore, using certain key mediating factors identified by Gewirtz and Ball (2000) that characterize the education environment, this framework provides an explanation of the variation in marketing responses seen across Canadian independent schools.

**Hypothesized positioning of case study schools on the Welfarism-New Managerialism continuum**

It was reasonable to assume that in case study schools the extent of the observed marketing shift would vary, and so three general possibilities for observed
school-based discourse and marketing were constructed; predominantly welfarist approach with some aspects of new managerialism incorporated, a predominantly new managerialist approach with some aspects of welfarism retained, and finally a balanced mix of welfarism and new managerialism.

In the first situation, school administrators would demonstrate predominantly welfarist discourses and practices, likely due to a combination of administrator resistance to new managerialism and a lack of an education environment that would require a new managerialist approach. Examining the key mediating factors characterizing the education environment demonstrated how and why welfarism has persisted to a degree not found in other schools. First, the school’s market position was expected to be relatively secure, characterized by a well-established niche in the local, and possibly national, education market. Competition for students would be minimal, and the school would enjoy relative financial security. Professional biographies of the senior leadership team were expected to demonstrate a teaching background, showing administrative socialization within the context of schools. School policies and practices would display a single prevailing discourse, deeply imbedded with welfarist values. Given this environment, administrators would not have experienced the market pressures necessary to impose an approach more in line with new managerialism. Additionally, it is possible that the local market would not support this change. Administrative professional backgrounds would suggest resistance to this discursive shift and any accompanying changes in administrative policies and practices.

Toward the midpoint of the welfarism – new managerialism - business continuum, the second administrative situation would be characterized by significant reliance on new managerialist discourses and practices. As stated earlier, while administrators in this scenario would focus on efficiency and the search for a competitive advantage, they would not lose sight of the needs of their students. Instead, these administrators would maintain that it is by focusing on institutional needs, raising standards and efficiency through the use of performance indicators, that student needs are best served. This consumer-oriented culture would most likely be seen in schools subject to a highly competitive education market. Considering the education environment, a market position characterized by intense competition from both the
public and private sector would encourage an approach more in line with new managerialism. Professional biographies of key administrators, while reflecting a teaching background, likely also include leadership roles outside of the school. These leadership opportunities would socialize the administrators in management strategies and practices outside the field of education, possibly providing a counter to the typically welfarist socialization of the teaching profession. Finally, school-based policies and practices would display a conscious recognition of the role of competition, performance indicators and institutional efficiency in providing a superior educational product. As a result, a new managerialist approach would be evident in all aspects of school administration, at times superseding, but continuing to coexist with a welfarist discourse.

The median situation would reflect a relatively equal balance between welfarism and new managerialism in the administrative approach to education. As a whole, the key indicators of the educational environment would be ambiguous, sometimes tending toward a more welfarist perspective while at other times reflecting a more new managerialist approach. The school’s market position might be uncertain; perhaps administrators had created a tenuous niche in a reasonably competitive market. The biographies of the senior administrative team might show a mix of backgrounds including both teaching and more generic management experiences. As a result, school-based policies and practices would show a combination of welfarist and new managerialist discourses, balancing the demands of the market with the more traditional welfarist philosophies and experiences of individual teacher-administrators.

It is expected that school marketing will be highly dependent upon where school administrators fall on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum. Marketing theory describes four fundamental approaches to marketing; a product oriented approach that focuses on a specific product or service, a selling oriented approach that focuses on large-scale promotion, a marketing approach that focuses on responsiveness to customer needs, and social marketing approach that focuses on the individual lifetime customer (Kotler, Armstrong & Cunningham 2005, Kotler & Cunningham 2004). These marketing philosophies reflect not only possible development over time, but also states of mind. (Sommers & Barnes 2001).
Despite the varied progression of industries through these stages, most industrial market economies reached a buyers’ market by the early 21st century, where, in a market environment characterized by an abundance of products and services, buyers are dominant (Kotler 2000). The large scale conception of education as a commodity is fairly recent. Interestingly, school marketing does not appear to follow the linear progression observed in industry; different schools appear to adhere to different market ideologies as a consequence of their educational environment. (See Table 1 where marketing approaches on the welfarism – new managerial - business continuum are aligned with the level of competition experienced in the local school market.)

Product-oriented industries demonstrate a narrow focus on the products and services they provide, along with the most efficient methods of production. This focus on products and production is possible in a market environment characterized by production shortages and/or intense consumer demand. For product-oriented organizations, the prevailing attitude is that a good product will sell itself, as a result, continuous product or service improvements occurred with little or no customer input (Beckman, Kurtz, & Boone 1992, Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie & Snow 2007, Kerin, Hartley, Berkowitz, & Rudelius 2006, Kotler 2000, Kotler, Armstrong, & Cunningham 2005, Sommers & Barnes 2001). The danger inherent in this marketing approach is that marketers focus only on existing customer wants and lose sight of underlying needs, a phenomenon known as “marketing myopia”. Such marketers will have trouble if a new product or service comes along that serves the customer’s need better or less expensively. (Kotler, Armstrong, & Cunningham 2005)

A school marketing team that is product-oriented would define themselves as providing a program that they believe is superior to all others. An IB program would be adopted because it is believed to be the most effective program in preparing students for post-secondary education and for involvement in an increasingly global society, worthwhile goals as determined by the administrative team. The program is subsequently implemented at the school based on administrative beliefs about how the school can best develop the program to allow students to attain these goals. As the prevailing belief for this orientation is “a good product will sell itself”, marketing efforts would focus on educating the public about the merits of the IB program.
Table 1: Level of market competition aligned with marketing approaches (position on the welfarism – new managerial continuum)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL OF MARKET COMPETITION</th>
<th>MARKETING APPROACHES IN SCHOOLS</th>
<th>MARKETING ERAS IN INDUSTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Minimal Competition      | • Minimal changes in school market  
                              • Philosophical belief that marketing is incompatible with the educational mission  
                              • Belief that a high quality school will sell itself through the performance of its programs and students  
                              • Belief that their product is “good for” students  
                              • Strong product orientation  
                              • Minimal school marketing; reliance on word of mouth promotion  
                              • Program implementation “with integrity”  
                              • Continuous product improvement with no customer input  
                              • **Exclusively welfarist approach**                          | **The Product Era (prior to 1930)**  
                              • narrow focus on products and services, and the most efficient methods of production  
                              • market environment characterized by production shortages and/or intense consumer demand  
                              • prevailing attitude: a good product will sell itself  
                              • improvements occur with little or no customer input  
                              • assumption is that potential customers consider a product or service to be so superior or desirable that they will seek it out |
| 2. Low Competition          | • Potentially small increase in market competition  
                              • Limited competition and/or strong consumer demand  
                              • Philosophical belief that marketing is incompatible with the educational mission  
                              • Belief that a high quality school will sell itself through the performance of its programs and students  
                              • Belief that their product is “good for” students  
                              • Increased budget for advertising and personnel  
                              • Marketing directed to parents  
                              • Marketing focused on school product; convincing parents of program merits  
                              • Continuous product improvement with little consumer input  
                              • **Predominantly welfarist approach**                          | **The Sales Era (1920s – 1950s)**  
                              • need to find buyers to meet the existing supply  
                              • an aggressive, high-powered sales force is developed, based on the assumption that customers on their own will not buy enough  
                              • focuses on creating sales transactions rather than on building long-term, profitable customer relationships. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTINUUM POSITION</th>
<th>MARKETING APPROACHES IN SCHOOLS</th>
<th>MARKETING ERAS IN INDUSTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 3. Moderate Competition | • Balance between supply and demand  
• More knowledgeable consumers resulting from increased choice  
• Diversification of marketing directed to parents, students or other stakeholders  
• Increasing consumer input and desire to learn about consumer needs  
• Beginning to focus on accountability and transparency  
• Mix of welfarist and new managerial approaches | |
| 4. Moderate-to-High competition | • Increasingly a consumer’s market; consumers are knowledgeable and occasionally demanding  
• Philosophical belief that marketing is entirely compatible with the educational mission  
• Responds to consumer input regarding certain aspects of programming  
• Significant diversification of marketing to a variety of stakeholders  
• Focus on accountability and transparency  
• Predominantly new managerial approach | **The Marketing Era (1950s – 1990s)**  
• shift from a seller’s market to a buyer’s market  
• more knowledgeable consumers, increased choice and competition  
• focus is to determine unmet consumer needs and wants, and satisfy them  
• marketing has a leading role in product planning  
• adapt quickly to changing consumer wants and needs  
• wants and needs of customers must direct the organization |
| 5. High competition | • Extensive changes in school market  
• A consumer’s market; consumers are knowledgeable and demanding  
• Belief that marketing is entirely compatible with educational mission  
• Adapt programs based on input to make them as attractive as possible  
• Wants and needs of consumers direct the organization  
• Significant flexibility in educational products offered  
• High level of accountability and transparency to consumers  
• Exclusively new managerial approach | **The Relationship Era (>1990s)**  
• respond to information about customer’ needs in an attempt to establish and maintain individual long-term relationships characterized by trust and commitment  
• primary objective to create loyal repeat customers and advocates  
• focus on internal marketing to raise productivity and staff morale, as well as conducting business is such a way as to contribute to a general improvement in society’s well-being |
In a sales-oriented approach to marketing, high volume output results in the need to find buyers to meet the existing supply. Typically an aggressive, high-powered sales force is developed, based on the assumption that customers on their own will not buy enough of the goods/services available (Beckman, Kurtz, & Boone 1992, Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie, & Snow 2007, Kerin, Hartley, Berkowitz, & Rudelius 2006, Sommers & Barnes 2001). This market approach focuses on creating sales transactions rather than on building long-term, profitable customer relationships. As a result, it is often wrongly assumed that customers will either like the product/service, or will forget their disappointment and buy again, or at least not tell others about their dissatisfaction (Kotler, Armstrong, & Cunningham 2005).

A school marketing team that is sales-oriented would be characterized by the belief that while the IB program is a good one, enrollment can only be enhanced by an aggressive advertising and sales campaign. The IB program is adopted because, as a good program, the marketing team can effectively sell both it and the school, ultimately improving enrollment. Here the prevailing belief is that sufficient customers will not, on their own, buy an independent school education, given a satisfactory public school (or less expensive independent school) alternative. Marketing efforts are directed to high-pressure sales, and widespread advertising of the school and the merits of the IB program. The goal is to induce enrolment regardless of whether or not customers believe in the merits of the program.

The marketing era is characterized by a shift from a seller’s market (more buyers for fewer goods/services) to a buyer’s market (more goods/services than people willing to buy them). A variety of factors, including more knowledgeable consumers, increased choice and competition creates the need for a consumer orientation. The focus for marketers in this era is to determine unmet consumer needs and wants, and satisfy them (Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie, & Snow 2007, Kinnear, Bernhardt, & Krentler 1995, Kotler, Armstrong, & Cunningham 2005, Kotler, & Fox 1985, Sommers, & Barnes 2001). In this era, marketing has a leading role in product planning, resulting in generally improved market success and overall performance. Additionally, industries following a marketing approach can adapt more quickly to changing consumer wants and needs than those focused on either producing or selling a particular product independent of

Despite the advantages of a marketing orientation, many industries and organizations have difficulty implementing this approach. The wants and needs of customers must direct the organization, and this can meet with heavy resistance. Additionally, an organization may be viewed as not needing to be marketing-oriented to prosper (e.g. a monopoly). Finally, in some instances potential customers consider a product or service to be so superior or desirable that they will seek it out (Sommers & Barnes 2001).

A school-based marketing-oriented team would demonstrate a commitment to determining unmet consumer needs and wants, and satisfying them. Since this approach gives marketing an important role in product planning, a school would adopt the IB program in anticipation of, or in response to customer desires, in this case a strong academic credential that carries global recognition and prestige. Implementation of the IB program would take into consideration not only the mission and capabilities of the school and faculty, but also the needs and wishes of potential and current consumers. Continued program delivery would be responsive to market changes, focusing on underlying consumer needs.

Building on the marketing era, the relationship era in industry responds to information about customer’ needs in an attempt to establish and maintain individual long-term relationships characterized by trust and commitment. The primary objective of this marketing approach is to create loyal repeat customers and advocates (Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie & Snow 2007, Kerin, Hartley, Berkowitz & Rudelius 2006, Kotler, Armstrong & Cunningham 2005, Sommers & Barnes 2001). This era is also characterized by a focus on internal marketing to raise productivity and staff morale, as well as conducting business is such a way as to contribute to a general improvement in society’s well-being (Boone, Kurtz, MacKenzie & Snow 2007, Kotler, Armstrong & Cunningham 2005).

A social-marketing team orientation by school administrators would build on the strategies of the marketing orientation. Customer responsiveness would be further enhanced, allowing for the possibility of highly customized educational programs. The
IB program may be one choice among many, and within the IB program structure, additional flexibility would be possible. Students would be provided with a multitude of choices, all tailored to create long-term, satisfied customers based on the provision of individual choice. As with the market orientation, adoption and delivery of the IB program would be sensitive to changes in the independent school market, responding quickly to customer needs.

The marketing mix adopted by a school leadership team will be largely dependent upon the extent of the transition between welfarist and new managerial philosophies, which is in turn determined by the educational environment of the school. A school with welfarist concerns is much more likely to demonstrate a marketing orientation that is predominantly product oriented. Concerned with the quality of the educational experience above all else, welfarist administrators will strive to ensure that the educational product is superior, and will subsequently rely on the quality of the program to speak for itself. Marketing efforts by welfarist administrative teams will likely be less consistent, with limited focus or strategic planning. In contrast, a new managerial administrative team is likely to focus more on a marketing and social-marketing approach to school promotion. Product marketing may still play a prominent role, but no longer is it to the exclusion of all other marketing strategies. For the new managerial administrator, product and marketing orientations are likely to be more evenly balanced, as the dual concerns of professionalism and business management are jointly represented in the approach to school leadership.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGIES

Outline

In order to develop an understanding of the existing shift relating to school marketing, this study explores administrative philosophies and approaches to marketing when adopting program-based changes. As a result, this study is predominantly qualitative in nature, in an attempt to explore administrator perceptions regarding this tension, and the resulting impact on programming and marketing decisions. In an attempt to determine the extent of this tension between welfarist and new managerial school leadership, a quantitative component is included, focusing more generally on the evolution of marketing approaches of Canadian independent school administrators nation-wide. Study outcomes include the establishment of a clear marketing continuum, from a welfarist approach focused on quality educational programs, to a new managerial approach characterized by a more business-oriented style of school leadership, focusing on both educational and organizational concerns. While a purely business-oriented approach is possible, representing the far end of the continuum, it was not observed in the schools included in this study.

Strategy of Inquiry

This study is a mixed method investigation, where both case studies and survey data provide important insights into the extent of the transition between a welfarist approach to independent school administration and a more new-managerial approach. A quantitative survey investigates the scope of this welfarist-new managerial tension and the shifts in marketing across Canadian independent schools more generally. It provides a broad perspective relating marketing trends, suggesting a continuum where the welfarist-new managerial balance correlates with the competitive arenas in which each school operate. Three cases provide an in-depth understanding of administrator tensions related to school marketing. I investigate three Canadian independent schools, all of which have adopted the IB diploma program within the last decade. The IB diploma program was chosen as a key attribute for case study schools as it provides an example of a significant program adoption. IB program selection and subsequent promotion allows schools to demonstrate a wide variety of marketing approaches,
where the administrative approach would likely be reflective of the school’s educational environment and the resulting positioning on the welfarism – new managerial – business continuum. I selected the three case study schools on the basis of the school’s conjectured orientation to this welfarist-new managerial tension as explained in the sample selection section below.

**Sample Selection**

*Survey*

With regards to the quantitative component of this study, the purpose of the survey was to acquire an understanding of the recent changes in Canadian independent school marketing, and how school administrators understand current school marketing practices. The impact marketing has on general school policies and practices was also explored. Following the creation of the survey, I contacted Jim Christopher, then the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) by phone and arranged for a meeting to explain the purpose of the study and attempt to secure organizational support. At this meeting, the Mr. Christopher expressed a shared belief regarding the need to examine independent school marketing and agreed to review the survey and consider providing support for its distribution. He subsequently agreed to distribute the survey to all CAIS member schools for completion by heads of schools, directors of marketing or any other appropriately designated school administrator. The resulting data was used by CAIS for benchmarking purposes as well as for this study.

*Case Studies*

Given that schools come to the IB diploma program from a variety of contexts, it seemed reasonable to study three schools; a number that is feasible from a practical standpoint, and yet allowing the different practices and philosophies of school marketing to be explored. Purposive sampling was used in order to select potential case study schools. I selected schools that had adopted the diploma program within the last ten years in order to maximize individual and institutional memory of the events leading up to the decision to adopt the program, as well as the events during, and immediately following, IB adoption and implementation. In order to explore the changes related to
school marketing, individuals needed be able to recollect as much as possible of the decision making process regarding program adoption and implementation.

At the time of sample selection, 20 Canadian independent schools offered the International Baccalaureate diploma program. From this pool, six schools were identified as having the desired characteristics for the case studies; recent IB adoption, a mix of geographically dispersed urban and rural locations across the country, co-ed and single-sex students, boarding and day programs, variation in the age of the school, and belonging to a range in the competitiveness of the school market. Early data collection through anecdotal conversations and survey data suggested that school age, the existence of boarding programs and the coed versus single-sex status of the school had little if any impact on marketing practices or administrative response to the welfarist-new managerial tension. In contrast, the biography of the school head and the school market were seen as the two key factors differentiating school placement along the welfarism – new managerial – business continuum. As a result, potential participant schools were selected primarily on the basis of geographic location, and hence the competitiveness of school market.

From these six schools, four Heads of Schools were contacted by phone during the 2007-2008 academic year in an attempt to secure school participation (See Appendix 1 for telephone protocol.). These four schools were selected as they represented distinct competitive market arenas as identified and developed through the survey investigation, and appeared to occupy significantly different positions on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum. The Heads of schools were given a Study Overview (See Appendix 2), which explained in detail the purpose of the study and the proposed methodologies and requirements for study participation. It also described potential benefits and challenges resulting from study participation.

Of these four schools, three Heads of Schools agreed to participate and thereby self-selected into the study. Key characteristics of these three schools are provided below.

**Long Island School:** A small rural day and boarding school, with a coed student population. The school runs from K-12, and offers only the IB diploma
program. Founded in the late nineteenth century, the school has successfully operated for well over one hundred years. Local competition is due exclusively to public schools as it is the only independent school in the region. As a result, the school experiences relatively mild competition and low marketing pressures. The school profile is suggestive of an approach consistent with a welfarist approach to school leadership and marketing.

**Mountain Heights Academy**: A large sub-urban day school, with a coed student population. The school runs from K-12, and offers the PYP along with the IB diploma program. Founded approximately 15 years ago, this school has enjoyed significant and continued growth since its inception. Local competition come from both public schools and other independent schools, however the number of independent schools in the market per capita is relatively low. As a result, the school experiences moderate competition but limited marketing pressures. The school profile is suggestive of an approach consistent with aspects of both welfarism and new managerialism in school leadership and marketing.

**Goodwin College**: A mid-sized urban day school, with a coed population. The school runs from K-12, and offers the PYP and MYP along with the IB diploma program. Founded in the mid twentieth century, the school has successfully operated for over forty years in a highly competitive school market. Local competition comes from both local public and independent schools, and the number of local schools of each type is very high. As a result, the school experiences intense competition and significant marketing pressures. The school profile is suggestive of an approach consistent with a more strongly new managerial approach to school leadership and marketing when compared to the other two case study schools.

In the individual case studies, the marketing-based factors motivating IB adoption at this time in the school's history will be explored as indicative of administrator
positioning and possible transition on the welfarist – new managerial - business continuum.

Marketing concerns were believed to vary considerably based on the location of the schools and hence the local competitive market. For this reason, each of the selected schools was drawn from a different region of the country, with both urban and rural regions represented. Factors responsible for the decision to adopt the IB program at this time were of central interest, along with any changes in the local competitive arena that may have motivated this adoption.

**Research Methods**

In an attempt to understand perceptions regarding the purposes of schooling, in particular the welfarist-new managerial tension and the ascendant role of marketing in school decision-making, official and informal leadership discourses and practices were examined.

**Survey**

In the quantitative section of this study, a survey (See Appendix 3) was used to obtain information from Canadian independent school administrators regarding marketing practices. The extent and nature of changing marketing practices in Canadian independent schools provide critical insight into the scope of the tensions relating to marketing and its implications for school administrators. The survey attempts to determine the nature of current marketing practices, including such aspects as marketing techniques, financial and human resources, and the impact of marketing on school change. The Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) agreed to sponsor the survey, and distributed it to all 80 member schools.

**Case Studies**

Over several school visits lasting approximately three days each, data were collected through interviews, informal discussions and observations for each of the case study schools in 2008. In each of the three case studies, 6-8 semi-structured interviews were conducted with IB coordinators, Heads of Schools (Head/Assistant Head), directors of marketing, communications and admissions, and other key administrative personnel, in order to obtain their particular perspectives regarding how the dynamics of
this tension evolving (See Appendix 4 for interview protocol.). These individuals were selected based on their ability to describe the decision-making regarding IB DP adoption, implementation and marketing, as well as the general administrative approach and attitude to school marketing and promotion.

During each school visit, I also carried out in-school observations, looking in particular for evidence of marketing-influenced decisions making. Where possible, I attended IB information sessions for parents and students, and engaged in informal discussions with parents, students and faculty regarding IB implementation and any related communications and promotion. This was done in an attempt to determine if and how the IB DP was marketed to prospective and current families. Finally I collected written materials for analysis. For each of the case study schools, I collected, where available, marketing/promotional materials, admission packages, IB authorization applications, annual reports, strategic plans, and CESI (Canadian Educational Standards Institute) accreditation documents. When possible, I also obtained access to school intranet sites and the newsletters, notices, presentations and documents available to the school community.

With each of these data collection techniques, I explored current practices and discourse relating to the purpose(s) of schooling as manifested through program adoption and marketing. If schools are located in a market with limited competition and/or school administrators are resistant to a business-oriented approach to education, decision-making may appear consistent with welfarism and revolve predominantly around pedagogical concerns. If, however, schools and educators are concerned with environmental scanning, a process according to Woods, Bagley & Glatter (1998) whereby schools determine, monitor and respond to the schools market, and use this information to make decisions regarding programming, then business and pedagogical perspectives may co-exist in a new managerial approach to school leadership.

**Ethical Considerations**

*Survey*

The Survey Request letter (See Appendix 5) sent to all CAIS school heads included mention of minimal risk and ensured the participating school of confidentiality.
Heads of School self-selected into the study by either completing the survey themselves, or forwarding the survey on to another senior administrator for completion. Collected data were retained and used by the CAIS according to their protocols. Data obtained for this study has been stored in a locked cabinet, and will be destroyed one year following the completion of the study. All schools were coded by number instead of school name to further safeguard the information provided by participating schools.

Case Studies

Participating Heads of School were asked to sign a consent form (See Appendix 6) following full disclosure of experimental procedures and objectives. The consent form included mention of minimal risk and ensured the participating school and individuals of confidentiality. Participating School Heads were made aware, however, that a guarantee of anonymity was not possible due to particular details about the school that may come out in the final report.

Transcriptions made from interview recordings were made available to participants with an opportunity for editing. The recording of participant interview and all other confidential documentation has been stored in a locked cabinet, and will be destroyed one year following the completion of the study. All recordings and transcriptions were coded by number instead of participant or school name to further safeguard the information provided by the research participants.

Names of individual participants and school names have been altered for the purposes of this study. Other information, such as specific location or other details that might readily identify the case study schools has been altered to impede school identification.

Data Collection

Survey

A survey with 14 restricted-response questions (See Appendix 3) was created and trialed with three marketing/admissions personnel at two CAIS schools and subsequently modified to address all feedback received. The questions were designed to obtain information related to the school's marketing program, administrative decision making, and the relationship between decision making and marketing concerns.
Following approval by Executive Director Jim Christopher, CAIS distributed the survey to all 82 CAIS schools via an email link to Survey Monkey, requesting their participation. This survey was accompanied by a Survey Request letter, indicating that survey results would be used in this study (See Appendix 5).

**Case Studies**

In collecting data for the case studies, IB coordinators, marketing, communications and admissions personnel, and other members of the senior administrative team were interviewed at each case study school, with an average duration of 60 minutes per interview. During this time, each participant was asked to engage in a dialogue, focusing on how s/he understands the purposes of schooling, with specific reference to school marketing. This semi-structured dialogue was led by me, following an established interview protocol (See Appendix 4). Each question in the protocol was asked in turn, allowing participants sufficient time to explore all relevant information.

Questions were open-ended to allow participants the opportunity to share their understanding of the welfarist-new managerial tension, and how it manifested itself in decision making regarding IB DP adoption, implementation and marketing. Additional impromptu question prompts were included as necessary, following the direction taken by each interview participant while ensuring that the discussion remained focused. All interviews were recorded for accuracy following participant permission, and subsequently transcribed, coded and analyzed thematically.

**Data Analysis**

The continuum between the welfarist, new managerial and business paradigms can be used effectively to explore current practices in Canadian independent school marketing. Through an analysis of administrative discourse and marketing approaches, schools can be positioned on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum that both influences and is influenced by a school’s educational environment.

**Survey**

The survey response rate among all CAIS schools was 40%; responding schools were grouped according to the size of the school market and the number of competitive
schools as general indicators of competitive pressures. Groups were analyzed to
determine trends in marketing strategies, changes in marketing, programming and
communication-related activities, and general marketing philosophies.

Some of the data (e.g. “Survey Item #6: Why did you believe these changes
would be attractive to parents and students? Please tick all that apply.”) was
categorical while some was continuous (e.g. From Survey Item #6, the relative reliance
on data collection techniques was assessed based on individual responses to this item).
Since a categorical analysis (chi square) considers frequency, exploring differences in
the categories chosen between groups, questions like Survey Item #6 that use the
frequency of participant response is best analyzed using chi square. In contrast,
ANOVA analyzes the mean differences between the groups. For those aspects of
analysis that consider how the different participants responded to the question as a
whole, rather than as a collection of separate categories, an ANOVA is the most
appropriate analytical tool. In these cases I am not considering a direct response made
by the survey participant, but rather my assessment of their overall changes on a
continuum. As a result, in certain data collection tables, both chi square and ANOVA
are used to explore different aspects of participant responses.

As with the case studies, the relationship between marketing, discourse and the
educational environment is explored. While the educational environment of each school
is unique, there exist certain similarities between schools on the basis of these key
school characteristics leading to the creation of a welfarist – new managerial – business
continuum. As a link to the wider Canadian independent school community, survey
data and the resulting continuum are used to suggest national trends in school
marketing.

Case Studies

Individual case studies were written based on a modification of the educational
environment framework described by Ball and Gewirtz (2000), where market politics
and key administrative biographies are identified as the key factors in a school's
educational environment. Examining both discourse and marketing practices as
mediated by the educational environment allows for a better understanding of current
Canadian independent school marketing practices.
In this study, the interrelationship between leadership discourse and marketing practices are explored in detail using three case study schools. In each case, existing marketing practices are analyzed as a function of the educational environment of the individual schools. Ultimately, this study explores the observed prevalence of welfarist and new managerial philosophies in differing educational environments in an attempt to identify important relevant correlations.

Themes or question areas from the interviews and developed through analysis are outlined below, following the research question and sub-questions identified.

**Action and Agency:**

Theme 1: **What are schools doing to gain a competitive advantage in their market?**

Research Question 1a: *What do administrators do to determine what is attractive to parents and students?*

Research Question 1b: *How do administrators interpret this information?*

This theme focuses on consumer scanning activities by school administrators seeking to obtain information regarding consumer perceptions and desires. In order to gain a competitive advantage in the local market, school administrators must anticipate and/or respond to the desires of parents and students. Knowledge of these desires may be attained through such activities as town halls, focus groups, or surveys. Finally, this theme explores how the information gained through consumer scanning activities is interpreted by school administrators.

Theme 2: **How does consumer scanning impact school programs and processes?**

Research Question 1c: *How does this interpretation impact the evaluation, selection and implementation of programs such as the IB diploma program?*
This theme focuses on how the interpretation of consumer desires affects the evaluation and implementation of school programs. According to Woods, Bagley & Glatter (1998), substantive change affecting school character and operational activities is a typical response to school choice and competition. Responding to consumer preferences, school administrators typically engage in change affecting such factors as curriculum, philosophy, students, facilities, organization, or a combination of these. School programs and processes are therefore changed in response to the market, in an attempt to make the school more attractive to potential consumers.

This is dependent upon the understanding school administrators have of their customers (see Themes 1 and 4) and the local school market (see Theme 3). If administrators believe that the IB diploma program is attractive to families, they may adopt and implement the program in such a way as to maximize its potential competitive advantage. Additionally, if school administrators accept that program adoption is both a pedagogical strategy and marketing tool, adoption and implementation of the IB diploma program will reflect their beliefs regarding parental preferences and values.

Specific details of interest include what the IB is perceived to represent to the various stakeholders (administrators, parents, students and teachers), why the IB is desirable and to whom, how the program is adopted, changes in programs and practices, the student population participating in the program, school dynamics, and what the IB program looks like in the local school context.

**Relationships:**

**Theme 3: Understanding of the school’s local competitive arena**

Research Question 2a: *How do administrators understand their school’s relationship with competitors?*

This theme focuses on the environmental scanning performed by school administrators. Following Woods, Bagley & Glatter (1998), the activities conducted to gain information regarding the local market will be explored, as well as the interpretation of this information and any proposed changes that follow. Specific details of interest include the identified competitive arena, the manner in which the school situates itself
(school niche), how school administrators define their parent/student populations, and the local school context.

Theme 4: **Understanding of the consumer-school relationship**
Research Question 2b: *How do administrators understand their school’s relationship with parents and students?*

This theme explores promotional responses by schools following market-induced change. Woods, Bagley & Glatter (1998) suggest that schools are reluctant to engage in more than subtle differentiation, fearing that they may appear to consumers to deviate from the leading models of good schooling. They found that policy and/or curricular innovations that privilege the academic without significantly impacting the focus of the school are most frequent in British schools.

It is likely that IB diploma program implementation represents a way for schools to establish a niche without demonstrating significant deviation from the norms of traditional schooling, and that it therefore represents a useful focus for promotional activities. The extent to which schools engage in consumer scanning and subsequently communicate their unique and desirable identity is important in this theme. Specific details of interest include the emphasis on brand positioning (vs. competitors) and brand personality (extrinsic and intrinsic value), and what schools are doing in terms of promotional activities.

Theme 5: **Relationships with external organizations**
Research Question 2c: *How do administrators understand their school’s relationships with other organizations such as the International Baccalaureate Organization?*

This theme explores other key relationships that school administrators are required to negotiate while pursuing a competitive advantage for their schools. Organizations of note include the IBO and the provincial ministry of education.
CHAPTER 4: SURVEY ANALYSIS

Introduction

The thirty-one schools providing survey data were grouped according to the local competitive market within which the school operates. The local competitive market appears to produce the greatest response consistency among group members, and is indicative of both the competitive and norm-seeking pressures that school administrators are facing.

The High Competition group consists of schools operating in population centers (cities and urban areas) that are geographically large relative to the Canadian context and have abundant independent schools in the local market. Competition for students is intense based on the large number of schools, despite the size of the market. Competition is further intensified due to the substantial cost charged by these schools; tuitions are approximately one-third of the average after-tax income in this market. As a result, High Competition schools are expected to demonstrate exclusively new managerial ideologies and practices with regards to school leadership and marketing.

The Moderate-to-High Competition group is comprised of schools located in a smaller market than that of High Competition schools, but with a higher ratio of independent schools to individuals. As a result, dividing the potential market equally among Moderate-to-High Competition schools leads to a smaller market share for each school than that observed in the High Competition group. Moderate-to-High Competition schools however also offer boarding, and this may offset some of the competitive pressure for the local market as recruitment includes international communities. The level of competition may also be partially offset by lower educational costs: independent school tuitions in the Moderate-to-High Competition group average slightly higher than one-quarter of after-tax income for this market. As a result, these schools are expected to demonstrate predominantly new managerial ideologies and practices with some aspects of welfarism with regards to school leadership and marketing.

Schools in the Moderate Competition group are located in large population centers; however the number of independent schools in the market is considerably
lower than for High Competition schools. The relative market share for Moderate Competition schools is over three times as large as Moderate-to-High Competition schools and roughly 1.5 times the size of that of High Competition schools. Educational costs are relatively low, slightly higher than one-quarter of after-tax market income, similar to that seen in Moderate-to-High Competition schools. As a result, Moderate Competition schools are expected to demonstrate an equal balance of new managerial and welfarist ideologies and practices with regards to school leadership and marketing.

Low Competition schools, like High Competition and Moderate Competition schools operate in population centers; however, the level of competition is lower than other groups due to a combination of a relatively large market size with a small number of independent schools. Educational costs are comparatively low at one-quarter of after tax market income. As a result, Low Competition schools are expected to demonstrate predominantly welfarist ideologies and practices with some aspects of new managerialism with regards to school leadership and marketing.

Schools belonging to the Minimal Competition group are located in rural areas or small population centers. These schools typically include boarding options for their students and have a wider target market than many of the other Canadian independent day schools. Local competition is often exclusively from public schools; in each case the school is the only independent school in the region. Educational costs vary due to boarding expenses, but typically costs are similar to Low Competition schools. As a result, Minimal Competition schools are expected to demonstrate exclusively welfarist ideologies and practices with regards to school leadership and marketing.

**Analysis of Survey Data**

**Marketing Expenses**

The large majority of Canadian independent schools show increasing marketing-related expenses. Of the 90% of schools indicating increased marketing expenses (28/31 schools), 54% claimed to have made substantial increases in their marketing budgets.
Table 2: Increases in Marketing Expenses\(^1\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools reporting increases in marketing expenses</th>
<th>High Competition (8 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</th>
<th>Low Competition (7 schools)</th>
<th>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</th>
<th>Statistical Significance ((\chi^2))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>87.5% (7)</td>
<td>75.0% (3)</td>
<td>88.9% (8)</td>
<td>100% (7)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>None (p&gt;0.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.0% (4)</td>
<td>75.0% (3)</td>
<td>33.3% (3)</td>
<td>28.6% (2)</td>
<td>60.0% (3)</td>
<td>None (p&gt;0.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When considering the relationship between changes in marketing expenses and school group, schools in Low and Minimal Competition markets all report increased marketing expenses, while in the Moderate Competition to High Competition groups it is only a majority of schools that report an increase. This increase relates only to the presence or absence of changing expenditures in the past five years; the actual dollar increase is unknown. It is likely, given the relatively small market size and lower competitiveness of Low and Minimal Competition markets, that the dollar value of the increase is less than that seen by High, Moderate-to-High, or Moderate Competition schools.

It is also possible that the time frame for increasing expenses varies depending on market. It may be that schools in smaller, less competitive markets (Low/Minimal Competition) have just begun to devote formal attention to marketing activities. This would explain the collective increase in expenses, even more so if norm-seeking behavior encouraged school administrators to follow the recent marketing behaviors seen in larger, more competitive markets. Since High, Moderate-to-High and Moderate

\(^1\) Survey item #3: In your estimation, how has the marketing and communications budget changed over the last 5 years? (□ increased substantially; □ increased slightly; □ no change; □ decreased slightly; □ decreased substantially)
Competition schools may have been focusing on marketing-related activities for a longer period of time, it is not surprising that some schools would be maintaining, rather than increasing, marketing expenses.

With regard to schools reporting substantial increases in marketing expenses, it is more difficult to identify a general trend. The Moderate-to-High and Minimal Competition groups stand out as having the majority of member schools reporting a significant increase in expenses. This increase may be due in part to the specific challenges currently facing Canadian boarding schools in terms of meeting boarding quotas. All of the schools in the Moderate-to-High Competition group and 80% of the schools in the Minimal Competition group offer boarding, while in the other groups the percentage of boarding or day/boarding schools is significantly less (12-57%).

What is clear from the reported percentages, is that, regardless of group, anywhere from one-quarter to three-quarters of schools are devoting significantly more resources to marketing endeavors now than in past years. Advertising, branding or rebranding, and the use of outsourced marketing companies is on the rise, and school administrators report that each of these activities are costly.

**Marketing Personnel**

Members of senior administrative teams tend to argue that all faculty have a responsibility to market the school through their interactions with students, parents, prospective students and parents, and the wider community. (See case studies for specific references.) Despite this generalized focus on school promotion, administrators in more competitive markets appear to believe that faculty-based marketing is not sufficient given the current school market (see case studies). Within in the last ten years Heads of schools have begun to hire marketing personnel whose sole objective is to ensure successful school promotion to current and potential stakeholders. Prior to this change, all marketing was typically done by the Admissions department, assisted by the Head and Deputy Head of school and other senior administrators (see case studies).

Looking at the average number of school personnel with an exclusively marketing focus, a clear trend can be seen across the five groups. This trend is statistically significant, with an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicating a direct
relationship between the number of personnel and the competitive market ((F4,28) = 36.63, p=0).

Table 3: Marketing Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition Level</th>
<th>Average number of personnel with a dedicated marketing focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Competition (8 schools)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Competition (7 schools)</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Significance (ANOVA)</td>
<td>F(4,28)=36.62, p=0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we move from Minimal to High Competition schools, the number of in-house marketing personnel shows a noticeable increase that cannot be explained solely on the basis of school size. Responding to the relative size of the market and number of local competitor schools, High Competition schools are now committing significant resources to school marketing. Five out of the eight schools in the High Competition group have Directors of Marketing or Marketing & Communication. Other High Competition schools have Marketing Communications Specialists and Communications and Public Relations staff.

In contrast, only 2 out of 9 Moderate Competition schools have Marketing Directors, while at Minimal Competition schools, all marketing-related functions are performed by Advancement, Admissions and IT personnel. It appears that whether through norm-seeking behavior or through a practical requirement for ensuring sufficient enrollment, High Competition school administrators are demonstrating behaviours consistent with a new managerial approach to school leadership. As market competitiveness decreases, the apparent alignment with a new managerial approach decreases to the Minimal Competition group, where there is little demonstrated commitment to formalized school marketing.

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2 Survey item #2: How many personnel do you have working in communications and marketing-related positions? Please list current job titles, and tick if the position was newly created within the last five years.
Marketing Strategies

This absence of in-house marketing suggests a lack of administrative focus on school promotion, more consistent with a welfarist approach to school leadership. This is not to suggest that administrators are not engaging in school marketing at some level. As we saw earlier, all schools have increased marketing-related expenses. Marketing strategies are changing almost universally; the large majority of schools in all school groups report a change. The nature of this change, however, appears to vary. The variation observed in the extent to which marketing efforts are diversified is statistically significant, with a Chi squared test ($\chi^2$) indicating a direct relationship between the extent of marketing diversification and the competitive market ($\chi^2(4) = 9.694$, $p<0.05$).

Table 4: Changes in Marketing Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools reporting changes in marketing strategies</th>
<th>High Competition (8 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</th>
<th>Low Competition (7 schools)</th>
<th>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</th>
<th>Statistical Significance ($\chi^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% (8)</td>
<td>100.0% (4)</td>
<td>88.9% (8)</td>
<td>100% (7)</td>
<td>100% (5)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>$\chi^2(4)=9.694$, $p&lt;0.05$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools reporting diversification of marketing strategies</td>
<td>75.0% (6)</td>
<td>100.0% (4)</td>
<td>44.4% (4)</td>
<td>100.0% (7)</td>
<td>40.0% (2)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools reporting increased research into consumer needs</td>
<td>50.0% (4)</td>
<td>50.0% (2)</td>
<td>33.3% (3)</td>
<td>42.9% (3)</td>
<td>20.0% (1)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools reporting increased market research</td>
<td>25.0% (2)</td>
<td>25.0% (1)</td>
<td>11.1% (1)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>0% (0)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diversification of marketing strategies is common among all school groups. Marketing diversification can involve the use of new techniques or venues within an existing market, or can refer to market expansion, targeting a previously untapped pool of consumers. Diversification typically occurs when there is a risk of market reduction, increased competition in a static market, or an absence of desired growth opportunities.

Given the lack of growth of the school-age population across Canada, most independent schools are experiencing intensified competition for a constant, or possibly decreasing, pool of students. Advertising techniques are changing, most noticeably in markets experiencing more intense competition. School branding is increasingly common in these markets, and yet the diversification that is taking place retains a strong degree of isomorphism among schools.

What is noteworthy from these results is that Low Competition schools report a very high level of diversification, creating a striking inconsistency with the Moderate or Minimal Competition groups. Moderate and Minimal Competition schools enjoy a relatively low level of competition for students; the niche markets they have created are sufficiently successful to allow them to maintain current marketing practices. Over half of the schools in the Low Competition group are located in regions where the population has fallen behind the national growth rate. It is possible that school administrators in this region are responding to predictions or statistics that indicate market reduction. This challenge to enrollment has not translated into increased marketing hires, but administrators appear to be trying new things to determine what might be most successful for student recruitment. This is consistent with the elevated level of research into consumer needs reported by Low Competition schools. More consistent with the markets of High and Moderate-to-High Competition schools, Low Competition school administrators are demonstrating an interest in researching consumer needs, perhaps in response to regional demographic changes leading to intensified enrollment pressures.

Momentarily ignoring the Low Competition group, the trend related to consumer needs research is not surprising. The competitive markets of High and Moderate-to-High schools result in heightened levels of consumer needs research, while Moderate and Minimal Competition schools, enjoying a less competitive market, demonstrate less
pressure to formally research the needs and desires of their consumers. General market research by schools also follows this trend. High and Moderate-to-High Competition schools, and to a smaller extent Moderate Competition schools demonstrate some interest in analyzing regional market trends in education. This is indicative of the level of competition facing these schools, and the perceived need to proactively meet market changes in both demographics and educational trends. To date, no market research has been undertaken by Low or Minimal Competition schools.

**Decision Making**

Market research can be extremely useful for school administrators as they attempt to ensure a competitive advantage for their school. The data provided by market studies gives administrators a detailed picture of their current market position, including an analysis of strengths, challenges and public perceptions. Administrators may also use this data to inform decision making at key points in the school’s evolution. For more frequent data to support decision making, many schools use simple surveys and other less formal techniques to gauge various aspects of their constituent groups.

The relationship between the use of demographic data in decision making and the competitive market is approaching statistical significance, with a Chi squared result of $\chi^2(4) = 6.634$, $p<0.157$). The strength of this relationship increases when the apparently anomalous Low Competition group is omitted from the test ($\chi^2(3) = 6.424$, $p<0.093$). (See subsequent discussion for a possible explanation of this anomaly.)
Historically, independent school administrators have made decisions based on anecdotal evidence obtained through informal conversations with stakeholders. Decisions are based, to varying degrees, on the intuition of experienced administrators. Intimate knowledge of a school and its stakeholders, along with a clear understanding of local competitors through a long association with them, have provided the basis for decision making in many independent schools.

In recent years, this reliance on anecdotal evidence and intuition has declined in certain markets for a number of reasons. Most notably, High Competition schools report a significantly reduced reliance on intuition in favor of data. Until relatively recently, the large majority of Canadian independent schools were led by long-standing

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4 Survey Item #6: Why did you believe these changes would be attractive to parents and students? Please tick all that apply. ( intuition based on experience; social / political trends; increased parental awareness of globalization and its impact; visits to other schools which had implemented the proposed change; visits to other schools which had rejected the proposed change; surveys of constituent groups; focus groups; qualitative information groups; demographic study; other - please specify)
teams of administrators who relied on their knowledge of the school and its market
developed over a large number of years. Intuition based on this knowledge was the
primary factor involved in administrative decision making. Administrators knew their
schools and they were confident in their abilities to make the best educational decisions
for their school community. This welfarist approach to decision making demonstrated
an exclusive focus on educational concerns, where school administrators were the
resident experts on education within the context of a particular school.

Over the last decade or two, administrative tenures in High Competition schools
have become shorter, and as a result administrators likely do not necessarily possess
the same depth of knowledge related to the local school environment. Furthermore, the
influence of the business world is unmistakable. Discussions of accountability,
transparency, core competencies and key performance indicators are common among
administrators as they hasten to support decisions with data. This shift to a new-
managerial approach to decision making is demonstrated by the percentages reported
above by High Competition school administrators. Approximately 60% of schools use
data regularly to inform their decision making. An even higher proportion (75%) of
schools report using surveys to collect information from their constituent groups, and
demographic studies are becoming increasingly common (62.5%).

Administrator reliance on intuition increases as market competition decreases
from Moderate-to-High through Minimal Competition. Roughly half of Moderate-to-High
Competition schools base their decision making on intuition, a proportion that increases
through Minimal Competition schools, where 80% rely on administrator intuition.
Traditional welfarist methods to support decision making remain more entrenched in
these markets. That is not to suggest that no data is collected or used; survey use
varies between 50 – 80% among these schools. More involved demographic studies
show less use, particularly in Moderate, Low and Minimal Competition schools where
fewer than 30% of schools report collecting demographic data.

The relative reliance on data in decision making is determined by the frequency
with which the various data collection techniques are employed by schools in the
various groups. Not surprisingly, this criterion demonstrates an inverse relationship to
the schools’ reliance on intuition. High Competition schools rely most heavily on data
collection in decision making, while the use of data is least prevalent in Minimal Competition schools. The exception to this general trend occurs in the Low Competition schools, where the relatively frequent use of data (46.4%) more closely mirrors that of schools in the more competitive groups. A similar relationship is seen in the extent to which decisions by Low Competition school administrators are based on intuition; the reported 42.9% of schools relying on intuition is within 5% of the High Competition schools, and is significantly less than that observed in any other school group.

As mentioned above, Low Competition school administrators may be facing particular challenges as a result of unfavorable demographic changes. This is the same group of schools that have demonstrated relatively high levels of market research, and it may be that these enrollment challenges and heightened awareness of the market may prompt administrators in the Low Competition group to be interested in, and attentive to, data.

**Marketing-Induced Changes**

Whether school administrators inform their decision making through data or anecdotal evidence and intuition, changes are implemented throughout the life of a school. These changes may have a purely educational agenda, and focus exclusively on the academic, co-curricular or social experience of students. Welfarist administrators make changes to address the sole goal of developing an unparalleled educational experience. With the influence of new managerial philosophies in certain school markets, change in these schools increasingly serves the needs of the organization while also addressing the student experience.

There is an apparent relationship between the total number of marketing-induced changes at a school and the competitive environment. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) between these two variables lacks statistical significance when all five market environments are considered. If, however, the Low Competition group is omitted from the analysis, the probability of a direct relationship approaches statistical significance (F(3,22)=2.44, p=0.092). (See subsequent discussion for an explanation of the Low Competition anomaly.)
Table 6: Marketing-Induced Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Competition (8 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</th>
<th>Low Competition (7 schools)</th>
<th>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</th>
<th>Statistical Significance ($\chi^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average number of program changes per school (e.g. adoption of IB or AP)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average increase in co-curricular programs offered</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of expansion or renovation projects of school facility</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average expansion of support faculty (e.g. counselors, ESL teachers)</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average total marketing-induced changes per school</td>
<td><strong>8.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.0</strong></td>
<td>F(4,28)=1.51, p=0.227; F(3,22)=2.44, p=0.092 (ANOVA)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Survey Item #5a: Which of the following changes have your school’s senior administrative team made in the last 5 years *in an attempt to make your school more attractive to current and prospective parents and students*? Please tick all that apply. (□ adopt a new academic program (e.g. IB, AP); □ introduce changes to the existing academic program; □ expand the athletic program (e.g. introduce a new sports program); □ expand the co-curricular/extra-curricular program; □ expand the arts program (music, art and drama); □ introduce new faculty positions (e.g. counselors, ESL teachers); □ improve professional development opportunities for faculty; □ alter the organizational structure of the school; □ expand the school facility (e.g. new gymnasium); □ renovate the school facility; □ alter the size of the student population; □ add grade levels; □ remove grade levels; □ diversify the student population (e.g. socioeconomic diversity, cultural diversity); □ partnerships with external organizations (business, charitable, etc.); □ other - please specify
Case study schools were asked to indicate school-based changes where marketing opportunities were a significant consideration in the decision making process. Many of the types of changes show no discernible pattern across the school groups. Schools in all groups adopted programs such as the IB or AP in an attempt to differentiate from competitors and/or strengthen the academic reputation of the school. Facility construction projects were also seen in all groups, where expansions or the renovation of existing older buildings were initiated in the hopes of improving the appeal of the school property.

In contrast, the average increase in the number of co-curricular programs offered by schools does suggest a clear trend. School administrators tend to agree that program changes ought to be determined exclusively by the senior leadership team with faculty input. When it comes to co-curriculars, administrators are much more likely to accommodate requests from students and parents for teams, clubs and other non-academic pursuits. In doing so, administrators can provide parents with an assurance that the school is responsive to their desires without allowing parents inappropriate control of academics.

The significantly higher increase in co-curriculars in High Competition schools in consistent with a highly competitive educational environment. Parental choice is fueled in part by the power parents wield by choosing one school over another. In order to attract families to a school in a competitive market, school administrators can make their schools more desirable by demonstrating a willingness and ability to accommodate the particular needs and wants of families in that market.

In contrast, Minimal Competition schools show an increase in co-curriculars that is roughly half of that seen in High Competition schools. Market pressures here may be sufficiently low that school administrators do not feel pressure to entice families with a particularly large or varied co-curricular program.

Another noteworthy trend is seen in the expansion of student services faculties, in particular school counselors, learning resource specialists, and ESL teachers. Schools in the more competitive markets have, on average, increased support personnel by twice as much as schools in the Minimal Competition group. Again this can be explained as a result of the competitive nature of these markets. Just as
diversification of marketing strategies typically occurs when there is a risk of market reduction or increased competition in a static market, diversification of the student population may be a solution to enrollment challenges. As Canadian independent schools re-examine the notion of ‘mission-appropriate’ students, many admissions departments are choosing to admit a higher proportion of students with learning challenges to maintain required enrollment numbers. Administrators must therefore ensure sufficient support for these students, and that typically results in a larger student services department. With the lower market pressures observed in Minimal Competition schools, it is possible that these admissions departments have had to alter their enrollment criteria to a lesser degree if at all and therefore fewer changes relating to student support are needed.

Looking overall at the number of marketing-induced changes occurring across responding schools, there is a discernible relationship between market competition and marketing-induced changes. Not surprisingly, increasing competition appears to increase the number of marketing-induced changes at a school. In an attempt to appear responsive to parent and student desires with regard to co-curriculars, and in order to provide all students with the necessary support for academic success, schools in competitive markets are reporting significant changes to programs and faculty positions. Low Competition schools represents the exception to this trend, however as previously discussed, changes in demographics are likely increasing market pressures in this region.

*The Marketing Mix: Marketing Orientations*

All Canadian independent school administrators must promote their schools to ensure sufficient enrollment numbers. In highly competitive markets, this task may become more daunting, but in any school, administrators need to decide how they will accomplish this requirement of school promotion. The four marketing orientations describe the varied approaches demonstrated by business organizations, and can be applied to the business of independent school administration. Unlike businesses, that have progressed through the four orientations in a similar manner to developmental stages, in schools these orientations co-exist. The relative emphasis on each orientation is developed based on the marketing activities of key competitors, the extent
to which differentiators have been established by the school, the history of the school and the biographies of its administrators, but most importantly it appears to be based on the demands of the local competitive market.

In a school setting, product oriented marketing focuses primarily on the promotion of academic programs and is of particular relevance for the welfarist administrator. Co-curricular programs may also be included as administrators describe the educational product that their school provides.

Selling oriented marketing in schools relies on more aggressive school advertising and sales techniques.

Market oriented promotion involves a willingness to tailor aspects of the educational experience to the individual consumer. This may include initiating new co-curricular pursuits at the request of a student or adapting aspects of the academic program to better suit student needs and/or interests.

Finally, relationship marketing focuses on the establishment and maintenance of a long-term connection with students and their families. It is based on the idea that a satisfied consumer will continue to give back to the school through financial donations, personal involvement and by providing a positive recommendation of the school to other families. Selling, market oriented and relationship approaches to marketing all demonstrate recognition of the importance of organizational needs, consistent with a new managerial approach to administration.
Table 7: Marketing Orientations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Oriented Marketing</th>
<th>High Competition (8 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</th>
<th>Low Competition (7 schools)</th>
<th>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</th>
<th>Statistical Significance (ANOVA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>42.7%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling Oriented Marketing</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Oriented Marketing</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Oriented Marketing</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>None p&gt;0.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent school marketing was traditionally relationship oriented; school administrators relied heavily on word-of-mouth marketing to ensure sufficient enrollment. This focus on relationship marketing remains across all school groups, where on average one-quarter of all marketing-related activities are devoted to maintaining strong ties with students and their families both during their time at the school and following their graduation.

With regard to market oriented marketing, the abundance of this approach appears to be consistently low across all groups, with the notable exception of an increase in High Competition schools. It seems reasonable that in reaction to more intense competition for students, school administrators in the High Competition group are more responsive to requests for more individualized programming. To a certain extent, this may have become a requirement of the local market; if competing schools

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6 Survey Item #4: Which of the following statements best characterize how you market your school? Please tick your top three. (☐we stress the delivery of quality programs; ☐we believe a good program will sell itself; ☐we work hard to convince parents and students about the advantages provided by our school; ☐we use powerful advertising campaigns to attract prospective families; ☐we rely on input from families to decide how we do things at the school; ☐we adopt a program because it satisfies the desires of our families; ☐we focus on establishing individual relationships with our families; ☐we customize our programs and services to meet individual needs; ☐other - please specify)
are offering personalized accommodations, then school administrators may feel pressure to conform to this developing industry norm.

Higher pressure sales techniques are relatively constant across the more competitive groups. A selling orientation is somewhat more prevalent in the Low Competition group, perhaps owing again to the demographic challenges and resulting increase in competition these school administrators are facing. Notably, Minimal Competition schools demonstrate low reliance on a selling orientation. It appears that competition is sufficiently low to relieve enrollment pressures and allow a more subtle approach to school promotion.

Finally, the level of product oriented marketing follows a similar pattern to market oriented promotion. In order for High Competition schools to emphasize their willingness to adapt their programs to the needs of the individual consumer, they need to downplay their commitment to any one educational option. Schools in the Moderate-to-high through Minimal Competition groups focus their marketing around the educational product students receive. Typically this product represents an academic curriculum that all students partake in, but may also include another type of specialized program. Administrators in High Competition schools therefore must strike a balance by promoting their programs while remaining sufficiently flexible to accommodate individual student needs. This would be reflected in a relatively low focus on product marketing coupled with a relatively higher focus on market orienting as seen in this group. In order to investigate this trend in more detail, schools that reported a de-emphasis on product marketing were identified.

Table 8: De-emphasized Product Marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Competition (8 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate-to-High Competition (4 schools)</th>
<th>Moderate Competition (9 schools)</th>
<th>Low Competition (7 schools)</th>
<th>Minimal Competition (5 schools)</th>
<th>Statistical Significance ($\chi^2$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools where product oriented marketing is de-emphasized</td>
<td>50.0% (4)</td>
<td>50.0% (2)</td>
<td>11.1% (1)</td>
<td>28.6% (2)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>$\chi^2(4)=6.634$, p=0.157; $\chi^2(3)=6.234$, p=0.101</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Schools that are considered to take a de-emphasized product oriented approach to marketing prioritize other marketing approaches. Interestingly, there was not a single Minimal Competition school where administrators did not identify a predominantly product-oriented approach to school marketing. This is consistent with a welfarist approach to school leadership, where low competition allows administrators to focus exclusively on the educational product provided to students. The general relationship between the competitive market and a reported de-emphasis on product-oriented marketing is approaching statistical significance. This relationship is strengthened with the omission of the Low Competition group of schools where a Chi-squared test produces a result of $\chi^2(3)=6.234$, $p=0.101$.

In more competitive markets, an exclusive focus on programming becomes less feasible and a new managerial approach, recognizing organizational needs, becomes increasingly important. Increased competition in the Low Competition market is reflected in a shift away from product marketing, and as a result product marketing among Low Competition schools is presently less prevalent than Moderate Competition schools. Not surprisingly, those schools in the most competitive markets demonstrate the least reliance on product oriented marketing. In each group, half of the responding schools exhibit a marketing philosophy more closely aligned with relationship and market oriented marketing, suggesting that the promotion of an excellent educational product is less critical than demonstrating responsiveness and loyalty to the consumer. This approach is strongly new managerial, and is likely a consequence of increasingly competitive educational markets.

**Survey Conclusions**

As seen in the analysis above, survey data appears to support the existence of five distinct approaches to school marketing among Canadian independent schools. Illustrated in the following figure, the different competitive groups demonstrate a range of approaches between welfarism and new managerialism in a variety of leadership and administrative functions (See Figure 2).
Figure 2: Positions of competitive groups on the welfarist – new managerial – business continuum
High Competition

High Competition schools consistently demonstrate a new managerial approach to school leadership and marketing. Programming at these schools reflects both the needs of students and their families, and the needs of the organization. Administrators at each High Competition school report recent changes in the academic program, and at some schools this change represent a major shift in curriculum, curriculum delivery, and/or assessment through the adoption of an externally accredited program. Adoption of a program such as the IB demonstrates a commitment to providing a rigorous academic program; however, due to the international recognition the IB credential provides, program adoption also provides administrators with a powerful marketing tool. In addition to changes to the academic program, High Competition administrators have also increased the number and variety of co-curricular offerings and the number of support faculty (counselors, special needs teachers, etc.). The frequency of these changes, addressing both student and organizational needs, is strongly suggestive of a new managerial approach to school leadership.

Administrative decision making related to the above changes is largely informed by data in High Competition schools. Administrators in this group have come to rely on data when making decisions. Furthermore, business influences, emphasizing accountability, transparency and key performance indicators, have necessitated systematic data collection and analysis. Decisions based on intuition and anecdotal evidence now accounts for less than half of all administrative decision making and are typically those decisions that have minimal impact on organizational policy or practices. This reliance on data and concern with quality assessment is entirely consistent with new managerialism.

All administrators at High Competition schools report changes in marketing strategy. Marketing has diversified for most schools in this group, reflecting intensified market competition due to the large number of schools, despite the large size of the market. Administrators are exploring new advertising opportunities, including print media, radio, street banners and bus shelters. More than a third of schools in this group are conducting consumer research and/or research on market trends in an attempt to gain a competitive advantage through data-based consumer scanning. Marketing
expenses have increased at the large majority of school, and all schools have at least one staff position dedicated to marketing.

The marketing mix reported by High Competition school administrators balances product, relationship and selling orientations. Roughly half of schools deemphasize a product orientation, focusing instead on establishing and maintaining relationships with customers, and actively selling the educational opportunity they provide. This does not suggest that the educational product is inferior or of little concern to administrators; rather it balances a focus on educational quality with a focus on organizational needs. This focus on school promotion reflects a new managerial approach, where the quality of education and the organizational health of the school are equally important objectives for administrators. This balancing of organizational and student needs is further emphasized in the highest levels of market orientation seen. In demonstrating a willingness to accommodate individual needs over strict adherence to an academic program, school administrators again effectively balance student and school needs. Improved consumer satisfaction through individualized programming results in greater customer loyalty, and in a market that relies on word-of-mouth marketing, strongly loyal customers increases retention and enrollment.

**Moderate-to-High Competition**

Relative to the High Competition group, High Competition school administrators demonstrate a less committed, but still clearly new managerial approach to school leadership and marketing. Program changes are similar in nature and frequency to those implemented in High Competition schools. Administrators in Moderate-to-High Competition schools have introduced significant changes to the academic program. Adoption of internationally recognized programs such as the IB (or AP) program is particularly important for Moderate-to-High Competition schools, many of which are boarding schools. The Moderate-to-High Competition market includes a significant international component, and students who attend these schools often return to the United States or further abroad to complete post-secondary degrees. IB adoption allows these schools to facilitate post-secondary applications and as a result increases their marketability. While not quite as extensive as that seen at High Competition
schools, Moderate-to-High Competition school administrators have increased the number of co-curricular offerings and the number of support faculty at their schools. Again these increases are attractive to consumers while at the same time increasing the quality of educational experience, reflective of a new managerial approach to school leadership.

Data again plays a significant role in administrative decision making leading to school-based changes. At Moderate-to-High Competition schools, the use of data is equally balanced by the use of anecdotal evidence or administrator intuition. With a lower reliance on data collection and analysis, Moderate-to-High Competition school administrators demonstrate a somewhat weaker reliance on new managerial techniques.

All administrators in the Moderate-to-High Competition group report changes to their marketing strategies, including the strategy diversification seen at all schools in response to high levels of competition. Due in part to a small local market, the ratio of independent schools to individuals is high for Moderate-to-High Competition schools. The prevalence of boarding among Moderate-to-High Competition schools may offset some of the competitive pressure for the local market; however competition for students remains high. Increased advertising focuses on the international boarding market, and administrators are demonstrating increased reliance on consumer research and the study of market trends. Marketing expenses have increased at three-quarters of Moderate-to-High Competition schools, with all of these schools reporting substantial increases. Despite the observed level of competition and resulting focus on advertising and marketing diversification, administrator commitment to sustained marketing is somewhat limited. On average, Moderate-to-High Competition schools have 0.5 full time employees with a dedicated marketing job description. This suggests that schools either have part time marketing personnel, or that marketing functions are combined with other roles such as admissions or advancement. This lack of specialization might result in lower marketing efficiencies, and again demonstrates a lower commitment (relative to High Competition schools) to the new managerial approach to school leadership.
The marketing mix reported by Moderate-to-High Competition school administrators prioritizes a product approach, followed by an approximate balance of relationship and sales oriented marketing. This favoring of product marketing at the expense of relationship and sales marketing is again suggestive of a lessor commitment to a new managerial approach relative to High Competition schools. Those schools de-emphasizing a product orientation are equally abundant, but a market orientation is rarer than that seen among High Competition schools. This hesitance to personalize educational experience suggests that administrators in the Moderate-to-High Competition group maintain ties to a more welfarist approach to school marketing. Considering all of these indicators, Moderate-to-High Competition school administrators remain predominantly new managerial in their approach, but they appear less committed to new managerialism that their High Competition school colleagues.

**Moderate Competition**

Administrators at schools in the Moderate Competition group demonstrate a mix of new managerial and welfarist approaches to school leadership. The Moderate Competition market reflects a significantly lower level of competition than High and Moderate-to-High Competition markets, and as a result of lower competitive pressures, administrators appear not to be required to focus on business concerns to the same extent. Moderate Competition schools have experienced fewer programming changes in recent years. Co-curricular offerings and the number of support personnel have increased in these schools, but the total number of marketing-induced changes among Moderate Competition schools relative to the High or Moderate-to-High Competition groups is lower. It is possible that some of these changes have been introduced as a result of norm-seeking behaviour rather than organizational or educational need. Since these changes have had minimal impact on marketing strategies, it seems likely that they reflect a predominant focus on educational experience and therefore are consistent with a welfarist approach to school leadership. Certain changes (e.g. IB adoption) have been used in marketing activities, and therefore position Moderate Competition schools somewhere between new managerial and welfarist continuum locations.
Decision making at Moderate Competition schools remains predominantly based on intuition and anecdotal evidence. The use of data is increasing, but does not equal the reliance on administrator expertise and opinion. It may be that the relative lack of competitive pressure has allowed Moderate Competition school administrators to continue to rely on intuition. It is also possible that the consumer environment is less demanding of a business-oriented approach than the High Competition environment, or that administrator tenure is longer at these schools, leading to more practiced consumer scanning. Whatever the reason, the limited reliance on data collection is suggestive of a more welfarist approach to decision making.

Despite the reliance on intuitive decision making, Moderate Competition school administrators are changing their marketing strategies. It is a minority of schools that demonstrate increased diversification of marketing, reflective of the relatively low levels of competition experienced by these schools. Again consistent with lower competitive pressures, consumer research or an investigation of market trends is seen in less than one quarter of schools. Administrators report increased marketing expenses as a result of these changes, but only one-third of schools have seen substantial increases. Less than one-third of schools have dedicated marketing personnel, due in large part to the lack of competition for students. The relative market share for Moderate Competition schools is larger than that of either High or Moderate-to-High Competition schools, and successful niche specialization have contributed to the persistence of a largely welfarist approach to school promotion.

The marketing mix reported by administrators at Moderate Competition schools is strongly product oriented, with a relative balance between relationship and sales orientations. Very few schools in this group deemphasize their educational product. Since strong product marketing is consistent with a welfarist approach to school promotion, this mix again reflects predominant welfarism by school administrators. Considering all of these indicators, Moderate Competition schools are located mid-way between welfarism and new managerialism on the continuum.
Low Competition

Low Competition schools represent an interesting mix of new managerial and welfarist approaches. Program changes at Low Competition schools are relatively low. Few new academic programs have been introduced, and the number of co-curriculars added in recent years is below the national school average. Increases in support faculty are lower than that observed in High, Moderate-to-High, or Moderate Competition schools, reflecting either a lower need for these services or reduced sensitivity to the need to attract students and their families. The latter would reflect a welfarist approach to programming, where administrators are not driven by competitive pressures to attract customers through program offerings.

Despite this seemingly welfarist approach to programming, the extent to which administrators use data to inform decision making is suggestive of a more competitive market than that observed. School administrators report that data support almost half of their decision making, while anecdotal evidence and intuition support the other half. This division closely matches that seen in Moderate-to-High Competition schools, where administrators demonstrate a new managerial response to higher competitive pressures.

All Low Competition school administrators report changes to their marketing strategies, and in each case strategy diversification forms part of the recent change. This frequency of diversification most closely aligns with that seen in High Competition schools and is indicative of significant competitive pressures. Since the expected level of competition in this group is low due to a combination of a large market size with a small number of independent schools, the reported level of diversification appears misaligned. If competitive pressures are increasing despite demographic-based predictions, market research would help decision making for a new managerial administrator. What has been observed is a low level of consumer research or investigation into market trends, a response that is more consistent with a welfarist focus on pedagogy than a new managerial concern for organizational fitness. A similar conclusion can be drawn from the fact that while administrators report increasing marketing expenses, only one quarter of schools found this increase significant. Furthermore, fewer than one third of schools have dedicated marketing personnel. Both
observations suggest that if competitive pressures are increasing, school administrators are not responding with a view to organizational well-being; rather they appear to be carrying on much as they have been, focusing on predominantly welfarist concerns. This reluctance to adopt a new managerial approach to school leadership despite potential or perceived changes in the school’s competitive market, suggests that a welfarist orientation is more firmly entrenched in administrators at Low Competition schools than that seen in the Moderate Competition group.

One last point of note from Low Competition schools is the reported marketing mix. A product orientation is most significant for school administrators, consistent with a welfarist approach to educational leadership. Interestingly, the reported reliance on a sales orientation to marketing exceeds even that reported by administrators at schools in the High Competition group. This sales marketing is consistent with the observed diversification of marketing, and may reflect changes in administrator marketing rhetoric that may or may not precede meaningful changes in marketing strategy. As seen with the low frequency of program changes, the near-absence of a market orientation suggests that competitive pressures may not be high enough to shift administrator focus away from pedagogy, or that administrators are resistant to a new managerial approach to school leadership. As a result, Low Competition school administrators remain predominantly welfarist.

The inconsistencies observed in Low Competition schools may suggest that this competitive group is a temporal artifact resulting from specific changes in the local market. Despite the differences in the reported level of diversification of marketing and reliance on data in decision making, the Low Competition group resembles the Minimal Competition group in its predominantly welfarist approach to school leadership. As a result, it is possible that the Low and Minimal Competition groups are not distinct and that the spectrum of competitive behaviors seen in Canadian Independent schools should be limited to four main groups. Since this study lacks a longitudinal component, the legitimacy of the fifth group cannot be tested; therefore following the data collected in this study, the fifth group will be included for all subsequent analysis.
Minimal Competition

While Moderate and Low Competition school administrators demonstrate elements of new managerialism in their leadership approach, Minimal Competition school administrators maintain a strongly welfarist orientation. While schools report changes to their academic program, co-curricular program and support faculty number, these changes are at the lowest levels seen across all school groups. A welfarist approach to school leadership would result in periodic changes to school programs. Changes would be based on demonstrated pedagogical merit, and as a result likely would be relatively few in number. In contrast, new managerial leadership institutes change based on both pedagogical merit and the resulting competitive advantage the change may create. The relatively low levels of program changes observed in Minimal Competition schools suggest that these changes are selected based solely on their effect on the educational product provided to students. This is consistent with a welfarist approach to administrative decision making.

Administrators in Minimal Competition schools also report the lowest level of reliance on data collection and analysis to inform decision making. Only one third of leadership decisions were based on objective data; in contrast the degree to which intuition and anecdotal evidence was used to support decision making was unparalleled across the groups. Again, this low level of reliance on data suggests persistent welfarism among Minimal Competition schools.

Interestingly, all Minimal Competition school administrators reported that they were changing marketing strategies, with slightly less than half of the case study schools diversifying their strategies. All schools have increased their marketing expenses, with many indicating significant increases. These aspects demonstrate greater consistency with a new managerial approach; however some additional information may minimize the significance of this indicator. Changes in marketing strategies may be due to norm seeking behaviors; school administrators in this group are well aware of the increasing new managerial approach of other Canadian independent schools. Despite shifting marketing strategies, administrators in Minimal Competition schools have rarely engaged in market or consumer research, suggesting that changes are based on more on intuition or norm seeking rather than supported
market needs or desires. Furthermore, the reported increases in marketing expenses may be less significant due to the dearth of past marketing endeavors. None of these schools have personnel with a dedicated marketing function, again reflecting focus on educational rather than organizational concerns due in large part to the absence of significant market competition. Each of these aspects of school leadership aligns with a welfarist approach that focuses on pedagogy. This administrative display of strong welfarism is reinforced in the reported marketing mix. Largely product and relationship oriented, the administrative marketing mix appears to reject a sales orientation that forms part of a new managerial approach. As a result, decision making in Minimal Competition schools is strongly welfarist.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Minimal Competition</strong></th>
<th><strong>Low Competition</strong></th>
<th><strong>Moderate Competition</strong></th>
<th><strong>Moderate-to-High Competition</strong></th>
<th><strong>High Competition</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic program</strong></td>
<td>Few program changes.</td>
<td>Few program changes.</td>
<td>Occasional changes, many minor in nature.</td>
<td>Major shifts in curriculum, curriculum delivery and/or assessment.</td>
<td>Major shifts in curriculum, curriculum delivery and/or assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Abundance of</td>
<td>Minimal increase in</td>
<td>Minimal increase in</td>
<td>Some increase in number.</td>
<td>Some increase in the number and variety.</td>
<td>Increased number and variety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>co-curricular programs</td>
<td>number.</td>
<td>number.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Abundance of</td>
<td>Minimal increase in</td>
<td>Minimal increase in</td>
<td>Slight increase in number.</td>
<td>Some increase in the number of counsellors and special needs teachers.</td>
<td>Increased number of counsellors and special needs teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>support faculty</td>
<td>number.</td>
<td>number.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Use of data in</td>
<td>Lowest level (&lt;1/3 of</td>
<td>Data supports almost half of administrative decision making.</td>
<td>Increasing, but is less important than administrator expertise and opinion.</td>
<td>Some reliance on data collection and analysis, but it is equally balanced with the use of anecdotal evidence / intuition</td>
<td>Decision making informed by data collection. Emphasis on accountability, transparency and KPI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision making</td>
<td>of decisions) of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reliance on data with no evidence of increase.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Use of intuition or</td>
<td>Extensive reliance on</td>
<td>Extensive reliance</td>
<td>Extensive reliance on</td>
<td>Extensive reliance on intuition/anecdote. Used by less than half of schools.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anecdotal evidence in</td>
<td>intuition and</td>
<td>on intuition and</td>
<td>on intuition and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision making</td>
<td>anecdotal evidence.</td>
<td>anecdotal evidence.</td>
<td>anecdotal evidence.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of consumer research</td>
<td>Administrators have rarely engaged in market or consumer research.</td>
<td>Low levels of consumer research or investigation into market trends.</td>
<td>Observed in fewer than one-quarter of schools.</td>
<td>Increased reliance on consumer research and research on market trends.</td>
<td>Data-based consumer scanning through research on market trends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of marketing orientation</td>
<td>Essentially absent.</td>
<td>Essentially absent.</td>
<td>Minimal evidence of a marketing orientation.</td>
<td>Slight marketing orientation, but relatively rare.</td>
<td>Able to provide flexibility in program delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Managerialism vs. Welfarism</td>
<td>Strongly welfarist, with a product orientation.</td>
<td>Predominantly welfarist with occasional new managerial characteristics.</td>
<td>Balance of new managerial and welfarist approaches.</td>
<td>New managerial; some prioritizing of consumer needs over organizational.</td>
<td>New managerial; balancing of consumer and organizational needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDY ANALYSIS

Case Study Schools and the Continuum

*Long Island School – Minimal Competition*

As previously discussed, Long Island School is a small rural day and boarding school. Local competition is exclusively from public schools as it is the only independent school in the region. As a result, the school experiences relatively mild competition and low marketing pressures.

Programming changes at Long Island School in recent years have been relatively few in number. School administrators adopted the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program several years ago. The IB program was a complete package that would provide students with an exceptional educational experience, and as a result fit the school's needs. IB adoption also provides an internationally credential that administrators could exploit in their school marketing, but to date, very little has been done to use the IB program as a marketing tool. Another important program adoption has been the creation of a hockey program. Like the IB program, the hockey provides administrators with a potentially powerful marketing tool. Since recruitment is an aspect of program administration, school leaders engage in some active program marketing, but it is understated and tends to allow the program to speak for itself. The natures of IB, the hockey excellence program and co-curricular adoptions have been strongly welfarist in nature. Despite significant marketing potential, administrators appear to have adopted these programs to support and enrich student educational opportunities and have done little to integrate these new opportunities into a marketing plan.

The absence of direct competition may allow Long Island School administrators to maintain a strongly welfarist approach to school leadership. Little advertising or marketing is done beyond that targeting current school families and alumni. The administrative team does not include a position focusing exclusively on school marketing and promotion. Any school promotion that currently exists is the joint responsibility of the Communications Coordinator (website management), the Alumni and Development Coordinator, and the Director of Admissions. As a result of the near-
exclusive focus on the student educational experience, Long Island School falls firmly within the **Minimal Competition** marketing approach.

*Mountain Heights Academy – Moderate Competition*

Mountain Heights Academy is a large sub-urban day school that has enjoyed significant and continued growth since its inception. Local competition come from both public schools and other independent schools, however the number of independent schools in the market per capita is relatively low. As a result, the school experiences moderate competition but limited marketing pressures. Mountain Heights Academy administrators adopted the IB program at the same time that the secondary school was created. Administrators were looking for an academic program that could be used to establish their academic reputation quickly, while at the same time creating a clear niche for the senior school. These organizationally-focused goals suggest a new managerial approach, but after the strategic implementation of the program, subsequent marketing has been essentially non-existent. School administrators have allowed the program to speak for itself, and promotional activities have been few in number.

Demographic data were used extensively in the tactical decision to adopt the IB program, and although administrator reliance on data has decreased somewhat, it is still important for strategic planning and related decision making. The collection and analysis of data is periodic, however, and is not used on an ongoing basis. This is likely due in large part to the lack of personnel exclusively responsible for school marketing and promotion. Perhaps because the school is young, there is not yet a position related to Alumni development, and as a result, all communications and promotions functions fall to either the part-time Director of Admissions or the Head of School. This lack of development of a position of responsibility related to marketing is strongly suggestive of a welfarist approach to school leadership. Competition is sufficiently low to allow administrators to focus on educational concerns; however, the strategic planning demonstrates a clear recognition of the necessity for a new managerial approach from time to time. Mountain Heights Academy shows a greater balance between welfarism and new managerialism than Long Island School, but in particular with regard to day to day operations, reveals a preference for a welfarist approach. As a result, Mountain Heights Academy falls within the **Moderate Competition** marketing approach,
demonstrating aspects of both marketing approaches depending upon the indicator chosen.

*Goodwin College – High Competition*

Goodwin College is a mid-sized urban day school, located in a highly competitive school market. As a result, the school experiences intense competition and significant marketing pressures. Like their colleagues at Mountain Heights Academy, administrators at Goodwin College adopted the IB program with strategic intent. Once administrators had satisfied themselves as to the academic excellence of the program, they considered the competitive advantage that IB would allow them in their current market. Goodwin College created a senior school in an independent market that was experiencing high levels of competition from prestigious, well established schools. At the time of implementation, Goodwin College would be the only co-educational IB diploma school in the region, and as a result the IB program would provide a specialized niche for the developing senior school. Following implementation, school administrators continue to consider the program as an important marketing tool. All marketing and promotional materials include reference to the program, and it is used both to differentiate from competitors and to testify to the rigorous university-preparatory program offered by the school. As a result, both implementation decision making and subsequent marketing demonstrate a new managerial approach to school leadership and promotion.

School administrators at Goodwin College are increasingly relying on data collection and analysis to inform decision making. Anecdotal understandings of parent needs and wants are no longer seen as sufficient, and there has been a large push in recent years to collect data in a more systematic and comprehensive manner. This data collection extends to more formal market and consumer research with respect to the school’s competitive market. Changing marketing strategies and increasing expenses relating to marketing demonstrate that significant resources are being directed to the school’s organizational needs in response to intense competition. All of these indicators suggest a strongly new managerial approach to school marketing. As a result, Goodwin College is a good example of the marketing approach of *High Competition* schools.
Case 1 – Long Island School:

Persistent Welfarism

Market position of the school

Long Island School is the only independent school in its region. As a result, it enjoys a de facto competitive advantage relative to many other independent schools nationwide. Approximately half of the small student population (grades 6-12) is composed of boarding students drawn from Canada, the United States and a variety of countries worldwide, while the remaining day students come from the local community.

Long Island School competes locally with public schools, with its main challenge to convince prospective families of the advantage of independent school education over public education. Historically the community has looked to Long Island School as a school for students with particular educational or social challenges, and administrators claim there remains a fundamental lack of understanding about independent schools and their advantages. Baseline knowledge about independent schools in Long Island School’s catchment area has been low and there remain many misperceptions about the school in the local community, although it is starting to be recognized that it is not a school for “problem kids” (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). Administrators claim they are working to dispel the “1980’s image” of the school as a place where troubled kids are sent by means of “a few press releases and some community service activities” (Communications Coordinator, Long Island School); however efforts in this regard appear minimal.

No formal data collection has been done to capture the public’s current understanding of the school or its students. As a result, there remains the anecdotal belief that many people in the community don’t recognize the school’s purpose or the advantages of an independent school education and incorrectly believe that tuition at an independent school is prohibitive for all but the wealthiest families (Head of School, Long Island School). If true, this regional belief that independent schooling is for the elitist child demonstrates that school administrators “still haven’t penetrated the market” (Head of School, Long Island School). Despite administrators’ claims that local perception regarding independent school education prevents them from capitalizing on
their unique market niche, day school enrollment has increased steadily (Head of School, Long Island School). As local parents and students choose to enroll at Long Island School, whether due to the particular attributes of the school or the more general advantages of an independent school education, the fact that Long Island School is the only independent school in the region provides it with an unquestionable advantage with regard to market competition.

As a boarding school, Long Island School also competes with schools in neighboring provinces, American States and, to a small extent, schools in other countries. East Asian countries such as Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan are well represented in the boarding population, as are Mexico and Germany. Like other Canadian boarding schools, Long Island School has experienced a decline in its boarding population in recent years, and is working to regain a full boarding complement. Over the past decade, school enrollment has increased by approximately 40%, but an examination of annual enrollment shows that student numbers have fallen 4-5% per year from 2006. Administrators attribute this decline to a drop in international student applications, due in part to a stronger Canadian dollar (Head of School, Long Island School). At the same time, domestic boarders have risen 60%, partially offsetting the loss of international fees, and again suggesting that while certain aspects of enrollment are currently challenging, the resulting financial concerns are not crippling for the school, or long term. The school reported losses in the 2005-2006, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 academic years, averaging approximately $280K per year. In 2009-2010 and in subsequent years, administrators expected to break even or show a small surplus despite continued reductions in international borders, due in large part to increasing domestic enrolment. These projections demonstrate the confidence school administrators have in their ability to successfully compete in the local and national school markets.

In recent years, administrators at Long Island School have worked to solidify a market niche beyond their independent school status. The school has become a member of the Round Square and Outward Bound programs, has established a Program of Excellence for elite hockey players, and has adopted the International Baccalaureate diploma program. While each of the programs has obvious benefits for
students, their adoption also serves to further differentiate Long Island School from other public and independent schools.

As a result of the economic and demographic changes that have been occurring in Canada during the past few years including financial instability and a reduction in the school-age population, the large majority of Canadian independent schools have had to face reduced enrollment and the financial difficulties that inevitably follow. Like many others, Long Island School administrators have reported declining total enrollment and annual deficits. Given Long Island School’s unique niche in the local and national education market however, administrators have been able to address these issues with relative ease; changes in their marketing strategies, in particular a more aggressive approach to recruitment by the admissions team, have boosted national enrollment and allowed administrators to project healthy enrollment and financial gains by the 2009-2010 school year.

It can therefore be concluded that Long Island School’s market position, like all schools in the Minimal Competition group, is relatively secure, characterized by an increasingly well-established niche in the local and national education market. National enrollment is increasing, and competition from local public and national independent schools is minimal. International enrollment presents more of a challenge, but potential fiscal losses are offset by improved national student recruitment. Given the economic climate facing all independent schools, Long Island School enjoys relative financial security due to increasing enrollment and effective fiscal management. Market pressures as experienced by Long Island School administrators are therefore relatively insignificant.

Professional biographies of school administrators

The current Head of School has had an important and sustained influence on the development of the school, having held this position for close to 25 years. Formerly a teacher, the Head of School brings an unquestionably academic perspective to the leadership of Long Island School. Having received administrative socialization within a teaching context, the Head of School strongly believes in the primacy of student learning and teaching, and a concern for academic standards and social goals in all
aspects of administrative leadership and management. For example, when discussing the recent adoption of the IB diploma program, the Head of School avowed that program adoption
demonstrates our interest and willingness to have the highest standards of education in the world. [Our] graduates are all going to have to compete on the world stage and preparing them to have the confidence, the courage and the strength to do this is an essential part of [their] education. (Head of School, Long Island School).

According to the Head of School, IB adoption, as with all other program, facilities and policy changes, was pursued based on its contribution to student academic achievement, personal development and quality of life on campus.

IB adoption satisfied the Head of School’s primary goal of providing quality educational opportunities for students, including universal recognition and professional development for teachers. Teacher buy-in effectively ratified the adoption decision, and for Long Island School, the final decision to implement the IB DP came after a year of administrator and faculty investigation and inquiry. It would be interesting to consider what would happen if the decision of the Head of School differed from that of faculty. It seems unlikely that faculty buy-in alone would be sufficient for program adoption, if support from the Head of School was lacking. In contrast, if staff did not demonstrate buy-in despite support from the Head of School it seems likely that implementation would not be forced. This suggests a leadership style based on a commitment to a collaborative, student-centered pedagogic culture, founded on the Head of School’s administrative socialization from a teaching perspective.

The professional biographies of administrative team members with academic responsibilities all reflect teaching careers. Like the Head of School, they believe teaching and learning to be of utmost importance in decision making, almost to the exclusion of other, more pragmatic concerns. The key importance of pedagogical concerns for school administrators in decision making is reflected in recent changes in the makeup of the administrative team. Prior to 2005, no one on the administrative team had primary responsibility for marketing initiatives; what marketing had gone on had been under the purview of the Director of Admissions. As with other members of the administrative team, the Director of Admissions had a teaching background, with no
specific knowledge or expertise in marketing. In 2005/2006, two new positions were created: a Communications Coordinator, and a Development & Alumni Coordinator, jointly responsible for all activities related to marketing, advertising, website development and maintenance, advancement and fundraising, and alumni affairs. Prior to these hires, the school had one individual responsible for alumni affairs, including publication of the school magazine three times a year. The professional backgrounds of the individuals hired to fill these two new positions were neither in teaching nor marketing/advancement; the Communications Coordinator has expertise in graphic design, while the Development Coordinator received on the job training. These individuals are sensitive to their non-teaching backgrounds, and readily defer to the expertise of the Head of School. The respect and admiration felt for the Head of School is evident in such comments as “since [the Head of School] came, it’s just been one thing after another that’s improving the school, that’s bringing a better education” (Communications Coordinator, Long Island School). The Communications Coordinator identifies the Head of School as his mentor, providing guidance in all aspects of his role. As a result, the pedagogical focus of the Head of School, along with its inherent beliefs and values related to decision making, is passed on to administrators without a teaching background. Since these individuals have direct responsibility for marketing and communications, the pedagogical approach of the Head of School directly impacts these areas in significant ways.

In early 2008, the position of Director of Development and Alumni Affairs was created. The impetus for the creation of this position was not clear, but may have been a response to similar changes occurring in many CAIS schools. Reflecting on a recent conference for CAIS advancement professionals, the Communications Coordinator remarked that these conferences were “usually more development and alumni affairs; geared for one of those. For the first time they had a lot of communications and marketing. They could see that the advancement office has to take on these new roles” (Communications Coordinator, Long Island School). The new hire for this position had an extensive professional background in marketing, and was able to bring considerable expertise to school practices and policies regarding marketing, communications and development.
Unlike the rest of her colleagues, the new Director referred to the school as a business, and was quick to observe, and suggest potential solutions for, challenges facing school marketing. For the first time, programs such as the IB were seen not only as academically valid, but also as providing valuable marketing opportunities which could be exploited. As a result, the Director pushed to develop an annual marketing strategy, using measurable objectives to develop, analyze and improve school marketing practices, but recognized that given the existing administrative structure, no one had the time and skills to do what was necessary in this regard.

Interestingly, this position was eliminated within two years of its creation. Reasons for this termination may include the significant disconnect between the philosophical approaches to school administration held by this individual as compared to the rest of the administrative team. The business orientation to school management almost certainly chafed with the pedagogically centered approach exhibited by the other administrators. As of yet, the position has not been filled, suggesting that the Head of School does not feel there is a need for this type of role on the administrative team.

Long Island school is the only Minimal Competition school to have included a position with dedicated marketing responsibility on their senior administrative team – however briefly (see Table 3). It seems likely therefore, that dedicated marketing positions are not necessary in this type of market, and perhaps may even cause practical and/or strategic challenges due to a philosophical misalignment within the administrative team and with the wider school community.

The final group of administrators to consider is the Admissions department. In the 2005/2006 school year, the Admissions department expanded from a single Director of Admissions to include two significant new positions. A co-director of Admissions was hired to travel throughout the region with the sole mandate of promoting the school in an attempt to increase enrollment. An Assistant Director of Admissions/Director of Hockey Operations was hired to attract elite players for the school’s newly-developed ‘abilities of excellence’ hockey program. Neither of the new hires had a teaching background, and yet both showed considerable respect for the pedagogical focus at the school.

In 2008, the co-director position was eliminated and a new individual was hired in the role of Admissions Officer. As with the Director of Development & Alumni Relations,
the co-director position represented an approach to school administration that is largely in conflict with that demonstrated by the management team. Charged with the task of promoting the school in a more strategic and assertive manner, the co-director of Admissions was effectively a salesperson, supporting a business organization by selling the program it offers. In contrast, the approach demonstrated by the Head of School relies on the program or product itself as a result of its inherent worth. While administrators recognize that they may have to promote their product in some way, “showing what [they] do” in terms of their academic and co-curricular programs, there appeared to be a certain level of discomfort with a more high-pressure sales approach to school promotion. This type of sales position is atypical of Minimal Competition schools (see Table 7), and was perhaps suited to addressing temporary enrollment challenges rather than representing a long-term approach to school promotion.

The Assistant Director of Admissions/Director of Hockey Operations is responsible for recruitment and management of the hockey excellence program at Long Island School. Since its creation in 2006, this program has expanded, showing significant promise as a recruitment tool in that it directly addresses a need of the school’s target market. In 2009, the original Director left the school, and this position was immediately filled. Administrators do not consider this excellence program to be a marketing tool; rather they characterize it as a co-curricular program created in response to parent and student desires. Although it has demonstrated itself to be quite effective as a marketing and admissions strategy, school administrators view the program as an opportunity for students to develop specific skills rather than an opportunity for the school to boost its enrollment numbers and catchment area. This again demonstrates the pedagogically centered approach of administrators, and their reluctance to acknowledge and develop marketing strategies.

**Diploma Program Adoption**

In the spring of 2004, given the increasingly apparent need to overhaul the academic program, school faculty and administrators began to discuss the strengths of the International Baccalaureate diploma program (IB DP) and its fit with school ethos. The IB DP was seen by administrators as a complete package which would provide the
school with a balanced and universally recognized educational program. Long Island School is not bound by provincial requirements and as a result teachers had been able to independently develop their curriculum and assessment strategies. Without clear school-wide goals and objectives, curriculum development and implementation in different courses, subjects and grades did not display vertical and horizontal cohesion. A lack of “design intentionality” resulted in minimal horizontal and vertical planning and was seen to threaten the integrity of the academic program (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). Without a provincial academic program or assessment standards, the reputation of the school rests solely on the quality of its graduates. Limited communication among faculty, a lack of curriculum leadership or a cohesive academic program, and indiscriminate professional development had hindered the establishment and maintenance of a top-quality educational program. The majority of teachers felt that the diploma program was not a huge shift from current practices at the time, and that adopting the established curriculum and assessment practices would be more expedient that re-creating the existing curriculum.

Diploma program adoption at Long Island School was motivated by a combination of philosophical and practical concerns.

Although the educators who created the IB programme were motivated by practical considerations, they also believed that students should share an academic experience that would emphasize critical thinking, intercultural understanding and exposure to a variety of points of view (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School).

The IB diploma links core elements such as the Theory of Knowledge course and the Extended Essay, believed by school administrators to be central to the student experience. It also provides evaluation techniques thought to be superior to either the AP program or other local or provincial evaluation and assessment exemplars. In addition to the perceived educational value of the IB program, administrators also recognized the more pragmatic benefits of IB adoption. The IB represents a complete educational package with “the stamp” of international credibility and recognition (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). As a result, it opens doors for school graduates in terms of university admissions:
The programme has earned a reputation for rigorous assessment, giving IB diploma holders access to the world’s leading universities. (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School)

Most importantly, the IB was seen as a great program for all kids, creating well-rounded students who would be well prepared for university and life. Despite their acknowledgement of a number of non-pedagogical advantages in IB adoption, the pedagogical focus of academic administrators was clearly demonstrated in the comment that “the Admissions department were against [IB implementation]; none are teachers, they’re thinking in terms of numbers” (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). By self-identifying as teachers first, academic administrators suggest a primary commitment to teaching and learning, with marketing concerns a distant second. While the adoption of the IB program provides school administrators with a focal point around which to organize a marketing strategy, movement in this direction has been slow. The marketing potential of the IB was a distant second in the minds of administrators when selecting the program, and remains largely untapped.

Early parental resistance to IB adoption stemmed from the local reputation of the program as excessively rigorous and elitist (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School; Communications Coordinator, Long Island School). For this reason, the Admissions department was initially opposed to IB adoption. For the Admissions staff, the program was not seen as a marketing draw, nor did they appreciate its pedagogical merit (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). While faculty support was necessary for program adoption, the Head of School did not view the support of the Admissions department as important in the decision to adopt the program. The disenfranchisement of the Admissions department illustrates the primacy of welfarist approach for the Head of School; concerns related to marketing and admissions were not relevant considerations during decision making.

Interestingly, this view may have been exacerbated by the lack of data available to the Admissions department regarding school marketing, enrollment and retention, again pointing to an essentially exclusively welfarist approach to school leadership. Limited use of data is characteristic of schools in the Minimal Competition group, where the welfarist approach strongly predominates (see table 5). Although admissions
officers had developed niches in Germany with senior students returning to Germany to complete their final year of university preparatory studies, they did not believe the international recognition of the IB program would boost enrollment. Whether or not German enrollment and retention has increased since IB adoption is uncertain as administrators “don’t keep numbers” (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). More generally, the resulting effect of IB adoption on student numbers is unclear; while students left the school around the time of adoption, the reason is unknown as administrators “didn’t track attrition causes … [the fact that certain students left the school] may or may not have been due to IB” (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School).

**Discourse**

Administrators, faculty and parents all demonstrate placing an inherent value on a welfarist approach where the educational product is the paramount concern of schools; it therefore follows that a discourse reflecting this approach would be most desirable. Throughout their communications with stakeholders, administrators and teachers at Long Island School consistently display a standardized discourse characterized by predominantly welfarist values. As the chief source of discourse and its related values, the Head of School maintains that competition among independent schools encourages excellence. Rather than seeing other schools as competition for a limited pool of consumers, administrators focus exclusively on the program benefits to be obtained through competition. They maintain that “independent schools should be part of the mosaic of the community, [but there] has to be a critical mass for awareness” (Head of School, Long Island School), referring back to the lack of independent school competition in their market. This lack is seen as a disadvantage, preventing consumers from understanding the benefits of an independent school education, rather than as an advantage, providing them with a clear marketing niche. The welfarist viewpoint, focusing on academic and co-curricular programming, overshadows the new managerialist approach to school management at Long Island School.

Discourse surrounding competition, school promotion and marketing reveals an emerging disconnect with practice. Although school administrators, led by the Head of
School, express a belief that no real marketing is being done or is necessary, Long Island School is perhaps unconsciously beginning to demonstrate a nascent marketing strategy demonstrating elements of a new managerialist approach. The activities of the Co-director of Admissions, characterized by a sales-driven philosophy of marketing, school branding, the coordination of social marketing efforts, and internal marketing with staff and faculty are some of the indicators that school practices are beginning to incorporate certain aspects of new managerialism. (See Table 4 for changes in marketing strategies by Minimal Competition schools.)

One interesting example to demonstrate this change is a cognitive shift by faculty members who are starting to conceive of their role as having a marketing function and are beginning to demonstrate a new managerialist “customer service” approach to their interactions with students and parents (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). This has been encouraged by school administrators through increased faculty involvement in school decision making; through this involvement, faculty have become more aware of the “big picture” and the need to actively promote the school (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). Many faculty members now recognize the importance of parent meetings, reporting periods and all other communications with parents and students as opportunities for school promotion rather than solely as ways to support and encourage student learning (Head of School; Director of the Middle School, Long Island School).

While certain marketing strategies consistent with a new managerialist approach are becoming visible in the policies and practices of Long Island School administrators, these administrators self-identify as having a product marketing approach and demonstrate a discourse generally reflective of educational welfarism (Director of the Senior School; Communications Coordinator, Long Island School). School administrators describe a culture in which they strive to “improve constantly, then ask if [they] are having the growth that [they] want” (Head of School, Long Island School). A quality education is most important for administrators, where they build a “great school first, then market that really good product” (Head of School, Long Island School).
Marketing Strategies

The strategic importance of effective communication became particularly salient to school administrators when deficits and declining enrollment began in the mid 00’s. Administrators initiated a ‘Communications Strategy Project’, which looked at existing communications strategies and the need to develop a more deliberate strategy related to communications and marketing. Administrators began to evaluate their predominantly welfarist approach to school leadership, as the financial needs of the organization were now in a position to influence school policy. Recognizing the previously “limited understanding of students as customers and decision makers”, the consulting firm’s review highlighted the need to market to students as well as parents.

The report recommended that the school build “a widely-recognized visual identity and brand,” as well as undertake an objective, independent market survey to identify, and better understand, the school’s target market. The review made it clear that the school had limited knowledge of prospective families and how to reach them effectively and efficiently. In recommending the development of an overall marketing plan school-wide, the report stressed the importance of a clear marketing strategy that addresses the needs of the school as well as the needs of the students. By focusing on the needs of the school as an organization, the report encouraged incorporating aspects of a new managerialist approach to school communication and marketing, emphasizing the use of performance indicators to improve organizational efficiency.

Following the report, administrators at Long Island School began to develop a brand, and revised past practices used for both print documents and on the school website (Director of Development & Alumni Relations; Director of the Middle School, Long Island School). A new web-based electronic communication system was created, which would keep parents better informed, and allow for more regular communication among parents and teachers. Recognizing the increasing power of students as decision-makers, the website was developed to include areas specifically targeted to prospective students and to generally update the website. The updated school website was initially effective with current parents and families, but was less effective in maintaining close ties with alumni. This was particularly problematic given that there were a number of issues at the time that threatened alumni relationships. In addition,
the school still lacked a formal communications plan relating to public relations and the wider community. One of the greatest challenges for Long Island School was “an internal lack of understanding of why [they would] want or need to communicate with the local community” (Communications Strategies Project, 2004). Tenuous relationships with alumni and the wider community appeared to be the result of an exclusive focus on pedagogy.

The Communications Strategy project had identified marketing as an important growth area for school administrators, citing a lack of knowledge about their target markets. CESI accreditation the following year also identified marketing as a key area for development. Since communication, marketing and admissions duties were shared by a small admissions team, the CESI report identified a “definite lack of a cohesive marketing effort” (CESI report, 2004). Since the Communication Strategies project, they had been moving toward an overall branding initiative however a marketing plan would be essential to ensure its effectiveness. The CESI report reinforced the necessity of school marketing by relating the need for marketing to the school’s admissions difficulties. The school had experienced declining inquires and applications over the previous three years; explanations for this decrease were solely anecdotal. In order to ensure the effective use of resources, CESI recommended the development of a formal mechanism to “track and measure the effectiveness of marketing initiatives” (CESI report, 2004). Long Island School is consistent with other Minimal Competition schools in this regard, where the reliance on intuition in decision making is at its highest level among schools and the use of data is at its lowest (see Table 5). Similarly, a planned and budgeted advertising campaign was encouraged, which would replace the ad hoc approach to local advertising. One of the most significant problems facing the school with regards to marketing and communication was that

“many families [in the region] do not know that the School exists, even though it has been in business of over [100] years. Many families [in the region] are unaware than an independent education exists as an option for their child. Those that are aware sometimes look at independent education as a solution to fix academic or non-academic issues for their child. It is a slow process to change these images and conceptions within the … culture” (CESI Self-Evaluation, 2004).
When asked how they market their school, administrators at Long Island School confessed that their marketing efforts were minimal. Administrators are currently recognizing an increased pressure on CAIS schools to actively engage in school marketing. Despite relatively low market pressures, Long Island School administrators demonstrate a desire to appear to conform to national independent school practices. In response to recommendations from a CESI accreditation visit, a marketing firm was hired to “evaluate [the school’s] client base and review [its] position within the [local] Canadian educational market” (School response to CESI report, 2004).

For school administrators, the concept of marketing appears to be limited to product advertising and a selling orientation, with which they feel uncomfortable. Despite their self-proclaimed mandate for school marketing, administrators admit “marketing is a struggle,” that it remains predominantly “ad hoc” (Director of the Middle School, Long Island School), and that even with changes in the Admissions department, school administrators are generally “poor at … self-promotion”. They incorrectly describe current marketing practices as limited to ad hoc advertising in local media and on billboards, and the information provided on the school’s website (Head of School; Director of the Senior School; Director of the Middle School, Long Island School). A focus on pedagogy as the paramount motivating factor for administrative decision making suggests resistance to a more business-centered approach to educational administration. An awareness of target markets in the promotion of the IB and hockey programs are subtle but evident for the first time at Long Island School; however, by equating marketing with selling, school administrators, like their colleagues in Minimal Competition schools, neglect increasingly active alternative orientations to school promotion seen in other CAIS schools, in particular a market orientation (see Table 7).

Product Orientation

The Head of School and other academic administrators at Long Island School believe that a product orientation is the most effective way to promote their school. For these administrators, the main challenge with regard to successful school marketing is to find ways to “show what [they] do” to prospective families (Director of the Senior School; Director of the Middle School, Long Island School). They believe that if they create an exemplary educational product, consumer awareness of that product will
ensure maximum enrollment and the continued financial success of the school (Head of School, Long Island School). Non-academic administrators share this belief that product is the primary motivation for enrollment, and identify the IB program, effort grades and co-curricular offerings such as the hockey excellence program as the main draws for parents and families (Co-director of Admissions, Long Island School). As a result, to date the majority of promotional efforts are program-related, consistent with the pedagogical focus of Minimal Competition school administrators (see table 7).

Efforts to promote the school and the IB program are not seen as marketing; rather they are seen as part of the communication necessary to establish and maintain favorable relationships with the parent community. Given parent concerns about the suitability of the IB program during the adoption and early implementation phases, the ability of school administrators to “market what [they] do positively, [and to] position [the IB favorably]” (Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Long Island School) became critical. Three parent meetings and information sessions were held each year, providing parents with information about the program, its requirements and its benefits. Administrators used numbers from the most comparable independent IB school to present to parents, and stressed the academic benefits of a well-rounded, university prep program (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School).

Just as school administrators appear reluctant to address IB promotion as marketing, the position of the Director of Hockey Operations represents a potential marketing strategy not recognized as such by administrators. They correctly believed that this new hockey program would help to create a niche for the school and as a result attract more students, but the rhetoric surrounding this program and student recruitment has been exclusively student-centered and appears to deliberately avoid marketing as motivation for the program (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). As with the IB program, school administrators believed that students would be attracted by the strength of the hockey excellence program and would enroll because of the program and the opportunities it provides.

When the Director position was created, this individual held responsibility for both the hockey program and school admission and recruitment. In what appears to be an attempt to separate the program itself from the duties of the admissions department, the
position title was changed after a few years from ‘Director of Hockey Operations & Assistant Director of Admissions’ to ‘Director of Hockey Operations’. This change prevents a focus on the pragmatic concerns of the Admissions department in favor of student-centered programming. It reassures parents and families that students are being recruited on the basis of talent and interest, rather than simply filling financial quotas, and thereby demonstrates the student-centered approach of administrators.

**Sales Orientation**

In a selling orientation, the organization undertakes a large-scale selling and promotion effort. In 2005 a co-director of Admissions was hired and charged with traveling around the region, making presentations to identified target groups and working particular markets in an attempt to recruit boarding and day students. Through exhaustive school visits, and presentations to rotary clubs and other receptive groups, this new admissions co-director was to sell the school. The co-director characterized this role as one requiring “persistence without being pushy … [with the goal of] speeding up a decision” about enrollment (Co-director of the Senior School, Long Island School). In addition to these visits, the new director worked to identify new marketing areas to be targeted, including hospitals, parent networks, partnerships with universities and colleges and links with businesses (Co-director of the Senior School, Long Island School). Discussions with international education agents were initiated in an attempt to develop long-term relationships boosting international enrollment. A joint marketing initiative with the local campus of a provincial university was considered, where the schools would market jointly to families with children at both age levels (Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Long Island School).

Within 4 years of the creation of the co-director of Admissions position, it was eliminated. A junior position of ‘Admissions Officer’ was created, and the mandate of travel and active recruitment was eliminated. This change may have been due to the fact that school administrators believed that the position had accomplished what it had been created for, and that a sales oriented admissions role was no longer needed, however due to the ever-changing educational market and an increasingly accessible international market, this seems unlikely. It is possible that administrators believed the position to be ineffective, but since no data was ever collected regarding the
effectiveness of the co-director’s activities, any assessment of effectiveness would be anecdotal at best and would reflect administrator bias. More likely this shift represents the discomfort demonstrated by academic administrators at this more aggressive attempt to promote the school in a Minimal Competition market and possibly even resistance from the wider school community to an approach unsuited to the local competitive arena.

At the time of its creation, the director of Hockey Operations/assistant director of Admissions position included a selling orientation. For this individual, the target market was clearly defined; elite high school hockey players in the region who would otherwise leave the province in search of a school with a distinguished hockey program. Like the Admissions co-director, the director of Hockey Operations travelled around the region, visiting rinks to scout out talent. These visits were conducted to raise awareness of the school, generating interest in the hockey program and selling the school as a whole. The director attended programs of excellence hockey camps and arranged one-on-one interviews with players of interest (Director of Hockey Operations, Long Island School). In these interviews, suitability of the student-school fit was explored while the benefits of the school were promoted.

As previously discussed, the mandate of this director was changed to focus exclusively on the hockey program. The admissions aspect of the role was eliminated, and with it the directive to actively recruit students. An exclusive focus on the program represents a shift away from school marketing and a selling orientation in favor of program development and maintenance characteristic of the product marketing preferred by Minimal Competition school administrators (see Table 7).

These new hires represented an important development in Admissions and marketing practices at Long Island School. Rather than relying on marketing and relationship approaches to school promotion, administrators began to actively sell their school and the products that it offers. Within four years, in both cases the selling orientation was eliminated in favor of a product orientation. The CESI accreditation visit and subsequent recommendations surrounding marketing practices, along with the tendency for CAIS school administrators to conform to current practices of the majority, may have provided the impetus for administrators at Long Island School to attempt a
selling orientation. With time however, the preferences of school administrators and possibly the needs and preferences of the local minimally competitive market appeared to reassert themselves, and selling oriented positions were altered or eliminated.

**Market Orientation**

A marketing orientation is characterized by the ability and willingness of school administrators to provide individualized programming, tailoring their product to the specific needs and wants of their consumers. Adoption of the IB diploma program limits the ability of administrators to provide individualized academic programs. Administrators are very clear, however, on the fact that they do not believe parents or students should be able to determine the academic program they receive (Head of School, Long Island School). Students are able to withdraw from the complete diploma program, but still must complete the essential elements of the program (extended essay, Theory of Knowledge) in order to satisfy the school's graduation requirements.

Despite the fixed nature of IB program participation, school administrators have decided to give some academic flexibility to families. In an initial attempt to appease parental concerns about academic limitations imposed by the program (e.g., only two sciences could be studied for the two-year duration of the program), a summer package offering an extra course was made available to students. Eventually there was somewhat more accommodation with respect to the academic program, as long as school standards were not compromised (Head of School, Long Island School). Faced with continued student requests to take a third science, Long Island School began to offer courses in the third science at a provincial level. The selection of courses within the program and the choice of the full diploma versus individual certificates are at the discretion of the student and their parents in consultation with the school IB coordinator. These modifications have minimal impact on the overall academic program available to students, and are characteristic of the low market orientation of Minimal Competition schools (see Table 7).

School administrators are open to parent and student input in other aspects of school life outside of academic programming. Administrators have encouraged a number of student-initiated athletics programs, including wrestling, cross-country skiing and Tai Kwan Do (Co-director of the Senior School, Long Island School). A new, larger
dining hall has just been constructed as a result of student desires to have a space able to accommodate the entire student body at once rather than having separate seatings for junior and senior students.

*Relationship Orientation*

Social or relationship marketing is based on the nurturing of long-term relationships and a focus on long-run consumer welfare. In its ideal form, it balances the financial well-being of the organization, the needs and desires of the customers, and the best interests of both the school community and society in general. Since independent schools are traditionally relationship oriented, administrators at Long Island School have likely been engaging in some form of social marketing since the creation of the school (Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Long Island School).

The most immediate form of social marketing is concerned with establishing strong loyalties with current and former students and families. Many of the old, established independent schools in Canada have relied heavily on legacy enrollment to meet student quotas; students would attend the schools that their parent(s) and possibly their grandparent(s) attended. Long Island School currently enrolls a significant percentage of alumni children, due to a combination of low family mobility and an emphasis on the maintenance of relationships with alumni (Director of the Middle School, Long Island School). These relationships depend on frequent communication with families and an active alumni program that ensures ties with the school are fostered over time (Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Long Island School). For prospective families, the development and subsequent maintenance of a personal relationship is similarly critical. As a result, relationship marketing has a considerable impact on the school's marketing orientation, which is typical for Minimal Competition schools where relationship orientation is at its highest levels across all school types (see Table 7).

School administrators work to maintain close ties with students, families and alumni, on the basis that customer loyalty will ensure optimum enrollment levels. The Head of School meets annually with every class of students and parents, providing a forum for discussion about current and future school policies and practices (Head of School, Long Island School). In doing so, parents gain a better understanding of school
operations and, perhaps more importantly, receive affirmation that they are valued stakeholders in the school community. The fact that the majority of faculty live on campus, with faculty home phone numbers given to parents, is used by administrators to demonstrate staff commitment to each child’s education. The Board of directors meets annually with different stakeholder groups regarding the vision and core values of the school, and uses this feedback to inform the development of the school’s strategic plan (Director of Development & Alumni Relations, Long Island School).

Committed and knowledgeable parents are not only more likely to maintain their enrollment at the school; they are also likely to act as ambassadors for the school, encouraging others within their social network to enroll. As with the majority of Canadian independent schools, certain types of exposure are more critical than others. Administrators report that the majority of student enrollment is accomplished via word-of-mouth among the parent community and subsequent school visits (Director of the Senior School; Director of the Middle School, Long Island School). As a result, it is vital that parents and alumni are highly satisfied and well-informed consumers so that they can act as knowledgeable ambassadors for the school. As their awareness of the increasing importance of school marketing grows, school administrators are beginning to strive for a greater presence in local communities.

**Persistent Welfarism**

A shift by certain schools in the Canadian independent school market from a focus on education alone to a management approach that combines knowledge of educational policies and practices with a business orientation has had an effect on administrative practices at Long Island School over the last ten years. Perhaps in response to a perceived pressure to conform to CAIS norms, administrators at Long Island School have altered their approach to marketing, shifting from an exclusively relationship orientation to a marketing mix containing product, selling and relationship orientations. Adding to the historical reliance on relationship marketing, school administrators introduced a selling orientation to the marketing mix through the activities of the admissions department.
When changes in the marketing mix are introduced, the effectiveness of the new marketing strategy is typically assessed through the collection of data. Following the changes in admissions activities, administrators at Long Island School did not design mechanisms for data collection or analysis related to marketing, nor did they begin tracking the effectiveness of program or marketing changes. The impact of the IB diploma program on enrollment, and the effectiveness of the sales marketing of the new director of Admissions and the director of Hockey Operations were never quantified; the perceived success or failure of these changes rested solely on anecdotal evidence and instinct as is typical in Minimal Competition schools (see Table 5). This appeared to be sufficient for administrators despite the norm-seeking recommendations of both CESI and the Communications Strategy Project conducted years earlier. The strategic use of data to measure marketing success is seen to be irrelevant by administrators who focus on the school as an educational entity in contrast to those that see independent schools as an educational-business hybrid.

Interestingly, administrators’ rhetoric regarding marketing did not change to reflect this shift in the marketing mix, possibly indicative of the discomfort shared by the academic administrators (and perhaps all school stakeholders) regarding a more businesslike sales approach to education. Within five years of this change, the marketing mix at Long Island School was changed again, eliminating the selling orientation from marketing practices. This shift also involved the elimination of several administrative positions that had been directly concerned explicitly with active school marketing. With all marketing practices used by the school, administrators are reluctant to characterize their activities as such, or use business terms to describe school management. Most importantly, it seems that the market itself does not require, and might in fact discourage, a shift in marketing practices or rhetoric since Long Island School continues to thrive and is experiencing no enrollment pressures. This lack of marketing pressure towards a new managerial approach is characteristic of Minimal Competition schools.
Case 2 – Mountain Heights Academy:
Predominant Welfarism with some New Managerialism

Market position of the school

Mountain Heights Academy is an independent, non-denominational, co-educational day school in a major Canadian urban center. Less than 20 years old, the school was created in an urban market characterized by numerous independent schools and strong local public schools. As a result, administrative decision making has demonstrated an awareness of the importance of creating a niche market for the school and using the unique characteristics of the school to effectively promote it.

As a day school, Mountain Heights Academy draws its student population from the surrounding region, an affluent semi-suburban neighborhood. The large majority of families in the region send their children to one of a number of highly ranked public elementary or secondary schools. Mountain Heights Academy was created in order to provide a nearby alternative to public education, in response to vocal and highly-involved parents with young children in a pre-Kindergarten Montessori program. Initially Mountain Heights Academy’s target population was highly homogenous and stable. Over the past decade however, this local population has become increasingly international and transient, resulting in a much more diverse student and parent population. This diversity has resulted in greater variation in parent and student wants and needs with regards to education, and has therefore made the task of school marketing increasingly complex.

Following the trouble-free creation of a successful elementary program, Mountain Heights Academy continued to expand, increasing from grade 8 through grade 12 over four years. By the time the first group of students reached grade 11 however, it became clear to school administrators that the school was being pressured at the upper level (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy). Competition from nearby public and independent schools was drawing away some of Mountain Heights Academy’s best students after grades 9 or 10, due predominantly to the fact that their parents believed that the strong elementary base established by the school was not
continued at the higher grades (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy).

Recognizing this challenge facing the developing upper school, school administrators initiated an intense period of strategic planning in order to determine the future of the upper school and to develop an effective marketing plan that would allow Mountain Heights Academy to compete successfully with neighboring schools. Since this time, administrators at Mountain Heights Academy have devoted considerable resources to clarifying and understanding their internal and external market environments. The strategic planning initiative began with an extensive data collection process conducted by an external group of survey consultants. Through parent surveys, faculty surveys and focus group sessions with parents, faculty, staff, senior administration, students and board members, a picture began to emerge regarding the school as it then existed, and the vision that the various stakeholders held for the school. Later the same year, administrators at Mountain Heights Academy hired a Management Consulting firm to conduct an in-depth situational analysis, including an overview of the education industry, market demographics, competitors, stakeholder needs, core competencies and current financial and business strategies and performance. As part of this analysis, it became clear that most of Mountain Heights Academy's competition came from other K-12 schools. Given that overall enrollment trends in the local independent schools had been relatively stable since 1997, Mountain Heights Academy would need to carve out a clear niche from which to share the independent school population (Berlin, Eaton & Assoc., 2003). Despite this overall stability, a small amount of growth in independent school enrollment was predicted for metropolitan areas, which might ease the increasing competition for students. Growth predictions focused on those schools that were identified by their educational specialties, particularly academic and university preparatory schools including the IB niche that Mountain Heights Academy would deliberately cultivate (Steffenhagen, 2003).

While enrollment trends across schools in the province suggested that Mountain Heights Academy’s intended upper school development would be challenging, the subsequent look at population demographics and current educational trends provided
school administrators with several possible solutions to the task of attracting and retaining greater student numbers. Changes in population demographics implied that while inter-province migration was declining, international migration was on the rise, and was expected to fuel any population growth in the region (BC Stats, 1997). The school’s target market would therefore be one that was increasingly diverse and internationally mobile (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).

As part of Mountain Heights Academy’s internal analysis, school administrators examined their mission, vision and aims, along with their core competencies via provincial exam scores and financial and benchmark analysis. Considerable input from all stakeholder groups was acquired through focused interviews and surveys. Coupled with an understanding of Mountain Heights Academy’s external environment, school administrators used this information to develop their current strategic plan. In this plan, administrators defined Mountain Heights Academy’s niche in their local (and non-local) markets as one characterized by small size, pastoral care, positive reinforcement, traditional values, a culture of expectation and a sense of community. What became clear was that this so-called niche was neither particularly unique nor specialized, especially when compared to other Canadian independent schools of a comparable size. Administrators identified a focus on enrollment and retention, and resolved to develop a focused, appropriately balanced program given the changing and heightened demands of their changing target parent population. Foremost in the operationalization of this plan was the identification, selection and implementation of a challenging university-prep academic program for the developing senior school. In doing so, they hoped to redefine their market niche to create a truly unique product, and a consistent culture of responsiveness to potential new families.

Since the creation of the strategic plan in 2003/2004, the administrative team at Mountain Heights Academy has continued to monitor their markets and stakeholder needs and views in an informal manner. This strong reliance on data is somewhat atypical of Moderate Competition schools, where the use of data is generally more infrequent (see Table 5). Closer examination of particular schools within this group suggests a relatively high level of variability of data use from school to school. Roughly half of Moderate Competition schools demonstrate a reliance on data similar to that
seen in the more competitive school groups (Moderate-to-High and High Competition groups), while the other half demonstrate relatively little reliance on data. This suggests that even within the Moderate Competition group there is within group variation based on the local micro market of the school, and that Mountain Heights Academy is an example of a particular micro market demonstrating a more business-like reliance on data.

At Mountain Heights Academy, competitor analysis formed an integral part of the situational analysis, with both primary and secondary competitors identified and analyzed. As with market research as a clear marketing strategy, this consumer research differentiates Mountain Heights Academy from the majority of Moderate Competition schools (see Table 4). Faculty and administration at Mountain Heights Academy readily identified key competitor schools, and in fact distinguished competitors by location, school size, and program offering (Director of Academics, Mountain Heights Academy). Consensus among faculty and administration was that Mountain Heights Academy’s competition was predominantly geographic; both local public and independent schools tended to have solid academic reputations, and several offered academically enhanced programs such as the AP and IB with strong academic results. Local public schools are also becoming more noteworthy competitors, both in terms of school program offerings and marketing strategies. These schools have changed their advertising strategies, and are consciously competing with independent schools for top performing students (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy).

The public school system is strategically placing itself in direct competition with the independent school system, pursuing consumer-driven “magnet” schools and offering specializing programs for students (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). Program offerings are all very similar among local independent and public schools, including academic, athletic, and artistic and citizenship opportunities at both the junior and senior level. Given the high level of academic success enjoyed by local public schools, Mountain Heights Academy administrators must rely on the benefits only an independent school education can provide to attract families.


Professional biographies of school administrators

The current Head of School was hired for a very specific reason; to oversee the successful implementation of the IB program at Mountain Heights Academy. A true believer in the merits of the IB program, this school Head had a long history with the program. Three prestigious Canadian independent schools and one international school currently offering the IB adopted the program under the leadership of this school Head. His entire career in educational leadership was dedicated to the promotion, administration and implementation of the IB program due to a deep-seated belief in the educational merits of the program.

Given this professional biography, it is no surprise that the Head of school constantly returns to the values of the IB program when discussing school promotion. For him, offering a strong IB diploma program will naturally provide a powerful attraction for families and students. This strongly product oriented approach to school leadership is consistent with Moderate Competition schools (see Table 7). The Head of School believes students are drawn to the school because they offer the IB program. The role of the school, its teachers and administrators, is to provide students with the best possible preparation for post-secondary education, and for life.

My job is to take these kids and prepare them for a life where I have no idea what they’ll be facing. That’s why I do the IB. The IB challenges them not just to learn 1+1=2, not just the information. It challenges them to be thinkers; it challenges them to face change. We should not do it because we want to do it as a marketing tool, we should do it because it’s in the best interests of those kids as they learn and grow (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).

The Head of School is very clear that IB adoption was not a strategic decision to differentiate from competitors, or provide a marketing strategy. This rhetoric is matched by a lack of personnel related to admissions and marketing. Low levels of dedicated marketing personnel are consistent across Moderate Competition schools, where the market appears not to require significant effort in this regard (see Table 3). Additionally, as a growing school, support structures such as admissions and marketing personnel may lag behind the development of the school and its student population. In fact, it has
only been a decade or two since independent schools relied on the Head of School for most aspects of school leadership and management.

The origins of the IB program at Mountain Heights Academy can be attributed to the Director of Academics at the time, newly transplanted from an IB diploma program in another Canadian international school. He had been the diploma coordinator at this school, and like the Head of School, had a strong ideological commitment to the program. While he did not come to Mountain Heights Academy with the intention of implementing the program, he was quick to recognize that the school culture would allow for relatively easy adoption. Interestingly, his concern with IB adoption was two-fold, including both the pedagogical merit of the program and the marketing opportunity it would provide.

When I got here I found something quite similar to my previous school. The school was relatively new and it had competition from a more established private school … just down the road – and of course the public school, which happens to be an IB school. So the school was somewhat squeezed between these two other schools and so the school at the high grades – at the senior school – really needed to carve out a niche for itself as a private school. (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy)

Both the IB coordinator and Director of Academics were hired from the public school system. Both are committed to the IB program as an example of excellent pedagogy, and focus exclusively on the various intrinsic advantages of participating in an IB program. The final member of the senior leadership team is the deputy head of school. The deputy head together with the previous Director of Academics “steered [the] steering committee” (Director of Academics, Mountain Heights Academy). Although the deputy head had no previous experience with the IB program, he came to realized that “there was almost a perfect fit [with] the philosophy of [Mountain Heights Academy] saying we would like to promote excellence in education across the full curriculum” (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy). He too recognized some attributes of the program beyond the strictly academic, including accountability and international program recognition. In order to market the IB program in a way that was consistent with the philosophical approach of the school Head, the
deputy head began to promote student achievement as an indirect way to call attention to the school and what it was doing.

We did quite a big thing on the celebration of our first IB grads … I think that the best way to highlight a program is to highlight student achievement. It’s fine for adults to talk about these things but when the kids start talking about, and you can actually highlight the achievements that they get – graduation. We have a kid who’s done a great job, she’s on the Canadian water polo team and she’s an IB diploma student so we try and highlight those. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

All members of the senior leadership team were teachers, and are committed to the development of their students above all else. This point is succinctly summarized by the deputy head when he said “I think as far as the IB goes, I feel passionate about [it] even for my own kids – my own kids are in this school because of the IB” (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy).

**Diploma Program Adoption**

Mountain Heights Academy administrators and faculty had begun considering both Advanced Placement (AP) and the IB Diploma Program in 2002, when the first graduating class was in grade 10. An IB implementation team consisting of two administrators and four experienced diploma program (DP) teachers were exploring the feasibility and desirability of implementing the IB DP at Mountain Heights Academy. This committee researched the specifics of the program and the implementation process through an examination of IB documents, including curriculum and exams, and extensive school visits in an attempt to determine the effect IB adoption might have on the school and its relationships with both stakeholders and competitors.

Niche was central when school administrators were evaluating the possibility of IB adoption (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy). The market advantage of being the only independent school to offer the IB program was further emphasized by the fact that Mountain Heights Academy had been losing some of its best students to the local public school, which offered the IB DP as a gifted stream (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy). Despite the importance of creating a market niche, if niche had been the only consideration for IB
adoption, school administrators would likely not have decided to implement the program.

The academic value of the IB Diploma Program and, given the results of the analysis of the school’s internal and external marketing environments, the marketability of the program, the Board of Directors and senior administration were confident that IB DP adoption was the best course of action for the school. This belief was gradually developed over the course of an intense period of scrutiny and investigation of the IB program by the Board of Directors (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).

Discourse

As an internationally recognized credential, the IB would help to establish Mountain Heights Academy’s academic reputation at the senior level. School administrators recognized that the IB program had become a selling point in North America, in particular with regard to accountability:

The IB was part of our [desire] to try and entrench a model of education that would provide the accountability that we felt is important to parents, universities and to an increasingly global community. The IB is a universally acceptable norm, you bring with it an acceptable skill set. If you present an IB diploma, you don’t [present] only the marks that you got for your diploma. People know you can do a research paper, you can defend a standpoint, you’re open minded, you’re a risk-taking type of person, you’ve been challenged academically so you can deal with a busy schedule. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

It would help to raise the profile of Mountain Heights Academy, underwriting it as a school of excellence, and since, unlike other IB schools in the area, the program was not intended as a program exclusively for academically gifted students, it would help to articulate Mountain Heights Academy more effectively:

If you get accepted to [this school], you have access to the diploma program. We’ve always believed that the diploma is not intended for the academically gifted. Schools that do test academically to get into the IB, who use [the program] as an advanced stream, are doing the IB a disservice because that’s not what the IB was intended to do. (Director of Academics, Mountain Heights Academy)
In clarifying the differences between IB schools, Mountain Heights Academy administrators firmly believed that the local public schools would not represent a significant source of competition. Not only were administrators confident in the benefits inherent in private education, but they believed the delivery of the IB program at the local public school was unattractive to many families. Offered as a gifted program, only a small number of students were admitted to the program following a period of heavy screening.

The decision to adopt the IB DP was made in May 2005, based on the new Head’s recommendation and culminating from three years of investigation by the implementation team (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy; Directors Report on IBDP Implementation, 2005). In the IB Application Document, school administrators described the motivation for IB adoption as follows:

Because the senior school (grades 10-12) is still small and evolving, we want to give this particular element a distinct identity and niche. When we were looking at the IB we found that there was a solid fit between the IB and our own model [of education]. The IB strives for academic excellence and insists on involvement in arts (creativity), athletics (through action) and service through its CAS component—similar to our [current model]. Our school mission statement … also fits well with the IB mission and philosophy. We want to raise continually the academic bar for our students. Finally we are already a very multicultural school located in a very multicultural and multiracial metropolitan centre. Internationalism already exists in our school. (IB Application Document, Mountain Heights Academy)

The decision to adopt the IB DP was therefore based heavily, but not exclusively, on the belief that the IB program could provide a niche attractive to Mountain Heights Academy’s target parent population. Once school faculty and administrators were convinced of the educational validity and philosophical alignment of the program with the school’s existing approach to education, decision making related to IB adoption was informed by the findings of the extensive market analysis. School administrators responded to market indicators, including an increasingly diverse and internationally mobile target population, and the resulting desire for an internationally recognized academic program that was demanding, prestigious and comprehensive. In selecting
the IB program, administrators redefined the market niche of Mountain Heights Academy to create a product that was, at the time, unique in the region. In doing so, they hoped to relieve the strain on the developing senior school, and co-exist with neighboring schools without feeling undue competitive pressure at the upper level.

**Marketing Strategies**

*Product Orientation*

As with the majority of Canadian independent schools that offer the IB program, Mountain Heights Academy administrators believe strongly that the IB program should be taught to all students rather than as a gifted stream for a minority of students. Their reasoning is that if the IB DP is an educationally superior program, then all students, regardless of previous academic achievement, would benefit from this curriculum and assessment approach:

> Really it's the best educational program out there. The best educationally balanced program out there that tries to develop the whole child and gives them the most opportunities in an international setting. (Director of Academics, Mountain Heights Academy)

Administrators have run information sessions entitled “Why the IB?” in an attempt to convince families of the advantages of the program. The key points from this presentation are summarized in Figure 3. Faculty and administrators are also quick to point out some of the more intangible benefits of the IB program, perhaps most importantly its increasing value as a credential:

> It gives their sons or daughters a competitive advantage. A lot of the elite programs [have a] majority of kids [that] are IB. There’s a selection process that occurs … I don’t think there’s any question about that. (IB Coordinator, Mountain Heights Academy)

> It represents an internationally branded education that they can take anywhere. To other families, I'm hoping it represents a well-balanced education. (Director of Academics, Mountain Heights Academy)
Why the IB?

- Offers students the best education program available (whether or not they complete the full diploma)
  - Success rate in post-secondary education is higher
  - Students receive a qualification that is accepted around the world.
  - Some universities assign credit for first year courses, saving time and money at university.
  - Universities prefer IB students (better equipped to deal with rigorous university program) – implies acceptance qualification
  - Almost all universities in North America have specific (favorable) admission-scholarship policies for IB students.
  - Many will grant admission based on “anticipated scores” from 24-28 points.
  - Students are usually placed in a separate applicant pool and are not compared with non-IB students

- Skill development for life - analytical skills, critical thinking, problem solving, organization, time management, balance, able to face change/adaptable, consider the global community

- Increased global awareness and diversity of IB students.

Figure 3: Mountain Heights Academy Powerpoint presentation slide for parents

The belief in the inherent strength of the IB program has had a direct and significant impact on school marketing. School administrators describe the IB DP as an excellent educational product that will, when implemented “with integrity”, attract parents and students as a result of the niche level of excellence achieved (Head of School; Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy). This reliance on product marketing is typical of Moderate Competition schools (see Table 7). In fact, promotional materials are limited to a school postcard, inclusion on the IB website and the school's application for admission; the postcard directs interested consumers to the recently updated school website, which administrators believe to be the most effective marketing tool (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).

This belief stems in large part from the changing demographics in the region, requiring administrators to focus promotional efforts to a more international market.
Administrators maintain that since they do not have the ability to convince parents of what they want, the selection and delivery of a program of excellence will demonstrate the advantages of enrollment at Mountain Heights Academy:

I’m an arrogant old guy who is utterly convinced that young people anywhere must be prepared to live in a very cosmopolitan and mixed society. That’s what we have here, but most of them are not going to spend their whole lives here and it’s hugely foolish just to be warm and comfortable and cozy and say isn’t life wonderful here. They have to know about the rest of the world, and they have to be prepared to adapt to it. So if I take what each parent, each individual member of my market wants, I haven’t got the time or the capacity to convince them to the level that I’m convinced that their kids need to know about it. (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy)

The majority of new families, many of whom are international, hear about the school through the internet, either the school website or the IB website.

The IB is definitely changing our enrollment beyond our immediate communities. There is a huge potential there for people who are not here, who might be relocating or locating to [the area]. They say, ‘you know what? We know nothing about the Canadian education system, what can we look for?’ And somebody might say ‘you might want to look for an IB school because it’s an internationally accredited program’. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

In contrast to the permanent local population, the immigrant population in the region is increasingly affluent and international and knows the IB as a global credential with multiple tangible and intangible benefits for students. These parents seek out Mountain Heights Academy as an IB school, and represent an increasing proportion of the Mountain Heights Academy community.

The general perception of Mountain Heights Academy’s administrators is that not only their own school, but in fact all independent schools in the greater metropolitan area have successfully diversified their educational products in such a way as to minimize competition for the same population of students. There seems to be truth to this, as Moderate Competition schools have significantly fewer positions dedicated to marketing and promotion than High Competitive schools, despite a demographically similar market (see Table 3). Self-identifying as a regionally-based, independent, co-ed,
IB school has provided Mountain Heights Academy with a unique identity. Neighboring schools may be public, or offer the AP rather than the IB program. Even those independent co-ed schools that offer the IB in the downtown area compete for a somewhat different geographic market and are therefore distanced in terms of the competitive market. In fact, it is believed by senior administrators that the various independent schools promote each other on the basis of their respective niches:

Our direct competitor is a completely different school to what we offer. We fit quite comfortably alongside them I think mainly because we have different sizes. Our school is more the smaller, community-type school, they’re just more of the larger independent school which makes its mark in great rugby teams, great tennis teams. [Their] kids go off to Harvard – our kids don’t always go off to the ivy league universities. I don’t think we’re appealing to the same people. I think we’ve got a different approach. The [city’s] independent schools got together a couple of years ago to talk about this exact same issue, to try and identify why we actually co-exist. As assistant heads we were actually coming up with different reasons why – [reasons] which everybody would be comfortable with as well. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

If it is true that schools in this area have successfully carved up the market based on the differential, competition may well be minimized, assuming of course that families have clear desires regarding education programs and environments. Parents however, have been accused of “not knowing what they want” by school administrators, and therefore competition may not be so neatly avoided (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). Certainly no other Canadian metropolitan center enjoys sufficient product differentiation to forestall competition, however many administrators at Mountain Heights Academy see inter-school collaboration as the ideal and deny that other independent schools are competitors. Instead they cite specific instances to demonstrate that they are not actively competing with one another, providing examples when admissions departments have counseled students toward other independent schools on the basis of student aptitudes and interests (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy).

This perception reinforces the belief of Mountain Heights Academy administrators that they do not need to actively sell or promote their school and are
content to let IB product excellence speak for them. As demographics change in coming years and competition for students intensifies, this belief in the strength of product marketing may provide to be problematic. Mountain Heights Academy’s product is unique based on the local geographic market, however a number of the downtown schools are of a similar size, offer the IB program, and are more established schools. Already certain independent schools in downtown area have begun to run buses from Mountain Heights Academy’s region, attempting to tap into the relatively more lucrative local market.

Sales Orientation

What little sales marketing is done highlights the two predominant marketing philosophies of school administrators, product marketing and relationship marketing. Through open houses, local education fairs and newspaper ads, student achievements are celebrated. In doing so, administrators highlight the advantages of the IB program while building group relationships through celebration of the successes of group members:

We ran a series of ads in the newspapers, interviewing students and teachers. Those were very successful – we did about 4 or 5 profiles … leading in to the IB. We started focusing more on the unique character of [this school] and not necessarily on the need to compete with the best schools out there. I actually got a call from a guy one day who said ‘so you know what? I just read this interview with one of your teachers and he sounds like such a nice person and so down to earth and we really enjoyed reading that’. I think that the IB also offers the simplicity in message that people would like to hear. They don’t necessarily need a lot of complicated [information or philosophies] – back to basics education is really what the IB is about. (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy)

Newspaper advertisements now celebrate graduating students who have successfully completed the IB diploma; open houses highlight the athletic and service accomplishments of students, contradicting the image of a ‘typical’ IB student who does nothing but study (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy).

Throughout the process of IB adoption and implementation, school administrators have worked to create a brand with maximum appeal that they can sell to their target market:
We’ve just gone for simplicity more than the big wow type of marketing. The branding has been much more [focused on our school,] excellence in education and life, the IB diploma – those three things in one. There’s been branding around the IB. If you look at our ads, you’ll see that they are uncluttered, they’re open and they’re clear. That’s been by design, what we’ve wanted to do. I think also it helps to calm people down. You don’t want to hype them up with the IB; it’s a sensitive issue with them. So you want to keep it simple, you want people to say, ok, this is understandable. I can read the ad, it makes sense to me. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

While taking advantage of the IB brand on their website and print marketing, Mountain Heights Academy administrators tailor their own school brand, presenting the IB and the entire educational product offered in such a way as to maximize local market appeal.

*Market Orientation*

Adoption of the IB diploma program limits the ability of school administrators to provide individualized academic programs. The willingness of administrators to adapt their product to the specific needs and wants of their consumers is similarly limited, due to their belief in the value of IB program integrity. This de-emphasis on a market orientation is consistent across Moderate Competition schools.

According to IB diploma program requirements, all students select six academic courses, one from each group or subject area. At Mountain Heights Academy, all students must complete the school portfolio, which extends the Diploma Program CAS requirement. They must also complete the extended essay and TOK course over two years, both of which are seen as integral components of the Mountain Heights Academy liberal arts program. Senior administrators believe that this requirement prevents the creation of “second class citizens”; those students who are visibly ‘full diploma’ students as compared to those who elect to complete certificates only (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).

Based on the school’s historical emphasis on the arts, requirements regarding the Group 6 (Arts) option are more restrictive than specified by the IB, where a student may substitute a second course from another group in place of a Group 6 course. To obtain permission to be exempted from the Group 6 requirement at Mountain Heights
Academy, students must make a special request (IB Coordinator, Mountain Heights Academy).

With the exception of the Group 6 course requirement, program implementation reflective of a marketing orientation appears minimal. As with the majority of Canadian independent schools, parents at Mountain Heights Academy are becoming increasingly vocal regarding their expectations and desires. When comparing consumer influence at Mountain Heights Academy to her experiences in public schools, one administrator believes that too much accommodation is given to parents, who she believes have a key role in shaping school structures and programs:

This school is run by parents. The Board [of Directors is [composed entirely of] parents. The parents provide the vision for the school. The goals for the school [are determined] in consultation with whom they hired, [i.e. the Head of School], but they’re definitely parent-oriented. There’s no question about that. (IB Coordinator, Mountain Heights Academy)

While it is true that independent school administrators generally work to appear consumer oriented, parent influence on academic programs and policies are limited. Administrators speak of the DP has having been implemented “with integrity”, referring to the fact that few adaptations or modifications to the program structure or content were made. It is by adhering to the original intent of program designers that Mountain Heights Academy administrators believe they provide the best program to their students. In providing a program of excellence, administrators are confident that parents will adapt their desires based on the demonstrated success of the IB program and its students, and the expertise of administrators and faculty that work with them.

**Relationship Orientation**

As relative newcomers to the independent school market, administrators at Mountain Heights Academy have been acutely aware of the importance of marketing the school successfully to parents and students. The decision to adopt the IB program was based in educators’ beliefs regarding best practices, along with an understanding of its marketing potential. While student and parent input was not directly considered when deciding to adopt the program, the importance of consumer buy-in led administrators to a concerted and immediate marketing pitch. School administrators hosted numerous parent sessions in the pre-adoption phase, and received quite a
positive response (Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy). The purpose of these sessions was to inform and promote the program, countering both elite impressions of the program and fears regarding workload and university admissions. At no point was it suggested that parents were involved in the decision to adopt the program; rather these sessions were opportunities for parents to ask questions and to receive information about the exploratory, and subsequently the adoption process. As a result of the ongoing efforts to ensure open and active communication channels, parent involvement at Mountain Heights Academy has been generally consistent and supportive. Considerable effort has gone into creating and sustaining ties with families, including fostering buy-in regarding the IB program.

Parents want their children to be challenged, but worry that they are being pushed too hard, possibly losing sight of the increasingly competitive nature of post-secondary education. As a result, school administrators, like their colleagues in other Moderate Competition schools, view relationship marketing as critical to ensuring retention of existing students (see Table 7). Administrators’ efforts to ensure parent buy-in to the IB program continued after program implementation. While the intent is not to convince or “sell” the program or the school, information sessions and print publications are motivated by the belief that if parents learn about the IB DP program, they will ultimately support program delivery. For those families who enrolled at Mountain Heights Academy prior to IB implementation, their understanding of the benefits of IB has been inconsistent. Administrators describe IB adoption as a “double edged sword”; while program adoption was very exciting for some parents, others were so concerned about the implications of adoption that they withdrew their children from the school:

Our biggest challenge has been maintaining [our] internal relationships. A lot of people signed up to [this school] because it was the private school for everybody. Now the IB, when it came in, [was a challenge for some families] because of the bad name that the IB has unfortunately [obtained as a result of] academic streaming. We’ve had to do a lot of maintenance there with our existing student body. We have, for example, a number of students leaving this year in grade 10. They don’t want to be in the IB program. If you talk to them, really they have not a very strong understanding of what the IB is going to offer them despite all the
information sessions. They hear their friends at [the public IB school] say ‘my brother was in the IB, [and] he had no life.’ (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

What further complicates this situation is that often parents have possibly conflicting desires, where they “want to stretch their children, but are concerned that they are being pushed too hard” (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). Students complain that they have too much work, and in response, parents worry that the program is too hard, causes too much stress and as a result may not have been the best program for their child. Where prior to their child’s participation in the program parents recognized the benefits of the IB, with student complaints and possible decreases in marks, certain parents have begun to have second thoughts (IB Coordinator, Mountain Heights Academy). As a result, parents tend to blame the IB for “anything that goes wrong”, and it is this knee-jerk reaction against the IB that school administrators must combat:

The IB now gets the blame for everything that goes wrong. People are inclined to throw in the towel when the going gets tough and that’s no different since we’ve had the IB from before we had the IB. But the parents do label the IB for anything that goes wrong; the kids that are overworked, the kids who work to hard, the perfectionist student who wants to do everything the best. The IB gets the blame that my child doesn’t have time to do it anymore. So we’ve had to simplify the IB in a way to make it more palatable. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

Electronic parent portals, quarterly interviews, course selection sessions, highly individualized report cards, monthly newsletters, and “Coffee, tea and IB” information sessions all represent avenues by which administrators have attempted to inform parents and eliminate concerns (Principal of the Senior School; Director of University Counseling, Mountain Heights Academy). School administrators have worked carefully to show that IB implementation has allowed the school to enhance its characteristic features within a system that provides international accountability and status (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy).
Ultimately, like most Canadian independent schools, Mountain Heights Academy relies most heavily on word-of-mouth marketing. Increasing numbers of new international students are learning of Mountain Heights Academy through the IB website; however the majority of students are still drawn from the local area and learn of the school from satisfied Mountain Heights Academy parents and students. Unfortunately, satisfied international families are often transitory, and as a result do not have a significant impact on local recruitment through word-of-mouth. As a result, considerable time and effort over the past few years has been devoted to educating all parents regarding the challenges and benefits of following an IB program, not only to boost retention, but to ensure that a key marketing strategy of the school is functioning effectively:

If there is one thing which I would say has been the success of the school it’s been empowering parents to understand. We’ve always tried to keep our parents very well informed. [We] have given them a lot of accessibility to information … to make sure they’re aware of everything that’s going on. (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy)

In order to encourage parents to act as enthusiastic ambassadors of the school, administrators have dedicated significant time and resources to support students on an individual basis. What has evolved is a marketing approach that, as much as possible within the constraints of the school, the IB organization and the provincial ministry of education, tailors individual programs for students based on skills, interests and goals (Principal of the Senior School, Mountain Heights Academy). Such an approach aligns with school philosophy and pedagogical beliefs, but has the added advantage that it builds strong relationships with students and their families, and encourages academic success. As a result, parents are more likely to view the school and its staff favorably, and promote the school to the wider community.

Another avenue by which school administrators have encouraged strong ties with the parent community is through the highly organized network of parent volunteers. At Mountain Heights Academy there is a high level of involvement and “huge buy-in” from the local parent community, and senior administrators consciously cultivate good relationships with parent volunteers, recognizing the importance of word of mouth advertising for local enrollment (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy).
**Predominant welfarism with some new managerialism.**

Administrators at Mountain Heights Academy demonstrate an interesting mix of welfarist and new managerial approaches to school leadership and marketing. It is clear from the professional backgrounds and current leadership practices of the administrative team that they are strongly product-oriented. All administrators are deeply committed to the ideology of the IB program, and believe that this is the best educational program available to students. Beyond the excellent academic preparation for post-secondary education, the international nature of the program prepares students for participation in a globalized world. Promotion of the school is accomplished by promotion of the IB program. Administrators advertise their school by celebrating the successes of their students, and by educating stakeholders about the merits of an IB education. As a result, what little advertising is done cannot be considered selling-oriented marketing due to the overwhelming focus on the academic product.

Marketing-oriented promotion is similarly limited following the initial implementation of the program. A compulsory group 6 course and the requirement of TOK for any certificate students adhere to school values prior to IB adoption and the notion of a liberal arts or ‘renaissance’ education. Requiring these components, however, restricts the flexibility allowed to diploma students and contradicts a marketing-oriented philosophy. School administrators show little interest in allowing students to adapt the diploma program as they see fit; the belief is clear that the program is best as it is, and that students (and parents) do not always have sufficient knowledge to recognize this. This paternalistic approach has been adopted to prevent adaptations that are seen by administrators to weaken or deprive students of the educational advantages provided by the full diploma program.

As with other independent schools, relationship-oriented marketing is a focus at Mountain Heights Academy. Administrators recognize the importance of word of mouth marketing, and work to develop strong relationships with families through parent involvement in school life. There is untapped potential in this regard however, as administrators have not yet developed an alumni association to maintain communication with alumni. Although the school is young, this is an important marketing strategy to
encourage life-long relationships and word of mouth marketing beyond a student’s tenure at the school.

The marketing mix at Mountain Heights Academy is therefore predominantly product marketing, with some relationship-oriented marketing through parent involvement in school life. A product orientation to marketing is entirely consistent with a welfarist philosophy where pedagogy is the main concern of administrators. What results in a balance between welfarist and new managerial approaches at Mountain Heights Academy is the business-like use of research and data to inform decision making. During IB program adoption and implementation, school administrators conducted extensive market research to inform the process. This use of data is inconsistent with welfarism, where a course of action is decided upon because the professional judgment of administrators suggests that it is in the students’ best interest. Administrators at Mountain Heights Academy do believe that they have the pedagogical expertise to know what is in the best interests of their students, but they recognize the influence of parental choice and the effects of market forces on their continued success. As a result, administrators effectively balance their welfarist tendencies with new managerial strategies that are likely to appeal to their target populations.
Case 3 – Goodwin College:

Developing New Managerialism

Market position of the school

Goodwin College is an independent, non-denominational, co-educational day school in a major Canadian urban center. Founded almost fifty years ago, the school has evolved from a small, family-style school to a mid-size school operating in a highly competitive independent school market. In the early years of operation, the school was a Montessori school, focusing on primary, junior and intermediate-level education. Roughly thirty years after the creation of the school, the decision was made to expand the school and offer a high school program. Recognizing the abundance of high quality independent schools in the region, school administrators immediately sought a program that would allow the school to differentiate itself from competitor schools. The IB program was first adopted at the senior level, and was subsequently introduced at both the primary (grades 1-6) and middle years (grades 7-10) levels.

Goodwin College draws its student population from across (and occasionally beyond) the urban center in which it is located. With the introduction of the IB program, the international student population increased, although the majority of students are local. The parent body is a highly educated group of double income working professional families who are looking for strong academics and a coeducational environment for their children (Parent Survey, 2007). The local independent school market has historically drawn students based on family tradition and social cache, and as a result, traditional single sex schools, many of which have existed for over one hundred years, continue to occupy a significant proportion of the competitive market (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). For many parents, these schools continue to possess considerable cache and have histories and facilities that cannot be rivaled by newer, less affluent schools in the city.

Public schools are a less significant competitor for students in Goodwin College’s market, and there has been little evidence of students leaving the school for public IB schools (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College).
The balance between collegiality and competition is an interesting one in the local market. While the independent schools make every effort to appear collaborative, there is no doubt that the competition for students is intense, and is increasing. The Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) and similar provincial organizations provide opportunities for collaboration, predominantly in the form of conferences and workshops (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Advancement personnel share information regarding successful fundraising techniques, capital campaign strategies, friendship programs and other revenue-generating incentives. Heads of schools, Advancement and Admissions personnel meet annually or semi-annually to discuss issues and challenges currently facing independent schools. For example, in October 2008 a CAIS emergency meeting was called to talk about the economy, the likely impact on Independent School enrollment, and possible strategies for schools.

Admissions personnel experience the most evident level of competition, but still work to demonstrate some sharing and certainly the existence of a collegial nature. There is an underlying assumption that all admissions officers want students to be placed in a school where they will experience success; as a result, they are generally forthcoming about the likely fit between a potential student and the school (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). If the student-school fit is not a good one, often admissions officers will discuss this with the student and/or the parents, and in some cases may even suggest a more appropriate school.

Interestingly, as student numbers experience a general decline in Canada, many independent schools have had to modify their definitions of ‘mission-appropriate’ students. Since many schools are attempting to attract a wider range of student out of financial necessity, this assessment of fit may be more lenient now than in past years.

Despite this apparent collegiality, school administrators are very aware that they are in direct competition with these schools. Goodwin College recently withdrew from the SSAT Ontario organization (Secondary schools aptitude test – Ontario Testing Consortium). This organization collectively sets rules regarding admissions, including the requirement that acceptances cannot be mailed to families until March 1. The result of this requirement is that parents can ‘shop around’, and then wait to see which
schools have accepted their child. This puts Goodwin College at a disadvantage since it is believed that concurrent offers of admission from Goodwin College and one of its single sex competitors will result in unfavorable comparisons due to its lack of history and financial resources. Senior administrators have decided that following the rules of the Ontario Testing Consortium are no longer to their advantage (Head of School, Goodwin College). As of the 2008/09 school year, Goodwin College began offering early acceptances in an attempt to secure top students by means of an early fee payment to ensure an enrollment spot.

Not all administrators are convinced that this strategy will pay off. The former long-standing Director of Admissions at Goodwin College believes that parents will still hold off and wait to see where else they are accepted. In her opinion, the lure of the single sex schools is still overwhelming, and as a result, very few will pay the early fees to guarantee a spot (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Either way, early acceptances – like the ‘poaching’ of students – is a very sensitive topic among independent schools in the region.

Goodwin College used to be in competition with day care centers at their satellite campus for primary students ages 3-5 years. In an attempt to reduce this competition, Goodwin College eliminated the program for 3 year olds, introduced a registration fee of $4000, and increased tuition. Interestingly, enrollment increased, suggesting that for parents, cost may be a strong indicator of quality (Head of School, Goodwin College). As a result of this change, administrators are now reaching out to day care centers for recommendations, and are hoping to make presentations to parents interested in enrolling in a JK/SK program. A similar, but slightly more tenuous relationship exists with independent schools that end at grade 6. Goodwin College admissions staff would like to recruit grade 6 graduates to their upper school program, however in doing so they may also recruit younger students, in particular younger siblings of students moving, or recently moved, to a new school for grade 7. As a result of this direct competition below grade 7, these schools have been reluctant to allow Goodwin College admissions access to their parents (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College).

Given the declining school-age population and increased parental knowledge around education generally, the need for independent schools to market effectively
continues to rise in this urban setting. Satisfying enrollment quotas with so-called mission appropriate students is increasingly challenging due to the more competitive marketplace. Part of this competition comes from the public sector; many target group parents attended public schools themselves, and public schools are generally doing better in the public eye than they have in past decades. Despite the fact that they are still under-resourced, there is less striking, and public schools are increasingly offering specialty areas and programs for those that seek them (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). As Goodwin College administrators have become more aware of this competition and the increased options available to parents, they are working to adjust to the changing local marketplace (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College).

Professional biographies of school administrators

Almost fifty years ago, the founding head established Goodwin College as a nursery school. Three years later, a toddler program and an elementary school were started, and after thirty years of successful operation, a secondary school was added. The founding head of school was directly responsible for all aspects of the day-to-day operation of the school, as well as all long term strategic planning. As a former independent school student, the founding head brought not only an understanding of primary school teaching, but of the traditional values and practices of independent school education in the region. Along with a small group of founding administrators, the founding head dictated all school policies and practices. The beliefs of the founding head are clearly evident in the development of the school. Community service endeavors were a central component of school expectations, reflecting the head’s belief in a modern form of ‘noblesse oblige’ for the staff and students of the school. Montessori roots were a contributing factor in the development of the school’s motto, which places the utmost importance on experiential learning.

The elementary school and middle school heads, like the founding head of school, began their education careers in the Montessori classroom. Together with the founding head, these division heads consistently demonstrated a welfarist approach to educational leadership throughout their forty-plus years leading the school community. Their commitment to student-centered education was characterized by their insistence
on high academic standards, collegiality and professional responsibility, experiential or authentic learning, and community service and outreach.

The final senior administrator in the four-person triumvirate responsible for shaping Goodwin College through its formative years was the Director of Admissions. Like the founding head and the elementary school head, the children of the Director of Admissions attended Goodwin College, which allowed this group of administrators to experience the school as both school leaders and parents. The Director of Admissions acted as an important liaison between the parent population and the senior administration team, and used anecdotal feedback to inform decision making, particularly in the early years of the school. Thirty plus years in this position gave her considerable insight into what parents were looking for in a school, however this insight was limited to conversations she had with parents and the value and interpretation she placed on what has been said. More formal input from parents was limited to short response cards at open houses (“How did you hear about Goodwin College?”) and brief exit surveys (“Why are you leaving?”). Since this time, decision making has been increasingly informed by data, as is typical of High Competition schools (see Table 5).

School leadership was in large part governed by a full belief in the responsibility of teachers to act in loco parentis, and structured the school according to what they believed to be the best for their children. As the school matured, and the founding students (and their parents) moved on to other schools, the relationship between parent and administration changed somewhat, but the senior administrators never lost sight of their commitment to provide what they believed to be the best academic experience for the students they serve.

When the school developed an upper school some fifteen years ago, two new administrators joined the team, including a senior school head and an IB diploma coordinator. The IB coordinator had been a teacher at the school, and had been steeped in the values and pedagogical approach of the senior leadership team. As a former parent, the IB coordinator also recognized and appreciated the educational experience received, and worked to promote and develop the mission of the school through IB adoption. The upper school head had only worked at the school for one year before being promoted to a senior administrative position. New to the school, and
perhaps more importantly, new to the teaching profession, the upper school head did not begin this administrative role with strong beliefs about education developed through professional experience. As a result, the upper school head was susceptible to the influence of the strong-willed individuals who were now close colleagues.

Several years into the new century, spurred on by a declining market and economic uncertainty, several new hires joined the administrative team. A Director of Communications was hired in 2003 by the founding head, to “improve the image [of the school, from one that was] wordy and not too concerned with appearances [to something that was] clean, capturing the essence [of the school that was] always evolving” (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). The Director of Communications was to re-brand the school. A new brand was eventually created, but perhaps due to the powerful influence of the founding head, the brand did not significantly alter market perception or the school’s position in the market.

Ultimately it took a new Head of School to initiate meaningful changes in the leadership of Goodwin College. In 2006, the founding Head of Goodwin College retired and a new Head of School was appointed. With this change in leadership, a number of philosophical changes were seen in terms of administrative philosophy. The new Head of School self-identified as a business person first and foremost. The second Head of School had as the foremost task, the development of a second campus for the JK–grade 5 program, and as a result was predominantly concerned with fundraising, marketing, enrollment numbers and retention. Unlike the former head, who was concerned with pedagogy for its own sake, the second Head saw the IB programs additionally as a recruitment tool, and was determined to use any leverage gained through IB program delivery with the school’s target market. Marketing efforts were not limited to the IB program. When speaking of school leadership and school promotion, this Head had a very clear view of the important role of marketing and communications. As a result, the administrative approach to admissions, marketing and advancement have undergone significant changes, including the substantial increase in marketing-related positions typical of High Competition schools (see Table 3), changes in accepted practices and expectations, and most importantly, a shift in marketing philosophy. This shift has been characterized by relative de-emphasis on product
marketing, a phenomenon that appears to be unique to High Competition schools (see Table 8).

Extensive parent surveys were used to determine what parents want from the school, and a new strategic plan put many of the desired changes in place. The use of data rose for Goodwin College, to the relatively high level characteristic of High Competition Schools (see Table 5). Since retention had become an issue for Goodwin College, this Head of School resolved to address parent desires, implementing changes where possible and ensuring better communication between stakeholder groups. It was believed that in doing so, administrators would “empower parents to market better”, and therefore concurrent changes were made to support this marketing through a “significant web presence” (Head of School, Goodwin College).

A Marketing and Communications Coordinator was hired in 2007 to “focus on media effectiveness, determining which communicates best, [as well as what they] are not communicating” in their advertising (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). Concerned with best business practices, the Marketing and Communications Coordinator was responsible for “evaluating the effectiveness of communications, [including an examination of whether or not] advertising is a responsible expense” (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). Other long-term school practices were reexamined by the second Head of School for their effectiveness, and certain practices believed to not to advance, or even detrimental to enrollment targets were altered. For example, Goodwin College pulled out of the provincial association responsible for aptitude testing, since it was determining when admission offers could be presented to students. This Head of School believed that by providing early offers of acceptance, parents would commit to Goodwin College rather than waiting to see if another top-tier school would also accept their child.

This decision was not fully supported by other members of the senior administrative team, who recognize that “early acceptances, like poaching students [from other schools], is a very sensitive issue” among the independent school community (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). This was not the only controversy within the administrative team; the philosophical approach to education held and exercised by the long-term Goodwin College administrators was often contrary to
the changes the second school Head was introducing. This ideological conflict was
difficult for certain members of the administrative team and Board of Directors, and may
have played a role in the decision to terminate this Head’s contract after five years in
the position. A third Head of School has just been hired. The background of this Head
of School is in the classroom, with some experience in both the Admissions and
Advancement departments. It may be that with this hiring, the Board hopes to realign
the administrative team to its earlier pedagogical focus while not neglecting the
necessary considerations of marketing and communications in a highly competitive
market.

**IB Diploma Adoption**

Goodwin College adopted the IB DP program over ten years ago, and within a
few years, added both the MYP and the PYP. School administrators became aware of
the IB DP in the late 1980’s as providing a “superb education [for students, along with
membership in a] great [professional] community” when a Board member suggested
that it might be a good fit for the developing school (IB Diploma Coordinator; Director of
Admissions, Goodwin College). As discussions to add a high school to the existing JK – grade 8 school began in earnest, IB DP implementation was a concurrent
consideration for school administrators (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College).
Given the competitive local upper school market, it would be necessary to ensure the
sustainability of the new upper school through differentiation and strategic marketing.
With the creation of an upper school, Goodwin College would place itself in competition
with many of the well-established, traditional single sex schools in the city. As a result,
there was an awareness that Goodwin College would need to create a niche that would
provide sufficient differentiation that the school could compete effectively in this
challenging market.

The IB DP was seen as an effective means of differentiating the new upper
school and as a result, “marketing was a huge influence in the decision to adopt the IB”
program (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Since the IB DP program was
known as the program for academic excellence among the local parent community, IB
adoption would provide administrators with a way to market the school. It was hoped
that IB program adoption would “bring the school up to the same status level as [a top-tier single sex school]” that ended up implementing the program one year ahead of Goodwin College (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College).

From the beginning, the IB DP was implemented with a larger institution in mind. The intent was that the school would grow, and in order to compete successfully with local competitors, it was believed that significant breadth in course selection was necessary (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College). In the first year of IB implementation, the school received increased applications, suggesting the appeal of the IB DP to the local parent market and their recognition of program merit and status. It became clear in subsequent years, however, that this increase was temporary, likely due in large part to the public school teachers’ strike that was taking place at the time (IB Affiliation Period – Final Letter, 1998).

Course offerings in the early years were extremely broad. The IB requires that a school offer at least one subject in each of the six subject areas, Goodwin College initially offered approximately 10 IB subjects. Since that time, course offerings have continued to grow and now number sixteen. While this often results in small class sizes, administrators continue to believe that this breadth is necessary to remain competitive in the local market; both with other IB schools and with other independent schools that have significantly diversified course offerings. Such a marketing orientation is consistent with the relatively high levels apparently unique to High Competition schools (see Table 7). The decision making around which courses to offer was limited to teachers and administrators, and has depended on student interest, student performance in the subject areas, and teacher availability.

While course planning related to hours, content and assessment are largely mandated by the IB for subject courses, the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, the Extended Essay and the CAS (Community, Action, Service) requirement of the IB diploma require significant local input. At Goodwin College, the TOK course has been offered as a regular course in the timetable taught over one year, taught over the lunch hour for two years, paired with an English course so that each has half time over two years, and taught alone as a half course over two years. Administrators continue to struggle with student accountability; a grade 12 provincial philosophy credit is awarded
upon course completion, but there is minimal overlap in course content between the two
courses. As a result, provincial ministry requirements are generally overlooked in favor
of IB content.

With regard to the Extended Essay and CAS requirements, structures related to
school-based program policies continue to evolve, due largely in part to parental
desires. The structure of the school-based extended essay has shifted to provide
increasing support to students in the form of internal deadlines, support sessions and
communication with parents. This reflects a trend, seen across Canadian independent
schools, of enhanced learning support. According to CAIS statistics, there has been a
national decrease of 14% in student-teacher ratios with no change in the average class
size (Christopher, 2009). This reflects a growth in the so-called ‘soft’ services, including
counseling and resource teachers. In response to this parental desire of greater
student support, Goodwin College administrators have provided interim deadlines,
greater research support, and more structured interactions between student and essay
supervisor. None of these measures are required by the IB; in fact, the intent of the
Extended Essay is that it is an independent research project. While increased support
does not conflict with IB policy regarding Extended Essay administration, it may
eventually violate the spirit of the essay requirement.

Discourse

Intended changes in marketing and communications were developed as part of
the 2007 strategic plan, led by the incoming Head at the time. Three key areas
emerged, the first of which was to develop a “comprehensive plan for improving,
integrating, streamlining and delivering [Goodwin College’s] communication programme
– detailing what information will be communicated, by what means and on what
timeline... [and including] clear guidelines for communication among the various
stakeholders” (Strategic Plan, 2007).

The second key area focused on the development of an overall marketing
strategy. The creation of a formalized, data based, cohesive marketing plan would
represent an important shift away from ad hoc and largely speculative marketing
approach and establish the business-oriented practices and discourse more typical of High Competition schools (see Table 5).

Administrators claim that there is a great divide between faculty and administration with respect to marketing. Independent school teachers are often unaware of the importance of their role in marketing, and administrators are therefore working to provide faculty with a clear understanding of why marketing is important, and with the tools to work in partnership with the marketing staff (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). The head of school is even more blunt in this regard, stating that faculty salaries are linked with marketing, and suggesting that it “hasn’t been pointed out to faculty that the final steps on [the salary grid] are directly related to enrollment” and perhaps should be (Head of School, Goodwin College). Despite the academic environment, the Head believed that at the end of the day, “this [school] is a business; you have to be marketing all the time” (Head of School, Goodwin College). Regardless of job title, all school employees are increasingly expected to act as marketers for the school. This increasing prevalence of sales and market oriented approaches is entirely consistent with other High Competition schools, demonstrating a reliance on these strategies that exceeds that seen in any other group (see Table 7).

An additional challenge facing administrators at Goodwin College relates to the coordination of all marketing efforts (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Despite improvements in communication, there are still some disconnects regarding how to disseminate information and to whom. A new HR position has been created with this in mind, with communication an important focus for this position (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College).

**Marketing Strategies**

Following the appointment of a new Head of School in 2006, administrators at Goodwin College began a more formalized and systematic approach to data collection in order to determine what is attractive to parents and students. The admissions staff began to maintain more thorough database records, and is starting to be able to put percentages to previous intuitions. Inquiries from newspaper ads and website page hits are now being tracked, providing new opportunities to measure effectiveness. Tracking
and database records however still remain an informal collection of data, and to date little has been done with this data.

The views and desires of parents have appeared to become increasingly important, perhaps in an attempt to improve retention and word-of-mouth marketing by families. Despite the increase in sales and market orientations to school promotion, relationship marketing remains high for High Competition schools (see Table 7). Goodwin College carried out a parent survey in 2006/2007 as a key source of data for their upcoming strategic planning process. There was an 87% response rate, and the survey provided school administrators with information regarding the parent body, their perceptions and desires for the school. Parents viewed the high academic standards as the core strength and key differentiator of Goodwin College, and as a result this was, and continues to be, the most important factor in their choice of school. (Parent Survey, 2007).

**Product Orientation**

In order to survive and grow, Goodwin College administrators instituted numerous changes over the years, perhaps most significantly the adoption and implementation of the three IB programs. This adoption was a deliberate strategy designed to create a unique niche in the local market, differentiating the school from its competitors. While implementation of the IB DP was predominantly motivated by marketing concerns, the approach to marketing at the time was still immature.

Recent changes in leadership have placed marketing concerns in a position of priority, and now are acknowledged to influence decision making in a more significant manner. Administrators are looking for more innovated ways of selling key attributes of the school, including the IB program and the commitment to a coeducational, non-denominational environment (Director of Admissions; Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). While Goodwin College administrators have always been conscious of what other independent schools in the region are doing with regard to programming, their new focus on marketing forces administrators to ensure that the school’s differential is maintained (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College). Student exchanges, a 'challenge week' program, and a grade 9 integrated, experiential program
were all adopted in order to “make us a little bit different … to give us an edge” (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College).

Marketing considerations were therefore central to the implementation of most, if not all programs adopted within the last five years, exemplifying the de-emphasis of product oriented marketing typical of High Competition schools (see Table 8). As administrators found out however, different is not always an advantage in the competitive local market. In the early days of the grade 9 experiential program, there was some concern among parents that the word ‘experiential’ “seemed a bit flakey” (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). In fact, this program acquired the reputation that it was a special education program, for weak or at-risk students, but one that all grade 9 students participated in. As a result, administrators had to do some quick public relations with families at the school, demonstrating how this program was every bit as academically rigorous as programs at competitor schools, and that the difference was in the real-world extras that it offered.

Ultimately, the key differentiator at Goodwin College is its reputation for academic excellence, of which the IB program is a large part. Parents looking for an IB school have several local independent schools to choose from; what distinguishes Goodwin College is that it is currently the only co-ed IB school in the greater metropolitan area. It is estimated that approximately 10% of new admissions come because of the IB program (Director of Advancement; Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). While some parents seek out an IB school for their child or children, many still do not know what it is (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). As a result, Goodwin College administrators cannot rely on the IB brand alone to market the school.

Sales Orientation

In addition to monitoring program offerings at local independent schools, Goodwin College administrators have become increasingly aware of marketing strategies at these schools. In the last few years, most of the local schools have ramped up their advertising, promoting their schools in such media as En Route magazine, financial magazines, city bus shelters and neighborhood newspapers (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Goodwin College administrators confess
that ultimately all ads sound very much the same; what is significant in many ways is that sameness (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College).

Administrators at Goodwin College want their school to be seen on the same level as the other, more traditional, top-tier competitor schools. What is different in the ads is the particular brand that has been displayed. Branding is new and pervasive among the local independent schools, and bring a new look to all marketing materials (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). This shift may be due in part to the retiring of the “old guard” of school marketers (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Up until the mid to late 1990’s, school marketing in local schools was largely the province of Directors of Admissions. Often this position was filled by a teacher who had chosen to pursue an administrative role in the school; as a result, their knowledge of marketing was generally learned on the job, working with school-based colleagues and other Admissions Directors from other schools. Around 10-15 years ago, the largest boarding schools began to hire other support positions with a focus on fundraising and marketing. It is at this time when the first Directors of Marketing and Directors of Advancement appeared in local independent schools (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College).

Now, as long-term Directors of Admissions are retiring, they are often being replaced by individuals with a different, and perhaps more current understanding of independent school marketing.

While relationship marketing and word of mouth school promotion are believed to be the most effective form of school marketing, Goodwin College administrators also pursue more traditional forms of advertising. In fact, sales oriented marketing is higher in High Competition schools like Goodwin College than in any other group (see Table 7). Enabled by the creation of an advertising budget, administrators now market to specific regions of the city, targeted by proximity and affluence (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College). For a day school like Goodwin College, geographic location is important, so local advertising targets key neighborhood markets and feeder schools, identified through postal code analysis (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Despite their efforts these target markets did not really understand what Goodwin College represented and the advantages it offered, so the advertising was redesigned to focus on co-education and other attributes of the school (Director of Advancement,
Goodwin College). By being clear on what the school provides, it becomes easier for prospective families to favorably assess fit. For example, in some ads, the profile of an IB graduate is presented, and the message to families is clearly understood and remembered (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). The IB program is better known now than it was even 5 years ago, but parents are still apprehensive about student fit, stress, and university admissions (IB Diploma Coordinator; Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). By celebrating the IB scores of high achieving students, and demonstrating how the IB applies to life, school administrators can assuage many of these concerns (IB Diploma Coordinator; Director of Advancement, Goodwin College).

In addition to academic successes, community outreach activities are highlighted; such activities are often more credible for prospective families than a philosophical statement since students are not paid while actively giving back to the community (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). Such outreach activities also have the advantage of improving the school’s reputation in the general community (Head of School, Goodwin College). Web development, while potentially improving the effectiveness of word of mouth marketing by current families, has other tangible marketing benefits. Overseas families depend on the web to select and maintain ties with a school (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Visitors to the school or parents responding to an ad will often look at the website to gain key information about the school (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). As a result, administrators at Goodwin College hired a company to refine their web product that deals exclusively with North American independent schools. As part of this improvement, the school now appears higher in web searches such as Google or MSN, increasing their reach in the international market (Head of School, Goodwin College). A presence on the IBO website is powerful marketing, as are listings with diplomats, international companies and consulates, and Goodwin College administrators are increasingly taking advantage of these opportunities (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). In all of these advertising endeavors, administrators are learning to focus on media effectiveness. Interest in what communicates best is clear, but for
maximum advertising value, administrators will "also need to look at what [they] are not communicating" (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College).

Another change in admissions practices is that staff no longer hold weekend open houses for the public due to an apparent lack of a positive effect on enrollment (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Goodwin College’s competitor schools are predominantly old, established, and affluent schools, and despite the recent investment in infrastructure, the buildings and facilities at Goodwin College cannot compete. As a result, Admissions staff now host groups of 5 families during the day, when the school is in session and the focus is on student engagement, learning and the school community rather than on the physical structure of the school (Head of School, Goodwin College).

One of the most efficient ways of communicating and advertising a school, its values, advantages and opportunities, is through school branding. Goodwin College began to explore the concept of branding in the early 2000’s, when the marketing committee sought to develop a school logo (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). Prior to this time, advertising had tended to be wordy and not too concerned with appearance. As part of this early branding initiative, a Director of Communications was hired by the Head of School to brand the school and unify the look of all communications. Interestingly, there was “a lot of trouble getting that going. The concept of change [around advertising practices was] making people nervous,” and so movement in this direction was slow (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). To this day, there is still no clear image for Goodwin College. The existing brand could not be clearly identified as such by the majority of stakeholders. It is used sporadically, and is “flowery, more suitable for a nursery school”, especially when compared to some of the “more focused, sharper ads” of competitors (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College).

**Market Orientation**

Prior to the development of the 2007 Strategic Plan, parents were asked to volunteer on task force committees and focus groups to gather and provide information on parent decision-making, knowledge of the school, and opinions of, and desires for, the school in the near future (CESI Self Evaluation Report, 2007). The data collected from these groups was combined with that from the 2006/07 parent survey, to form the basis for the five year strategic plan (2007-2012). Of the five strands of the strategic
plan, three follow directly from survey results; the academic program, the co-curricular program, and parent/community engagement.

Based on parent desires and/or recommendations, grades 1-6 co-curriculars are in the process of being enhanced, including the creation of a new staff position to oversee this change (Head of School; Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). While parents expressed a desire to see enhanced co-curricular offerings, they did not dictate the changes to be made. School administrators decided the specific direction these changes would take, for instance introducing competitive sports at the grade 4-6 level (Head of School, Goodwin College). The other two strands, facilities development and marketing/communications involve related areas. In order to improve co-curricular, social and volunteer opportunities, school facilities had to be improved upon. As a result, a new capital campaign was initiated in order to finance these substantial changes. This has led to the acquisition of two new buildings a short distance away from the school, which now house the JK-grade 5 classes. These buildings have completely new facilities, and the existing building is in the process of undergoing considerable restructuring as the upper school (grades 6-12) expands.

What is critical to administrators is the reason behind these changes. Goodwin College administrators believe that they are building for the long term, not just reacting to stated parental desires for new, improved facilities (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). Communications was another area of need identified by the parent survey, and the effectiveness of communications was subsequently formally evaluated. Based on a demonstrated need, a new marketing/communications position was created (Marketing & Communications Manager, Goodwin College). The focus for improved communications relates to school transitions; promotion from the lower to the upper school, and movement between the three IB programs. This attempt to address transitions is one of the key reasons why the grade 6 class was transferred to the upper school. As a result of this change, grade 6 students now have specialist teachers and follow the IB Middle Years Program. The same change has recently occurred at Mountain Heights Academy, and in both instances the main reason for this change is marketing. For both sets of school administrators, the belief is that if students transfer to the upper school one year prior to the transitions occurring at other schools, the hope
is parents and students will be less likely to transfer schools following grade 6 (Head of School, Goodwin College). A market orientation therefore holds a significant component of the marketing mix, typical of High Competition schools (see Table 7).

**Relationship Orientation**

Historically, Goodwin College prided itself on its small, cozy, family atmosphere, where high parental involvement resulted in close ties between parents, students and faculty (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College). When the school expanded to include a new high school program and moved to a new location, structures became established that had previously been ad hoc, and significant growth occurred. As a result, the identity of Goodwin College and what it represented to employees and families became unclear. Since no marketing beyond relationship marketing in the school community was being done, this transition period was less obvious, and perhaps as a result, took longer to transition through. The adoption of the IB marked the end of this nebulous period for school administrators, and Goodwin College has now become renowned for academic excellence and faculty quality and commitment in a coeducational environment (IB Diploma Coordinator, Goodwin College; Parent Survey, 2007).

Goodwin College administrators view parents as key partners in the development and maintenance of a financially successful school. Not only do parents pay tuition fees, but through their involvement and enthusiasm for the school, parents are of paramount important in their ability to market the school through word of mouth. In fact, the Goodwin College Head maintains that one of the best strategies for successfully competing with the local independent schools is by enhancing the effect of parent marketers (Head of School, Goodwin College). Parents are most effective as markers when they are involved and informed about school life. Parents become knowledgeable about the school’s organization, faculty and staff, programs and facilities through both electronic and print media, and face to face interactions with school personnel. A detailed website provides the most up-to-date information for parents regarding programs and school activities. It also allows for easy contact between parents and faculty by connecting to the school’s email. Electronic newsletters, push pages, and brochures for programmes such as the international exchange programme, Challenge
Week, and the international service expedition to India are also available for parent viewing. Print publications include the school prospectus, annual report, Parent Calendar & Handbook, Student Planner, and course calendar & curriculum guidelines.

One piece of data that remains entirely consistent with previous anecdotal knowledge is that the large majority, roughly 90-96% of current parents, hear about the school through word of mouth (Head of School; Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Importantly, the fact that parents have become much more knowledgeable about their children’s education may have considerable consequences for the role of word-of-mouth marketing. Historically, independent schools have always relied on word-of-mouth as their predominant marketing tool. As administrators at Goodwin College have begun to formalize their marketing practices, they continue to rely heavily on this means of communication and promotion. As a result, strategies to ensure parents are effective ambassadors of the school are critical, even more so due to the issues of retention and recruitment intensified by the current economic downturn.

One way that Goodwin College administrators have decided to empower stakeholders is through the school website. Until a year ago, the school’s web presence was “awful”; it has since been redesigned to be more user-friendly and a more effective marketing tool (Head of School, Goodwin College). Current parents are now being involved in the recruitment process. An involved and satisfied current parent is asked to take responsibility for a group of 5 or 6 prospective families and call them to answer questions following a school visit. This provides a valuable opportunity for word-of-mouth marketing. As senior school graduates are still relatively young, administrators are also working to develop alumni relations (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Through a new alumni association, administrators are in the process of enhancing ties between the school and its graduates. Both graduates and past parents have become focal points for relationship marketing, and administrators are trying to build life-long relationships with these groups. Ultimately, the more satisfied and connected representatives the school can support, the more powerful and widespread word of mouth marketing will be. Relationship marketing with current parents has also received greater attention in recent years due to retention issues at Goodwin College (Director of Advancement, Goodwin College). Administrators are
increasingly willing to respond to parental concerns and desires, and as a result processes and procedures are done on an ad-hoc basis rather than relying on clearly defined and rigid practices.

**Developing new managerialism**

Goodwin College administrators work within a highly competitive independent school market. Only a decade or two ago, school leadership and marketing demonstrated a welfarist orientation, but with changing school Heads and an increasingly competitive market, administrators have had to adapt. The school’s marketing mix has shifted from strongly product-oriented to one that demonstrates a roughly balanced combination of all four marketing orientations. Administrators remain convinced of the merits of the IB diploma program, and program marketing remains an important component of school promotion. All promotional materials are designed around the IB continuum from JK to grade 12, and highlight the values of this exceptional program.

A selling orientation is evident in the advertising produced by Goodwin College administrators, but this is as much a norm-seeking behavior as it is aggressive school promotion. All independent schools in the region advertise using a variety of media, and Goodwin College is no exception. Relationship oriented marketing is increasingly important for Goodwin College. As the senior school ages, graduates are now professionals, and will soon start having children of their own. The alumni association is becoming significantly more active than it was its early days, and ties with alumni and their parents are being strengthened.

The most significant approach to school promotion for Goodwin College administrators is a marketing orientation. High Competition schools demonstrate the highest level of market orientation in school promotion, and Goodwin College exemplifies this (see Table 7). Goodwin College administrators are willing to be highly flexible in adapting academic programs to a wide variety of student needs and interests. The student services department (including special needs and counseling) has increased from one to four, and personal education plans are varied and valued. Parents are considered partners in determining an appropriate education plan for their
child, and administrators work to support programs that are in the best interest of the individual student. This produces challenging for faculty, but parents are highly satisfied with the level of personal attention and accommodation that they receive.

Given the importance of word-of-mouth marketing at Goodwin College, parental satisfaction is of great value, and so in many regards, this marketing orientation evolves into a more sophisticated form of relationship marketing. Goodwin College administrators monitor consumer satisfaction through regular data collection and analysis. All of these activities indicate the predominance of a new managerial approach at Goodwin College. As has been reinforced before, this does not suggest that administrators are indifferent to the quality of education they provide; rather it demonstrates an attention to the business concerns of the school as an organization.
CHAPTER 6: CROSS CASE ANALYSIS

Environmental Indicators: Market position and Professional biographies

Identified by Gewirtz and Ball (2000) in their model of institutional change, certain key factors mediate the shift between welfarist and new managerial languages and practices. Data from this study suggests that the market position of the school in the local competitive arena and the professional biographies of key school administrators can be used to explain the extent to which both discourse and the resulting administrative practices in the case study schools have shifted along the continuum from those of welfarism toward new managerialism.

Market position of the schools

Differentiators

Administrators at each of the three case study schools describe their schools based on the differential. To some extent, this has been true throughout the history of independent education in Canada; independent schools have been characterized by what made them different from public schools. Given the changes in the education market, in particular the role of parental (and student) choice and the globalization phenomenon, independent schools are now, more than ever, focusing on what makes them different – and better – than other schools. The schools in this study are no different. They differentiate based on their competitors and based on their target market, and each of these schools is doing this successfully as demonstrated by their healthy enrollment.

Long Island School differentiates on the bases of academics and co-curricular pursuits. It is the only independent school in the region, a fact which, in and of itself, provides a strong differentiating feature. The IB diploma program is the only academic differentiator, but administrators use a number of unique co-curricular features to distinguish and market their school. The Round Square program, frequent participation in Outward Bound activities, an exceptional hockey program, and daily participation in sports for all students, function to distinguish Long Island School from its competitors.
As with Long Island School, independent school status is the key differentiator for Mountain Heights Academy, despite what appears to be a very different competitive market. Features such as the student-teacher ratio, the availability of individual support and instruction, co-curricular opportunities and university acceptance rates all recommend independent schooling to families when choosing a school. Mountain Heights Academy also heavily emphasizes the quality of the academic program as an important differentiator. The IB Diploma program is featured prominently in all promotional materials, communicating clearly the belief that program excellence will result in enrollment. Other co-curricular differentiators are visible, such as the historic focus on the Arts that impacts academic requirements in the senior school.

For Goodwin College, key differentiators are the IB academic program, a coeducational environment and experiential learning opportunities. Unlike the other schools, independent school status is a less significant differentiator due to the fact that most competition comes from a robust independent school market, centered around a number of longstanding single sex schools. While experiential learning has been a part of the school’s history since its origin, in recent years it has enjoyed a renewed focus, further distinguishing Goodwin College from its competitors. Key school differentiators for study schools are summarized in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differentiator</th>
<th>Long Island School</th>
<th>Mountain Heights Academy</th>
<th>Goodwin College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent School Education</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>√</td>
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<tr>
<td>IB</td>
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<td>Co-curriculars</td>
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<td>Experiential learning</td>
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Table 10: School Differentiators
Competitors

As suggested by the focus of Long Island School and Mountain Heights Academy on their independent school status, the primary competition from these schools comes from the public sector. For Long Island School, it is a matter of geography; there are no other independent schools in the region. For Mountain Heights Academy, while a number of longstanding and well regarded independent schools are within a reasonable commuting drive, there is some geographical separation between them. While this decreases the competitive pressures from these schools, there are many strong local public schools nearby that serve an affluent and academically-oriented population. As a result, these schools are becoming more like independent schools by providing magnet or specialized programs, academic streams such as the IB program or AP, and enhanced co-curricular offerings. Administrators in these public schools are also marketing these changes, attempting to demonstrate that they offer all the advantages of an independent school education. The response from Mountain Heights Academy administrators is to maintain the varied and distinct advantages that they provide cannot be imitated within the constraints of a public school setting.

Public schools are less significant competitors for Goodwin College; the bulk of their competition comes from traditional single sex schools with strong academics and historic reputations. Rhetoric from school administrators describes a form of cooperation; advancement techniques are shared, heads meetings and workshops provide opportunities for collaboration, and admissions personnel attempt to match student ‘fit’ with what the school can provide. The same rhetoric is seen with Mountain Heights Academy administrators. The issue of student ‘fit’ is however, becoming increasingly challenging with a limited pool of students.

Long Island School has addressed the issue of competition by searching for international students to fill their boarding houses. For day schools such as Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College, they must fill their admissions quotas in other ways. Mountain Heights Academy administrators maintain that cooperation among independent schools is real. They believe that the schools in the region have sufficiently diversified so that there is little overlap among school differentiators. When Mountain Heights Academy expanded their lower school to include grades 9 through
12, administrators initially encountered significant competition from established schools in the region. In response to this competition, a detailed and ultimately successful marketing plan was devised to effectively differentiate the new upper school and alleviate some of these competitive pressures. Independent schools in the region offer IB, AP and the provincial curriculum. Some are large, while others are small. Some cater to students with special needs or particular co-curricular interests. It appears that no two independent schools in the region overlap with all key differentiating features. Student numbers for many of the schools in this region likely remains healthy due in large part to an influx of international students who reside locally. With sufficient student numbers to meet enrollment quotas, it becomes easier for admissions personnel to be more generous about sharing potential families. In fact, administrators at Mountain Heights Academy maintain that if a student is not a particularly good fit for their school, knowing the specialties of the other local independent schools, the student will be referred to a school where there is a better match.

Unlike Mountain Heights Academy, the student population at Goodwin College does not include significant international representation. In response to the declining national student population, many schools in this region are redefining what they consider to be ‘mission-appropriate’ students. The most significant consequence of this shift is that there is increasing overlap among schools, and no clear differentiation among qualifiers of student ‘fit’. This has led to increased competition, despite the rhetoric of collaboration and cooperation. Goodwin College’s withdrawal from the SSAT organization and subsequent acceptance of early acceptances with fee payment demonstrates administrators’ beliefs that this system unfairly favored long-standing schools with the highest social status. Goodwin College now includes grade 6 in the upper school (as does Mountain Heights Academy), a move that encourages retention of students between grades 7 and 8. The relationship between Goodwin College and other ‘feeder’ schools that end at grade 6 is now even more tenuous, and the ‘poaching’ of students at any grade level is a highly sensitive topic.

**Target Market**

Just as Canadian independent schools are developing their differentiators in an increasingly competitive educational market, many school administrators are
reconsidering their conception of their target market. Administrative knowledge of a school’s target market varies considerably across case study schools. Part of this is dependent upon need; where competition is intense, school administrators must be keenly aware of the characteristics and desires of their market to remain competitive. As a result, administrators at Long Island School maintain that they have limited knowledge of prospective families and how to reach them effectively. This does not, however, entirely reflect the reality of marketing practices at Long Island School. Initiatives such as hiring a Co-Director of Admissions with a focus on outreach, and the Hockey Excellence program demonstrate an awareness and understanding of their most promising market areas. The continuing success at international recruitment shows a similar understanding of the school’s market.

This lack of confidence when discussing the school’s target market may stem from the origin of this understanding; to date, Long Island School administrators have done little in the way of objective data collection or market research. Anecdotal understanding shapes market awareness; parents of student athletes are drawn by the Hockey Excellence program, international students come for a Canadian education and the IB Diploma, and increasingly, local students come for the advantages of an independent school education. Administrators acknowledge that a clear, research-based marketing strategy is ultimately needed, but since there appears to be no immediate need to alter admissions and/or marketing practices, this type of research has not yet been initiated.

In contrast, Mountain Heights Academy began their upper school with an in-depth market analysis due to the competitive pressures they faced. The target student population for Mountain Heights Academy was confirmed to be increasingly international and diverse. Their affluent, international community knows the IB as a global credential with tangible and intangible benefits, and it was this knowledge that led to the adoption of the PYP, MYP and Diploma programs. Market research results have also impacted advertising and admissions practices; much has been streamlined to allow for an overseas market. Essentially all marketing is done through the school’s website, or simple ads or postcards that direct the individual to the school’s website. Local recruitment is accomplished in a similar manner. Parents are increasingly
knowledgeable about education; they are looking for academic enrichment, broad co-curriculars and strong community engagement, all differentiators that Mountain Heights Academy is able to provide.

While Long Island School and Mountain Heights Academy may represent opposite ends of the market research continuum, Goodwin College falls somewhere in the middle. Competitive pressure for Goodwin College is just as great if not greater than at Mountain Heights Academy, but it took somewhat longer for Mountain Heights Academy administrators to begin any form of systematic market research. Goodwin College administrators, like their colleagues at Long Island School, until very recently characterized their target market entirely through anecdotal evidence. Similar to Mountain Heights Academy’s market, parents at Goodwin College wanted a strong, university preparatory program in a co-educational environment. Independent education is seen as necessary for many families, for both the tangible and intangible benefits it provides. Most students are local, but administrators are increasingly considering corporate transfers and international families to counter decreases in the local market population by capitalizing on the IB advantage in an increasingly globalized world. The development of an upper school at Goodwin College predates that of Mountain Heights Academy, but by only a handful of years, and did not coincide with any research relating to the school’s target market.

The catalyst for market research at Goodwin College appears to be the opening of a new lower school campus, a short distance away from the original school building. With this opening, school administrators began developing a new marketing and communications plan, along with a new branding and advertising campaign. What was most clear was that grade 7-12 students were increasingly powerful in school choice decisions. In response, Goodwin College administrators designed a marketing campaign that spoke to upper school students, and another that targets the JK/SK parent (an area in enrollment difficulty). Rather than trying to market indiscriminately to all family members and as a result being somewhat successful with all, Goodwin College administrators are now recognizing the realities of their target market with regard to decision making and are targeting marketing efforts more directly. The hope is that this directed marketing will be more successful with principle decision makers.
Long Island School administrators have recognized a similar shift in their target market, and are contemplating marketing to students as well as parents. To date, Mountain Heights Academy does not appear to be considering a similar change.

Considering the three case study schools in the area of market position, it is clear that administrators at each school demonstrate aspects of both welfarism and new managerialism. Each school offers a variety of programs, whether academic or co-curricular, in an attempt provide superior educational opportunities for students. The extent to which these programs are considered differentiators may in part reflect the extent of the shift from a welfarist to a new managerialist approach. Programs that are adopted solely to improve a student’s educational experience may be more strongly indicative of a welfarist approach, however this is not seen in any of the case study schools. Instead, each of these schools has recently adopted new programs, aware of the marketing potential of these programs. As a result, new managerialist considerations appear to have played a role in adoption decisions.

An awareness or acknowledgement of a more business-like approach to educational decision making does seem to vary from school to school. Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College are forthcoming about the strategic nature of the decision to adopt certain programs. At both schools administrators recognized that these programs contained strategic marketing potential in addition to obvious pedagogical merit, and this factored in to their adoption decisions. Administrators at Long Island School are reluctant to describe programming decisions as strategic or of marketing significance; instead they prefer to focus on the pedagogical merit of the program. This may reflect the realities of the educational markets of these three schools. The competitive markets of Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College are easily linked to the business environment characterizing the urban location of the schools. Competition and a business orientation are more evident and perhaps more easily acknowledged in such as setting, and a result, the transition from a welfarist to a new-managerialist approach is more apparent. That does not mean that administrators in more competitive environments fully embrace a more business oriented approach to educational administration. As demonstrated by Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College, the rhetoric of independent school collaboration is pervasive, despite
a reality increasingly characterized by competition for students. In light of increasing competition, school administrators are turning to a more business-like approach to marketing, conducting formal market analysis research or collecting data in an objective and systematic manner. Research results are beginning to displace anecdotal evidence at schools in more competitive markets, and marketing policies are being shaped and informed by these results.

Professional biographies of school administrators

Heads of Schools

In an independent school, the Head of School is the most influential person when it comes to establishing and/or developing the culture of a school. He or she plays a critical role in establishing policy and procedures for the school, and has a considerable impact on most, if not all, facets of school life. All of the heads of schools, past and present, of the schools in this study began their educational careers as teachers. This career path, from teacher to administrator, predisposes these school heads to a welfarist orientation of leadership. In order for a school head to begin to incorporate aspects of new managerialism into his or her leadership approach, there would need to be a clear advantage for doing so. This advantage could be tangible improvements in student retention, faculty recruitment and so on, or it could be the result of norm-seeking behaviors in a community of school heads.

While the current head of Long Island School was not the founding head, he has been in his role for well over two decades. This head of school self-identifies as a solitary leader, and this is true in a number of ways. First and foremost, he is the only independent school head in the region. As a result, he does not work within a community of leaders, unless an effort is made to go beyond the annual meeting of Canadian independent school heads. This school head does not, therefore, experience any great pressures for norm-seeking; the only relevant norm for consideration is the recent history of the school, which is characterized, of course, by the actions and philosophies of that same school head. This head of school is also a solitary leader in that he favors an autocratic style of leadership. As an experienced leader, he does not require or desire a more collaborative senior administrative team approach, however his
leadership is based on collegiality, professional respect and autonomy. He believes strongly that all administrative decisions should be based on student learning outcomes, exemplifying welfarism in both his rhetoric and practices. Interestingly, there are certain instances where this school head suggests that they 'should' be doing something different, often in regard to school marketing practices. It is unclear why he believes this to be the case; it may be due to anecdotal evidence collected through school activities, or it may be a result of the influence of CAIS school activities and a small impulse toward norm-seeking.

The leadership of Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College differs significantly from Long Island School. Both Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College enjoyed a long period of successful leadership under their founding heads of schools. These schools began through the partnership between a group of parents and teachers who wanted to address a perceived gap in the education market, and were entirely welfarist in their approach. In many regards, these school heads were comparable to the current Long Island School head in their educational beliefs, consistently demonstrating a fundamental belief in welfarism. They were directly responsible for all aspects of school governance, and their welfarist values were reflected in a wide variety of school policies and practices. These founding heads were also strongly pragmatic, and were not oblivious to certain marketing demands. It may be, however, that the education market at the time was not under the competitive pressures that are experienced today, and as a result, a welfarist philosophy of school leadership was either encouraged, or at the very least allowed to flourish. When these founding heads left the school, there came an opportunity for change, including the incorporation of a somewhat more new managerialist approach to educational leadership.

During the first decade of the new century, the Head of School changed in both Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College. The educational market was also changing, becoming significantly more competitive in these schools' urban locations. Each of these new school heads were hired for a specific purpose; they were experienced leaders near the end of their careers, and were appointed to accomplish a strategic planning element devised by their predecessors. For Mountain Heights
Academy, their new school head was hired for his long-term commitment to the IB program as a whole. Throughout his career he had worked as a teacher, a school administrator, and as a consultant for the IB organization. His main task was to oversee the successful implementation of the IB programs at the school. The head of school at Goodwin College was hired to locate, finance and build a lower school campus. Despite the fact that these two seasoned school heads appeared to inherit similar schools, their approach to school leadership was quite different.

The Mountain Heights Academy head was concerned with creating an educational program that would provide a quality educational product for students. His belief in the IB program as the pinnacle of educational experiences demonstrated a firmly-held commitment to a student-centered, internationally minded school culture. In this way, he built on the work of the founding head, and continued to espouse and practice a welfarist approach to educational leadership. Staff both respected and appreciated the leadership of this new head, and perhaps due in part to a similarity in educational philosophy, the transition between heads was relatively smooth.

In contrast, the Goodwin College head set out, as charged, to expand the business that was the school. Unlike any of the other school heads, this head of school worked in public schools for the majority of his career. He had demonstrated himself to be an innovative and entrepreneurial leader in the public sector, and espoused a business mentality. He saw the IB as a recruitment tool, and reinforced the importance of faculty marketing. While the head of Goodwin College was concerned with the quality of educational experience provided to students, he believed that a business orientation was necessary for success in the current local education market. Perhaps due in part to this shift to an explicitly new managerial approach, administrators and faculty found the transition between heads challenging.

The current heads at Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College, both appointed within the last two years, represent in many ways a logical progression from the previous heads. Mountain Heights Academy has again selected an experienced administrator with a teaching background. Once appointed, he participated in a strategic planning process that identified a number of program-related initiatives. A focus on the personalization of learning, support and curriculum, as well as greater
emphasis on the arts, athletics, citizenship, and outdoor education reflects a commitment to welfarist ideals. This focus on the personalization of learning however also reflects new managerialist realities. Many independent schools are introducing differentiated, student-centered instruction, the use of technology for student support and the abundance of resources teachers. Such support structures, while they undoubtedly benefit students, allow schools to expand who is defined as mission-appropriate, an asset when competition for students is great. Secondly, these support structures are typically highly attractive to parents, and may represent a powerful marketing tool. Other components of the strategic plan include an international dimension, including a Mandarin language program, overseas partner school and service learning, and an expansion and development of the physical facilities. These changes are also highly marketable as parents value both the credentials that come with global experience and the attractiveness of new, state-of-the-art facilities.

The current Goodwin College head also represents a balance of welfarist and new managerialist approaches. If administrators and faculty at Goodwin College were uncomfortable with the overtly business orientation of the second school head, the current head would represent a return to more comfortable welfarist principles while still retaining the competitive benefits of new managerialism. This head of school has worked as a teacher as is new to school headship, but has also worked in the admissions and advancement departments of the school. As a result, he represents a combination of welfarist and new managerial backgrounds, committed to student-centered pedagogy while addressing the business realities of running an independent school. To date he has initiated a new branding and advertising campaign, and is in the process of developing a new marketing and communications plan.

Senior Administrative team members

Just as all of the heads of school from the case study schools began their careers as classroom teachers, so too did all senior academic administrative team members. Senior administrators tend to focus primarily on pedagogy, consistently demonstrating a belief in the importance of teaching and student learning. For most of these administrators, they are not concerned with the business aspects of independent school leadership; this appears to be one of the main differentiators between the roles
of head of school and division head/principal. The vision for the school is determined by the school head; pragmatic details related to teaching and learning are addressed by the school head in conjunction with the division head/principal, while pragmatic business details are addressed by the head alone.

At Long Island School, strategic planning resides with the school head. A small group of academic administrators are strongly loyal to the head of school, and readily accept his direction. Due to his long tenure at the school, this head of school has had the opportunity to hire and develop a cohesive team that responds well to his particular style of leadership. They work together to implement the academic vision of the head, and are united philosophically and procedurally.

The administrative structure of Mountain Heights Academy is significantly more complex than that of either Long Island School or Goodwin College. Three division heads are supported by five vice principals; in addition, there are over a dozen program coordinators who oversee various academic and co-curricular programs. The overall effect of this compartmentalization is uncertain, but it is possible that it encourages a focus on individual student experience rather than student experiences within the context of an organization. This would suggest a more welfarism-oriented administrative team, and in fact, senior administrators at Mountain Heights Academy consistently demonstrate a welfarist approach to program management and frequently appear divorced from business-oriented concerns.

The philosophical approach of the senior administrative team at Goodwin College has changed, but still predominantly reflects welfarist concerns. In the early days of the school, the senior administrators were not only teachers, but parents with children who attended the school. As a result, they demonstrated an approach to education that was strongly centered on the in loco parentis responsibility. This intensely welfarist approach has been tempered as new administrators replace those retiring. In addition, the second school head continually reinforced to his administrators and faculty what he saw as the business realities of independent school education. As a result, there appears to be a greater awareness and consideration of business concerns when considering program management.
Changes in Administrative teams

Administrative changes in Canadian independent schools in the past decade seem to have centered around three main areas; admissions, learning resource/support, and communications, development and marketing. While these areas may have an impact upon the educational experience provided to students, the focus is predominantly on attending to the needs of the organization. These new managerialist concerns reflect the balance between efficiency (resource availability and allocation) and effectiveness (positive student outcomes).

Within the last decade, the admissions department at Long Island School has changed from a one-person department to a department with four full time and two part time admissions officers. One of these part time admissions officers is also the Director of Hockey Operations, a position that is closely linked with student recruitment and retention. The job description for one of the admissions officer position has been altered significantly. Between 2005 and 2008, the school employed Co-Director of admissions who was responsible for travelling throughout the region to aggressively promote the school. This is a clear shift towards a more new managerialist approach, and is counter to the prevailing rhetoric and policies of Long Island School's administrative team. Not surprisingly, this position was altered in 2008 to assume a more traditional approach to admissions, reflecting a return to a more welfarist approach in admission practices.

Mountain Heights Academy has seen a similar expansion of its admissions department. Five years ago, all admissions activities were conducted jointly by the Principal of the junior school, the Head of school, and a part time admissions coordinator. Mountain Heights Academy now employs a full time Director of Admissions and an Admissions assistant, although the Principal of the Early Learning Center is also actively involved in student intake.

Neither is Goodwin College an exception to this growth trend. Over the past three years, two Admissions officers have been added to the department, along with an admissions assistant. These hires reflect the growing challenge schools face in terms of the recruitment of sufficient numbers of mission-appropriate students. Admissions departments are becoming more innovative and active in student recruitment, and this
requires greater staffing. While concern for mission-appropriate student intake is a welfarist concern, the reality for these schools in an increasingly competitive educational market is enrollment quotas must be met in order to ensure the ongoing viability of the school. Larger admissions departments are therefore a clear indication of the increasing salience of a new managerialist approach to educational leadership.

Growing numbers of learning resource/support personnel addresses both welfarist and new managerial interests. Providing learning support for students as needed exemplifies student-centered pedagogy and is in close alignment with welfarist ideals. The provision of such support however, can also be considered from a new managerialist perspective: differentiated learning and individualized programming is highly marketable. After a period of cut backs in public education related to learning support, many of the Canadian independent schools are now promoting such programs. Mountain Heights Academy hired a learning resource teacher in 2004 who is supported by two teacher-librarians, and from 2007 to present, Goodwin College has hired 3 full time resource teachers.

To date Long Island School has not hired a learning resource teacher. This may be due to a difference in competitor influence: in their isolated setting, administrators at Long Island School may not feel the norm-seeking pressures to adhere with this current practice. Alternatively, there may be less pressure from parents to provide such services due to different needs or expectations. The final growth area across independent schools is that of marketing and communications. Long Island School hired its first communications coordinator almost a decade ago. Responsible for all print and electronic publications, media and advertising, the considerable scope of this job made it difficult to deviate from establish practices. In recent years, the need to re-evaluate their communications has become clear to Long Island School administrators and this is an identified priority in their current strategic plan.

Mountain Heights Academy recently hired a Director of Communications and Marketing and a Communications coordinator; prior to these hires the Head of school and various school principals were responsible for all aspects of marketing and communications. As with Long Island School, improving communication with
stakeholders is also an identified priority in the current strategic plan for Mountain Heights Academy.

Similar changes are occurring at Goodwin College. While a communications position has existed at Goodwin College since the turn of the century, the focus for this part-time position was predominantly local advertising and the creation of unified print publications for the school. Five years ago a full-time Communications and Marketing officer was hired, and a much more systematic and intentional approach to these areas was adopted. Recently an E-communications officer was hired to develop the school’s online presence and online community.

There is no doubt that these case study schools, like many independent schools across the country, are increasing staffing related to both the admissions and marketing/communications. It seems likely that the extent of these changes is related to the increasing competitive pressures faced by the various independent schools. All schools are experiencing a decrease in the school-age population, but the ability of each school to offset some of this decline by accessing non-traditional market areas is critical in determining the challenge presented by this decline. Similarly, the size and degree of niche specialization of the school’s local competitive arena will undoubtedly influence the need to market more effectively, both with the school’s constituents and the wider market. These concerns demonstrate the increased need for, and prevalence of, a new managerialist approach to independent school management.

Admissions and marketing personnel have limited impact on the quality of educational experience for a student once that student is attending the school. Their role is, however, critical in ensuring the sustainability of the school as an organization. If organizational needs are not met, welfarist concerns relating to the quality of education quickly become irrelevant. The increased prevalence of learning specialists in independent schools likely also represents an increase in the importance of new managerialist philosophies. Schools are, first and foremost, concerned with providing quality education to all young people. When faced with economic challenges, ‘extra’, or ‘optional’ services such as learning support are often cut back in public schools despite the unquestionable benefits they provide to students.
Despite increased competitive and therefore economic pressures, Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College are examples of schools that have decided to increase learning support personnel. Given the importance of parental choice in the local markets of these schools, it seems likely that enhanced learning support is being used as a marketing tool to recruit and retain a wider range of mission-appropriate students. Students benefit from the provision of these services and organizational interests are served by improving the market appeal of the school, thus displaying the attributes of a new managerialist approach to school leadership.

**Outcomes of the Environmental Indicators**

*Diploma program adoption*

The role of teachers in administrative decision making is reflective of the balance between welfarism and new managerialism if the assumption is made that teachers are unaware of, or unconcerned with the business aspects of independent school leadership. If this assumption is true, then teacher input should demonstrate a strongly welfarist viewpoint. Administrators that rely more heavily on teacher input are therefore more likely to demonstrate a welfarist philosophy.

At Long Island School, the concept of IB diploma program adoption began as a grassroots movement from teachers. Administrators and faculty recognized that improvements to the academic program were necessary, and were considering options in this regard. The adoption of the IB DP would solve many of the challenges facing the school; detailed syllabi were available with standardized assessment, professional development for faculty was provided, and the program was internationally recognized for its academic rigor. Several faculty members at Long Island School had taught the diploma program at previous schools, and believed it was a great program that produced well rounded students. As a result of this advocacy, the faculty as a group came to see the program as a very positive option for their school. Select faculty members attended workshops and gathered knowledgeable about the program that reinforced this initial highly positive impression. The Head of Long Island School reports that his decision to adopt the IB DP was based on the support and enthusiasm of his faculty. Faculty buy-in was essential for adoption, consistent with the belief that
the student educational experience is the main determining factor in leadership decision making.

At Mountain Heights Academy, the decision to implement the IB was also a grassroots movement, although certain business-oriented concerns were also present from the beginning. Due to a highly competitive market arena, the development of the upper school centered on finding a niche in the market that would allow the school to successfully differentiate itself from its competitors. Administrators and Board members were uncertain as to the form that this differentiation would take, and as a result, input from teachers was taken into consideration. As was the case at Long Island School, certain faculty had experience teaching the IB diploma, and it was felt to be a good fit with the school's philosophy and history. Following extensive exploration of the program, including an analysis of curricula, teacher training and site visits, faculty members were convinced of the educational validity of the IB DP. Situational analysis of the school's market confirmed that IB adoption would provide a marketing niche for the developing upper school. Similarities between existing school policies and practices and those of the IB DP suggested to school administrators that marketing to current families would not be negatively affected by the adoption. Instead, adoption would increase the potential student market for the school by enhancing international enrollment. It was therefore a program that would meet both the educational needs of the student and the organizational needs of the school and so represents a strongly new managerial approach to decision making. The next head of school was selected based on his experience implementing and developing the IB DP; the decision to adopt was made by senior administrators, Board members and teachers prior to his hiring.

The decision to adopt the IB DP at Goodwin College was very similar to that at Mountain Heights Academy. A Board member who had knowledge of the program proposed it to the senior leadership team and Head of school. At the request of the school Head, faculty participated in IB workshops and visited other DP schools, and returned with consistently positive feedback about the program and its impact on students' educational experiences. Administrators at Goodwin College, like their counterparts at Mountain Heights Academy, were looking for a way to differentiate the developing upper school, and only one other independent school in the region was
considering offering the diploma program. The fact that it was a high-status competitor served to increase administrative interest in the strategic marketing potential the program would offer. The IB DP was seen as an internationally recognized program of excellence that would bring the developing school to the same status level as its top-tier competitors. The program was eventually adopted because of its perceived value for students, but also because of its business-related advantages. Marketing factors were a huge influence in the decision to adopt the IB; this was reflected in a subsequent push to adopt the PYP and MYP, which allowed the school the status of being the first school in Canada to offer all three IB programs.

In each of the three case study schools, teachers continue to play a role in program decision making, but other strategic and pragmatic concerns appear to predominate. Teachers may recommend certain courses of study based on their personal interests or expertise, but student interest, student performance and scheduling opportunities are just as important, if not more so, in determining whether a particular academic course will be offered. Other, more global concerns also play a role.

For Mountain Heights Academy and Goodwin College, where implementation of the DP was concurrent with the establishment of the upper school, broad course offerings were made available to students despite low numbers for individual teachers. The intent of administrators was that the schools would grow to fill the classes, and it was believed that a sufficient breadth in course offerings was necessary to attract prospective students. As a result, the influence of students and parents has been significant in determining what courses are available to students. A similarly broad program of study was offered at Long Island School, reflecting the senior level courses that had been offered at the school prior to IB implementation. Other, non-academic aspects of the diploma program are determined with minimal teacher input in each of the case study schools.

The core of the IB DP consists of the TOK, CAS and extended essay requirements. Issues of timing, time frames and supervision structures are determined by senior administrators with minimal input from teachers. In contrast, many of the support structures have been created either in response to expressed desires of
parents or represent an attempt to anticipate parent desires. In both cases, these schools are providing additional support to students, which is both beneficial to them in their educational experience and beneficial to the school in that this support is attractive to families and therefore enhances school marketability. New managerialist concerns therefore appear to predominate in IB implementation in all case study schools.

The extent to which teacher input is solicited and reflected in an administrative decision is suggestive of administrator balance between welfarism and new managerialism. While faculty input is typically solicited and valued in an independent school setting, it is by no means the sole consideration when adopting and implementing programs such as the IB DP. Faculty input appears to be most powerful when the adoption of an academic program is under consideration. There is good agreement among senior administrators that parents are not sufficiently knowledgeable to influence academic decision making. In contrast, faculty members are program experts with regard to their particular discipline, and senior administrators trust that expertise. Faculty buy-in is important beyond being an indication of the best educational experience for students at a particular school. Administrators candidly recognize that without faculty buy-in, program implementation is likely to have limited success; independent school administrators are therefore loath to impose programming requirements unnecessarily. Both the reality of faculty input and encouraging the perception of faculty influence in decision making are likely important components of administrative practices.

Most parents in independent school settings want to feel empowered to affect the educational experience of their child. Whether it is advocating for their child in an academic setting or supporting his/her co-curricular interests, independent schools work to give parents a voice. What is clear from the case study schools is that parent influence is significant but limited. Administrators will not allow parents to dictate academic aspects at their schools: they do, however, demonstrate a consultative approach to parent involvement in non-academic aspects of school life. This tends to appear strategic; if parents are unable to contribute to academic decision making, and it is important to allow parents to feel empowered and connected to the school in a decision-making capacity, then they must be allowed to influence non-academic
matters. School enrollment and retention depend on parent buy-in, and for many parents this depends upon their belief in the schools’ responsiveness to individual desires and/or concerns.

Discourse

The discourse among Canadian independent school administrators demonstrates how, and to what extent, conceptions of leadership and school management transition between welfarism and new managerialism. The ideas and experiences of administrators at Long Island School result in a discourse that places inherent value on a welfarist approach to education. This welfarist discourse is standardized among both administrators and faculty due perhaps to the consistency and duration of a single administrative discourse. At the forefront of this discourse is the belief that school faculty can best serve their students by creating an exemplary educational program that addresses the needs, academic and otherwise, of all students. By focusing exclusively on the educational obligations of the school, administrators knowingly and deliberately neglect efforts to promote the school. The head of school and his administrative team ultimately believe that if they build the best possible educational environment, students will be drawn to the school. Various administrators state that this exclusive focus may not be best, and that an ideal school can still have low enrollment if it is not promoted, needed or wanted by the market. Despite this acknowledgement, administrators persist in an essentially exclusively welfarist discourse and set of practices.

Periodic marketing and/or business-oriented initiatives have been seen over the past decade but tend to be short lived. A Board marketing committee was created and subsequently disbanded based on the conclusion that marketing was the responsibility of the head of school and senior administrative team. The position of Co-Director of Admissions, with a heavy focus on school promotion and marketing was eliminated after four years. When these structural changes were made, suggesting a greater focus on and commitment to school marketing, administrative rhetoric was not altered accordingly. This may have foreshadowed the ultimate demise of such initiatives, where conflict between the prevailing discourse and new business practices created a tension that could not be sustained in the long term.
The most recent strategic plan has suggested the intent to expand school marketing initiatives: without a change in administrator rhetoric it is yet to be seen if any meaningful initiatives in this regard will be sustained. Initiatives that are exclusively business-oriented tend to be neglected or rejected entirely. Administrators at Long Island School engage in minimal school advertising because it is not believed to be effective; this belief appears to be based on an ideological rejection of new managerialism rather than the analysis of data from their target markets. There are other potentially business-oriented initiatives that have had more success in the long term. The promotion of the school’s IB and hockey program is not seen by administrators as marketing in the same way as initiatives that do not directly address the student educational experience. The hockey program in particular is used to attract students, but the rhetoric surrounding recruitment focuses exclusively on the educational opportunity provided to students rather than the niche market it provides for the school to exploit. Similarly, discourse around the IB program centers on a belief in educational excellence: current practices largely ignore the marketing potential of the program.

Another objective of the current strategic plan relates to the development of a marketing and communications committee. Interestingly, the mandate of this committee (“to develop a strong marketing and communications program that can be used school wide, so that [stakeholders] will always have the school ‘message’ in mind when they are talking to the public”) is broad enough to allow for interpretation. It is possible that the prevailing administrative discourse could result in a committee that focuses on communications at the expense of marketing. Alternatively, the current discourse could be used to produce a plan for relationship marketing that effectively uses educational excellence as a central component.

Mountain Heights Academy administrators appear to share many of the welfarist ideals as their counterparts at Long Island School. They too believe that if an outstanding educational program is implemented, that families will be drawn to the school as a result. Faculty and administrator discourse is centered around the creation of such an educational program, and believe strongly that the IB programs represent this level of excellence. Administrative focus rests on teaching and learning activities,
with a concern for both academic standards and the development of the whole child. Upon implementation of the IB programs, administrative discourse shifted slightly to accommodate this new endeavor; it largely reflected the educational opportunities afforded to students but also acknowledged the advantages that program adoption offered to the school. An internationally recognized credential such as the IB program would establish the academic reputation of the developing upper school in a highly competitive educational market.

Despite this awareness of the marketing potential of the IB, administrators are reluctant to characterize marketing practices as anything more than minimal. They describe program adoption as something that benefitted the school as an organization by creating a clear niche in the local education market, but beyond that, are content to let the program speak for itself. Little advertising was done to promote the developing upper school; in fact, the school head was proud that the extent of print publications for marketing and recruitment purposes was limited to a single postcard, directing interested parties to the school website. Such minimal efforts with regard to school marketing suggest that administrators were interested in creating a quiet but pervasive message that the school was concerned first and foremost with the student experience. Furthermore, what little advertising was done in the early years of diploma program adoption focused on student experiences and celebrated their successes. Similarly, faculty experience and expertise related to IB program delivery were communicated to the school’s market in such a way as to focus on the primacy of the teaching process.

However, despite this administrative discourse describing a student-centered culture, each of these initiatives also serve a clear marketing function. It is as if administrators believe that not only would active and/or aggressive marketing be seen as vulgar by their target market, but that their market expect and select a school where administrative discourse is welfarist despite marketing realities. It may be that Mountain Heights Academy’s market wishes to avoid a division of labor for the administrative team; requiring administrative energy to satisfy marketing demands may imply that less energy is then available to devote to educating students. By deemphasizing the business realities of running an independent school in their discourse, administrators
might appeal to parents by consistently demonstrating the primacy of teaching and learning.

Unlike administrators at Long Island School and Mountain Heights Academy, administrators at Goodwin College were clear in their discourse that adoption of the IB programs served both the interests of the students and the interests of the school. The IB programs were believed to provide an educational experience that would best prepare students for post-secondary experiences. At the same time, it was recognized that the IB program was an internationally recognized program that would boost the status of the school and enhance its marketing potential. Administrators were clear that one of the major reasons for IB adoption was that an elite single-sex competitor school was in the process of adopting the program, and that adoption at Goodwin College would compare the school favorably to this competitor. Furthermore, all three programs of the IB were adopted, providing the school with the distinction of being the first school in Canada to offer all programs. Discourse surrounding program implementation was therefore two-fold; the IB provided both an exceptional educational experience for students, and established the developing upper school as a serious competitor in the local independent school market.

Following successful program implementation and the eventual transition of the head of school, the prevailing discourse shifted to demonstrate an increased focus on business concerns. The new school head spoke of the importance of word of mouth marketing, and the necessity for all administrators and faculty to act as school marketers at all times. Retention challenges had emerged at Goodwin College, during a time of expansion of the physical plant and a significant capital campaign. This fiscal pressure may have contributed to the observed shift in discourse, where business concerns were increasingly prevalent. This discourse, reflecting both the needs of the student and the needs of the school as an organization, has continued with the transition to a third school head. This most recent school head speaks of the collective need to market the school while providing the best educational product possible. Due perhaps to the highly competitive market of the school, administrators do not have the luxury of focusing exclusively on the student experience. Financial realities require a constant awareness of the needs of the organization, and the requirement that all
administrators and faculty work to market the educational product they provide to students.

Through existing communication strategies, the use of data, and the prevailing administrative discourse, the case study schools demonstrate the extent of their transition between welfarism and new managerialism. Long Island School administrators are relatively consistent in their approach across these areas; welfarist concerns predominant. Administrative discourse both reflects and shapes existing school processes, and this is seen in the recent approach to both data collection and communication strategies. The existing welfarist discourse discourages marketing functions that address organizational needs rather than student needs.

Communications have focused on the internal community, and while there has been a recent push to improve external communications, this has yet to be accomplished. The disconnect created between administrative discourse and strategic planning around communication may prove to hinder the development of effective marketing-related communications as it has in the past for Goodwin College. Alternatively, the focus on internal communication may indirectly enhance relationship marketing efforts and thereby represent some transitioning towards a new managerial approach. The lack of data collection and analysis remains consistent with a welfarist approach to school leadership. The measurement of efficiency is a new managerialist concern, and has traditionally not played a role in independent school admissions or marketing/communications. Long Island School administrators remain unconcerned with data beyond indicators of student academic performance, and even this data relating to student successes is not used to promote the school to the wider market. Similarly, niche programs are not exploited for their marketing potential, indicating a general reluctance to embrace new managerialism. This reluctance is evidenced in a consistently welfarist discourse among faculty, staff and administrators.

Communications, data use and discourse at Mountain Heights Academy suggest that administrators are predominantly welfarist, but that certain new managerialist approaches been incorporated in the management of the school. As in Long Island School, communication strategies are predominantly welfarist, based on a desire to optimize the educational experience provided. Discourse is strongly welfarist, and
ultimately rests on the belief that a superior educational program with a focus on teaching and learning minimizes the need for active school marketing.

One exception to the welfarist approach of administrators at Mountain Heights Academy is the consistent use of data to inform decision making. This collection and analysis of data deviates from the traditional independent school approach to admissions, communication and marketing, and is suggestive of a transition towards a new managerial approach.

Goodwin College administrators have shown the greatest transition towards a new managerial approach in their use of data, communication strategies and discourse. Perhaps motivated by a highly competitive local market, administrators at Goodwin College have transitioned to a specific focus on external communications, advertising and marketing. Administrative discourse has shown a similar shift, and the ongoing need for all faculty and administrators to market the school is continually reinforced. The use of data is growing and becoming more formalized, and the demands for accountability and accurate performance indicators are increasing. As a result, a new managerialist approach is evidenced in all discussed areas of school management.

**Marketing Strategies**

Another consequence of the extent of the shift between welfarism and new managerialism appears to be decision making related to school marketing. A product-oriented approach to marketing is based on the perceived superiority of the school’s educational program or philosophy, and follows from a welfarist approach to school leadership. A program such as the IB diploma is adopted because school administrators believe it is the best preparatory program for post-secondary education and life in a global society. As a result, marketing is focused on the existing program and has as its primary goal public education about the advantages of the program. School administrators characterize their schools by saying 'We are an IB school', thereby demonstrating a belief in the ability of a good product to sell itself.

Nowhere is this marketing approach more clear than at Mountain Heights Academy. School administrators engage in minimal marketing; what marketing they do consistently focuses on the IB program and the successes of their IB students. No glossy brochures are produced; print marketing is limited to a postcard that directs
people to the school website. Given the increasingly large proportion of families that are not local, this approach makes pragmatic sense. Once at the school website, the IB presence is strong. The advantages of the IB program are continually reinforced while prospective families are educated about the program and its implementation at the school. Local changes to the program are minimal, as administrators focus on implementing the program “with integrity” (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). The IB program is recognized as educationally superior, and as a result is taught to all students, not just to a gifted stream, and regardless of whether or not each student elects to complete the full diploma. All students must complete the school portfolio including CAS, the extended essay and TOK, which are seen as integral components of the school's liberal arts program. The head of school strongly believes that if administrators and faculty create an excellent IB program, and demonstrate continuous program improvement, the program itself will “speak for itself” and draw families to the school (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). All energy goes into creating an exemplary program rather than trying to “convince parents of what they want” (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). To date this approach appears to have been successful. School enrollment is flourishing despite a highly competitive market arena and limited school marketing. Ultimately school administrators rely on program loyalty as an important method of recruitment and retention.

Goodwin College also relies on program loyalty, and administrators proudly share that theirs was the first Canadian school to offer all three IB programs. The school website and print publications highlight the strengths and opportunities offered by these programs. Unlike Mountain Heights Academy, a marketing approach that exclusively focuses on the IB programs has not proven to be sufficient to ensure the desired enrollment numbers. Only 10% of current families have come to the school for the IB program; they are looking for something more.

Goodwin College does not enjoy the niche specialization that is seen at Mountain Heights Academy, and the parent population at Goodwin College demands a level of responsive programming beyond the structures of the IB programs. As a result, administrators at Goodwin College demonstrate a marketing-oriented approach to school promotion, demonstrating a commitment to determining and satisfying consumer
needs and wants that is characteristic of a new managerial approach to school leadership. Adoption of the IB programs was based on both their educational merit and their ability to satisfy customer desires for a globally recognized and prestigious academic credential. They continue to be co-constructed in such a way that they are responsive to the needs of potential and current consumers, and as a result of consumer satisfaction resulting from this responsiveness, enrollment targets are met. Individual accommodations for students with differing learning needs, creative program combinations and a wide variety of co-curricular and experiential learning activities all demonstrate the consistent attempt by school administrators to anticipate and satisfy consumer needs and desires. This attempt to be more “service-oriented” is reflected in the current strategic plan at Goodwin College and continues to influence school practices (Head of School, Goodwin College).

Long Island School also demonstrates elements of a product orientation to school promotion. A product orientation is evident in the welfarist rhetoric of school administrators: “build a great school first, then market that really great product” (Head of School, Mountain Heights Academy). Administrators have focused on “[showing] what they do” in such activities as the IB program, effort grades and communications with parents, and the co-curricular programs (e.g. hockey excellence). Following adoption of the IB program, there was no change in school marketing beyond their website, but administrators recognized that the IB program provides a “high degree of recognition and enhanced opportunities for post-secondary education” (Director of the Senior School, Long Island School). Management of the hockey program of excellence was similar; administrative focus was on student-centered programming rather than recruitment. This product orientation was reflected in the change in job title from Admissions Assistant (focusing on enrollment in the hockey program) to Director of Hockey operations. However, as the initial job title suggests, there was a time when the school’s marketing orientation briefly tended toward a more aggressive approach. The admissions department was increased with both the Admissions Assistant and a co-director of Admissions who actively promoted the school in the region.

The activities of the co-director demonstrated a sales-orientation to school promotion, characterized by more aggressive advertising and sales. This approach was
adopted at a time when admission challenges were significant for Long Island School, and administrators recognized the need to take action to improve retention and enrollment. IB adoption allowed school administrators to demonstrate their welfarist orientation by introducing a program that provides an excellent educational experience for students. It also allowed administrators to address the fiscal reality that current enrollment would not sustain the school. The Admissions co-director therefore created a marketing plan that focused on high-pressure sales, and widespread advertising of the school and the IB program it was adopting. As a result, marketing following IB adoption introduced an element of new managerialism into an administration that was staunchly welfarist.

The ultimate goal of the sales orientation was that profits through enrollment volume, achieved through large-scale selling and promotion, would be sufficient to ensure the fiscal stability of the school. Presentations were made to target groups such as schools and rotary clubs throughout the province to recruit students. New market areas to be targeted were also identified, including hospitals, parent networks, and partnerships with businesses and the local college and university. The IB was a recruitment tool; social networking opportunities were exploited, as were connections with alumni. Within five years of the onset of the sales orientation, this goal had been achieved. Interestingly, the Admissions co-director position was altered at this time, and a sales orientation was eliminated from the admissions department’s marketing practices. A complete return to a welfarist product-orientation to school promotion quickly followed, reflecting the deep-seated philosophy of school administrators.

Goodwin College also demonstrates a selling orientation, but the activities in this regard are less intense than the temporary sales marketing seen at Long Island School. The market realities for Goodwin College require that they are more aggressive in their marketing strategies than either Long Island School or Mountain Heights Academy. Market norms for the region require branded advertising, and it is important for Goodwin College to adhere to these norms in order to be seen on the same level as the more established schools they compete with. Dedicated marketing personnel have become the norm for these schools, and as a result, the market presence and success of the school is closely monitored. They also monitor marketing at other independent schools
in the region and across the country, norm-seeking while attempting to differentiate to their advantage. Such behavior is consistent with the new managerialist orientation demonstrated by Goodwin College administrators.

While businesses tend to progress sequentially through the various marketing orientations, and typically display only one orientation during any given time period, independent schools appear to follow different rules for the evolution of marketing. Throughout their history, independent schools have relied on a relationship orientation that focuses on customer needs and values. Word of mouth marketing continues to be the most effective form of school marketing; some administrators estimate that this accounts for up to 96% of their school enrollment. (Director of Admissions, Goodwin College). As a result, customer loyalty becomes paramount, not just for the immediate future, but for a long-term relationship that encourages the family to continue to recommend the school to others. Legacy students, the children of those who have attended the school, are a powerful indicator of the success of the school’s advancement department, staff who are charged with ‘friendraising’ and the ongoing development of alumni relations.

Depending on how it is conducted, relationship marketing can fall into either (or both) the welfarist or new managerialist approach. Profits are maximized through customer loyalty, but the provision of lifetime value demonstrates unquestioned educational merit. Customized and exemplary educational programs are adopted and co-constructed to create long-term, satisfied customers. Responsiveness to the independent school market and customer needs result in a societal marketing concept that recognizes the needs of the school as an organization while optimizing the educational product provided to consumers.

Long Island School administrators demonstrate social marketing through program implementation. The full IB diploma program is optional, but students must still complete the extended essay, the Theory of Knowledge class, and the CAS (creativity, action, service) requirements to satisfy the school’s graduation requirements. Classes are structured to allow students to take a third science if desired, something that is usually not possible in DP schools. School administrators have introduced a number of student-initiated athletics programs, and both the summer camp and academy were
created to satisfy consumer wants. Relationships with families are also carefully monitored and developed by administrators at Long Island School. Administrators recognized the considerable concern among their parent population regarding IB adoption and quickly introduced a series of parent meetings and information sessions addressing these concerns and stressing the academic and global benefits of the program. Word of mouth marketing is encouraged through frequent and detailed communication, and an active and successful alumni program clearly demonstrates the relationship orientation of Long Island School administrators.

As with Long Island School, relationship marketing is critical to ensure retention; for administrators at Mountain Heights Academy, IB adoption is a ‘double edged sword’. Parents had faith in the judgment of Mountain Heights Academy administration, but they still needed to be convinced that the supportive academic environment of the school was not compromised. Concerns about the IB program in local public schools created a potential retention challenge, and in the first year of program implementation, roughly one-quarter of the grade 10 students chose to enroll elsewhere. Word of mouth marketing is of primary importance, in particular with the large number of international families that form part of the school. As a result, administrators demonstrate great effort in ensuring frequent and detailed communication with parents and supporting students on an individual basis. Since the first graduating class was in the mid 2000’s, the alumni program is still in its infancy. While as of yet there are not dedicated personnel managing alumni relations, administrators have placed alumni relations in high priority and are working to develop life-long relationships with graduating students and their families.

Social marketing surrounding IB program implementation at Goodwin College considers the wants and needs of families and students. Over the past decade, program selection has increased as the school had attempted to provide students with a wide range of offerings. Limited to a certain degree by the size of the school, courses such as environmental systems & societies, film, and mandarin have been added in response to student interest and aptitude. Resources and support for program execution have also developed since program inception. As an example, students are guided through the extended essay process by means of internal deadlines, learning
support, and communication with parents. There is also a trend of enhanced learning support, with the recent introduction of learning needs specialists. Goodwin College administrators, like their colleagues at the other two study schools, recognize the critical importance of relationship marketing. Despite over a decade of IB programming, parents are still apprehensive about the IB. There is a lack of knowledge about its advantages, and they worry about student stress, work load, and the potential negative impact of a demanding academic program for university admission. Communication is therefore key is addressing and alleviating these concerns and school administrators continue to devote considerable energy and attention to ensuring effective and frequent communication with stakeholders. Since word of mouth marketing is key, parents need to be informed and involved in school life, and so administrators use electronic and print media along with regular opportunities for personal interactions with school faculty. The importance of word of mouth marketing is so clearly established for Goodwin College administrators that they use current parents as part of their recruitment process, giving prospective parents an opportunity to speak with current parents, asking questions and hearing live testimonials. As with Mountain Heights Academy, the alumni association at Goodwin College is still developing, but staff responsible for alumni relations have clearly made the establishment of positive, long term relationships with alumni a priority.

Positioning of case study schools on the Welfarism – New Managerialism - Business continuum

Many Canadian independent schools are now in the midst of a philosophical transition, where the business-oriented beliefs of new managerialism are impacting, to various degrees, the traditionally welfarism approach of independent school administrators. Each of the three case study schools represents a particular position along the welfarism – new managerialism – business continuum, with this new equilibrium reflecting the market position of the school and the biographies of senior administrators. One specific outcome of this positioning that is of particular interest in this study is the marketing philosophies that administrators demonstrate when promoting this school. Through product, sales, marketing and relationship orientations
to marketing, school administrators tangibly demonstrate their positions on the continuum by the choices they make relating to specific school promotion strategies.
Table 11: Summary of environmental factors responsible for positioning of case study schools on welfarism – new managerialism – business continuum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market position</th>
<th>School 1 rural; low level of school market competition</th>
<th>School 2 large urban center; low level of school market competition</th>
<th>School 3 large urban center; highly competitive school market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relatively secure due to a scarcity of competitors and a clear market niche / differentiation (independent school, IB program, athletics programs).</td>
<td>Relatively secure despite abundance of competitors due to highly effective niche marketing. International recruitment also alleviates competitive pressures.</td>
<td>Somewhat uncertain market position due to a lack of clear differentiators in a highly competitive urban environment. School niches demonstrate significant overlap.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target market</td>
<td>Combination of local day students and national / international boarding students. Market has been broadened to include a wider geographic range.</td>
<td>Combination of affluent local market and international families.</td>
<td>Predominantly local families seeking an independent school education. Marketing increasingly directed towards adolescents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitors</td>
<td>Minimal competition beyond local public schools.</td>
<td>Competitors based on local geographic proximity. Niche marketing essentially eliminates competition.</td>
<td>Numerous local competitors. Most significant challenges come from prestigious, long-established single sex independent schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional biographies of administrators</td>
<td>Teaching background; administrative socialization at School 1 with current head of school.</td>
<td>Teaching background; administrative socialization within the context of Canadian independent schools.</td>
<td>Teaching background; administrative socialization in Canadian and international schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing personnel</td>
<td>Short term Co-Director of Admissions and Director of Marketing and Alumni Relations.</td>
<td>Marketing and advancement; currently all done by the Head of School.</td>
<td>At present, five full-time employees focus on communications, marketing and advancement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative discourse</td>
<td>Welfarist discourse; focus on the educational product. Some discussion of ‘customer service’ ethic among administrators and teachers.</td>
<td>Welfarist discourse by Head of School. Other administrators more business-oriented with a focus on organizational needs.</td>
<td>New managerial discourse; centers on both organizational needs and a commitment to excellence in education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making regarding IB implementation</td>
<td>IB adoption resulted from a commitment to a student-centered, pedagogic culture.</td>
<td>IB adoption due to a combination of welfarist and new managerial motivations.</td>
<td>IB adoption due to strategic planning related to niche marketing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The role of consumers in decision making</td>
<td>Parents not involved in the decision to adopt the IB. Subsequent parental buy-in important in relationship marketing.</td>
<td>Parents not involved in the decision to adopt the IB. Subsequent parental buy-in important in relationship marketing.</td>
<td>Parent influence is strongest in terms of co-curricular programing, but they also do affect academic decision making in a variety of ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Frequent communication with the goal of maximizing student performance. Minimal communication with wider communities and/or markets.</td>
<td>Communication is largely internal; communication with the wider community is limited. Occasional press releases celebrating student achievement.</td>
<td>External communication targeting the students. Internal communication with parents is also continuing to be strengthened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of data</td>
<td>Minimal collection or use of data; anecdotal reports inform the majority of decision making.</td>
<td>Considerable market research and data collection was done surrounding IB adoption. Subsequent data collection minimal.</td>
<td>Increasingly prevalent use of data. Administrators continue to develop market research strategies and the analysis of school based data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing mix</td>
<td>Elimination of Co-Director of Admissions and Director of Marketing and Alumni Relations (sales oriented marketing) returns approach to one that is strongly product and relationship oriented.</td>
<td>Strongly product oriented approach to school marketing, relying on the merits of the program to sell itself. Relationship orientation is evident with current families.</td>
<td>Product marketing insufficient. Administrators demonstrate considerably flexibility and responsiveness with regard to academics, consistent with a marketing oriented approach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Long Island School: Persistent welfarism

Long Island School administrators continue to demonstrate a predominantly welfarist approach to school management. Personal administrative philosophies are strongly welfarist, due perhaps to administrators’ professional backgrounds, but there is an increasing awareness that new managerialism is not incompatible with welfarist ideals. Pressures from the public and independent schools markets are affecting practices at Long Island School in small ways, although administrators do not appear to be entirely comfortable with all of these changes. Although new managerialism has had some effect on administrative decision making, it remains a minor contributor to the overall philosophical approach demonstrated by administrators. This persistent welfarist approach to school administration is correlated with situational characteristics that allow it; the school context is removed from environmental factors that may demand a shift toward new managerialist concerns.

Mountain Heights Academy:
Predominant welfarism with some new managerialism

Like Long Island School administrators, members of the senior leadership team at Mountain Heights Academy demonstrate predominantly welfarist behaviors and philosophies. The key difference between the educational environments of these two schools is that the educational market of Mountain Heights Academy is urban and highly competitive. Administrators have been able to retain a welfarist approach to leadership as a result of highly effective niche marketing, which has allowed, and perhaps encouraged a product-oriented approach to flourish. This market niche was developed through new managerial strategic planning, including a heavy reliance on data. Having established a clear niche in a competitive school market, administrators are able to step back, at least in the short-term, from a focus on organizational needs, perhaps explaining both the selection of the head of school and the current prevailing welfarist discourse.

Goodwin College: Developing new managerialism

A new managerialist approach is increasingly evident in the activities of the senior administrative team at Goodwin College. Although certain aspects of school leadership appear more welfarist in nature, aspects related to market position and
professional biographies are clearly new managerial. It is likely that this business orientation results from the highly competitive urban environment that Goodwin College is a part of. The market position of the school is of constant concern in a highly competitive educational market, and the abundance of international schools has made it difficult for Goodwin College to establish a clear niche. Significant competition for students requires that school administrators continually address organizational issues while ensuring the educational excellence of their school. This creates an environment that is the most strongly new managerialist of a case study schools.
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The foundations for this study were laid almost fourteen years ago, when I first entered the Canadian independent school system as a teacher. Prior to that time, teacher-administrators relied on instinct and personal experience to effectively promote their schools. Particularly at smaller or newer schools, administrators were increasingly focused on consumer needs and working to provide value-added programs or experiences for students. Competition and differentiation were part of school management and promotion, but rarely had administrators thought of marketing as a strategic endeavor. Any marketing that was done was carried out in an almost apologetic manner, suggesting that while it was necessary for school sustainability, marketing detracted from the main purpose of administrators; the educational welfare of students. Welfarist ideals were pervasive among school leaders, although there were hints of an impending change. Certain independent school administrators were becoming increasingly strategic about school programming and the need to differentiate in rapidly growing markets.

It was not just the increasing local market competition that was challenging the historically welfarist approach to school leadership. The growing neo-liberalism in western education, globalization and the importance of credentialism were beginning to drive competition for advantage among certain schools. The increasing importance of market rules in certain education markets challenged school administrators to examine the sometimes conflicting demands of instructional leadership and school marketing. Approaches to school marketing in competitive markets are becoming more strategic and deliberate; marketing personnel with experience as marketers rather than teachers are joining senior administrative teams at certain schools. The extent of these changes however, is not seen equally in the different local education markets across the country. In markets with low levels of competition, administrative practices and philosophies appear not to have changed substantially and remain predominantly welfarist in nature. In contrast, in the more competitive local markets, administrators appear to believe that addressing the school as a business is important for sustainability.
As teachers by training, many school leaders struggle however with the notion of schools as businesses rather than organizations centered around the education of children. This may present a particular tension for administrators in highly competitive markets where new managerial practices are increasingly prevalent, and could be seen by some as antithetical to student-centered education. This is due in part to the misperception that new managerialism, in its focus on efficiency and institutional needs, places the needs of the organization over the needs of the student. An economic or business language is used to describe education; client and stakeholder language suggests that students are not the only, and perhaps not even the most important, individuals for schools. Furthermore, students may be seen as a commodity; a marketable item to satisfy the needs of the school (where students used as a marketing tool) or society. Administrators may worry that a new managerial model, with its increased focus on marketing and efficiency/accountability will increase administrative staff and their accompanying resource needs (office space, salaries, technology, etc.), and thereby siphon off resources otherwise destined to improve the student educational experience.

Detractors of a new managerial model in education mistakenly assume however that the student-organization tension represents a zero-sum game. A new managerial focus on efficiency doesn’t necessarily detract from the quality of education provided to students. Welfarist ideals can co-exist within a new managerial approach, where the needs of the students and the organization are both recognized and addressed. A new managerial administrator recognizes that increased efficiency and a strong infrastructure can immediately help student learning. For example, in hiring external coaches, lunch room supervisors and marketing consultants, teachers can focus on teaching, and administrators are free to focus on other aspects of school leadership.

**Significant Findings**

On a practical level, this study observed the response of school administrators to increasing competition and the infusion of marketing ideals into school systems. Administrators provide consumers with a range of value-added options, from high-status programs such as the International Baccalaureate diploma program, to a wealth of
desirable co-curricular offerings. Strategic differentiation has been critical for the large majority of Canadian independent school administrators. Differentiation has shown considerable variation, from the academic curriculum (IB, AP, provincial, or an individualized school-based program), to co-curriculars (sports programs of excellence, international exchanges, Round Square programs, etc.), to school-based resources (land, buildings and facilities).

It has been the purpose of this study to explore the extent and nature of the transition toward a more business-oriented approach to school leadership. Survey and case study data suggest a direct relationship between the competitive pressures experienced by a school and the extent to which school administrators have demonstrated a transition from a welfarist toward a new managerial approach to school leadership.

High Competition schools such as Goodwin College exist in a highly competitive, urban environment infused by business practices. Intense competition for students has resulted in an increasingly differentiated marketplace, but the sheer number of schools has made it difficult for individual schools to establish a clear niche. Administrators at Goodwin College demonstrate rhetoric and practices consistent with a new managerial approach to school leadership, where the needs of the consumer are balanced with the needs of the organization. While they believe in the educational products they offer, it is not uncommon for High Competition school administrators to offer a level of flexibility consistent with a marketing orientation to school promotion. In doing so, they demonstrate a belief that one educational program is not paramount to student success; instead accommodating both organizational needs (tuition dollars and customer loyalty) and student needs (program flexibility) can provide a mutually beneficial outcome. Administrators at Goodwin College monitor consumer satisfaction through regular data collection and analysis. Despite an increasing administrative focus on business concerns, the quality of education remains central to all aspects of school leadership. These activities indicate the predominance of the new managerial approach typical of High Competition schools.

In contrast, Minimal Competition schools such as Long Island School are committed to a program that administrators believe provides the best educational
product for students. Existing in a market with relatively low competition, administrators have not had to face the market pressures that other colleagues experience. It is possible that norm-seeking behaviour among the Canadian independent school community is responsible for certain instances where Minimal Competition school administrators have adopted practices consistent with new managerialism, such as increased marketing expenditures and, as demonstrated by Long Island School administrators, a brief selling orientation to marketing. With a variety of marketing practices, administrators are reluctant to characterize their activities as such, or use business terms to describe school management. Personal administrative philosophies are strongly welfarist, due perhaps to administrators’ professional backgrounds, although there is an awareness that new managerialism is not incompatible with welfarist ideals. Despite the occasional occurrence of new managerial behaviors, administrative discourse, taken as an indication of underlying administrative philosophy, remains pedagogically focused, with marketing concerns appearing largely unnecessary. As a result, Minimal Competition school administrators remain welfarist in their approach to school leadership.

Moderate Competition schools fall on the continuum between the two extremes of welfarism and new managerialism. Administrators at Mountain Heights Academy demonstrate an interesting mix of welfarist and new managerial approaches to school leadership and marketing. It is clear from the professional backgrounds and current leadership practices of the administrative team that they are strongly product-oriented. A product orientation to marketing is entirely consistent with a welfarist philosophy where pedagogy is the main concern of administrators. What results in a balance between welfarist and new managerial approaches at Moderate Competition schools like Mountain Heights Academy is the business-like use of research and data to inform decision making and the strategic implementation of programs that can effectively differentiate the school product from its competitors, producing a clear niche in the education market.

The location of each of the case study schools on the welfarist – new managerial continuum is illustrated below in Figure 4.
From marketing theory, the four major marketing orientations (product, sales, marketing and relationship orientations) that have appeared sequentially in business markets display a different, more complex pattern in the education market. While there is some suggestion from study results that in competitive markets such as High Competition schools the categories may be somewhat sequential, these orientations do
not appear in isolation from one another. In the less competitive markets of Groups 4 and 5, progress through the marketing orientations does not appear to be necessary at this time for school sustainability.

**Study Limitations**

Any participant observation study has a number of inherent advantages and limitations. Due to my involvement in the Canadian independent school system, I likely bring a wealth of knowledge and understanding to this study that an external observer would not share. The challenge however, was to ensure that my personal biases did not cloud my analysis of individuals, actions or events. These biases may have affected the data that was collected or the interpretation of this data, resulting in misconceptions regarding the motivations of, or the relationships among individuals and/or their schools. I have made every effort to support my analyses with clear evidence, and so misrepresentation has hopefully been minimized. If this is not always the case, my sincerest apologies to those individuals involved.

One of the key factors used in this study to analyze marketing practices and administrative positioning on the welfarism – new managerialism – business continuum is the market position of the school. For both case study schools and schools involved in survey analysis, market position is not based on self-report but is instead determined through an analysis of such factors as market population, the number of competitor schools in the local market and relative tuition costs. This analysis may not accurately reflect the market position as perceived by school administrators, and it is these perceptions that will likely influence administrative continuum positioning. Just as administrators were not asked to share their perceptions of market position, the eventual level of success of administrative marketing practices was not assessed. This study was concerned with the changing practices and philosophies of independent school administrators rather than the ultimate success of these marketing strategies. The only consideration was that the strategies were successful enough to ensure school sustainability at the time of data collection.

My involvement with the Canadian independent school system is not equal among all geographic regions or all schools. My knowledge of the case study schools is
similarly weighted in favor of one of the schools. While the information obtained and discussed from each of the case study schools is not identical, every effort was made to ensure that knowledge obtained of the three schools was as equal as possible with regards to the areas of interest for this study.

A further limitation related to knowledge of the case study schools is practical in nature. My visits to the case study schools were of limited duration, consisting of a single 3-day visit to each school. This visit was supplemented with ongoing email communication with administrators at each of the case study schools, and questions regarding documentation and/or interview data that was received at each visit were well answered. The fact remains however, that I was able to secure a limited amount of time at each school site. As a result, my understanding of a dynamic school environment was reduced to a snapshot in time.

It is very likely that many of the conditions demonstrated during my visits in 2008 have changed in many ways over the past five years. It is a major limitation of this study that it lacks a significant longitudinal component. While I have continued to follow the case study schools during this time, I have not been able to gather the depth or breadth of data obtained during my school visits. Given the speed and intensity with which marketing ideals are permeating certain markets within the Canadian independent school community, it seems unreasonable to assume that this study remains an accurate description of the three schools. What likely remains true however, is the overarching pattern of welfarism and new managerialism within independent school markets.

As with any study based on a representative sample, a final limitation is the number of schools that participated in the study. Only three case study schools were selected, with the hopes that they would accurately reflect diverse segments of the independent school system. This hope appears to be validated by study results, but three schools cannot fully reflect the diversity and complexity of close to one hundred schools. Similarly, the response rate for the survey portion of the study was 40%. This may well be a biased sample, affected by the relative salience of the survey topic to the various school administrators. As a result, survey data, while useful in characterizing key aspects of the national independent school market, cannot be taken to describe all
schools with equal validity. For many, the experiences described in the survey results will ring true; for others it may poorly describe marketing-related experiences. Results can therefore only describe general trends among the Canadian independent schools, but cannot hope to state with any level of certainty the behaviours and motivations at any one school.

If I were to repeat this study, I would make a number of small adjustments. The survey portion of the investigation was completed prior to adopting Gewirtz and Ball’s (2000) model of environmental indicators as central to the welfarism – new managerial transition. As a result, I was not able to include questions that would more closely link the results of the survey analysis with that from the case studies. Specifically I would include questions relating to administrator perceptions of competition in the school’s market and the professional biographies of senior administrators, and school micropolitics.

Another change I would make would be the way survey distribution was managed. While I am grateful to CAIS for distributing the survey to member schools, in future I would choose to be more proactive in following up with non-responding schools in the hopes of securing a higher participation rate.

A further opportunity for improving the study would be the development of longer term relationships with the case study schools. In hindsight, I would have liked time and finances to allow for multiple visits to each of the case study schools. Continued visits and conversations with administrators would have allowed me to track changes in policies, practices and/or philosophies over time, and may have given a fuller picture of the transition from welfarism toward new managerialism at the various schools.

Finally, the selection of case study schools from the three marketing Groups was invaluable in developing an understanding of the differing marketing practices in Canadian independent schools. If I were to repeat this study, I would again choose schools from these same three groups. By considering multiple schools within the same marketing group, I would be able to determine the extent to which marketing experiences are common to a particular Group. This would lend further strength to my observation that a school’s competitive market is of key importance in determining the
administrative approach to marketing and the extent of the transition from welfarism to new managerialism.

Implications for Professional Practice

This study demonstrates that environmental factors have a clear influence on the extent to which school administrative practices have transitioned from welfarist to new managerial. Canadian independent school administrators, regardless of their context, have a historical legacy of welfarist thought. As former teachers, their default consideration in matters of schooling typically address the student first, and then the organization as a distant second if at all. For many school administrators, new managerialism represents a different way of thinking. Considering the needs of the organization with the needs of the student should not detract from the quality of the educational experience provided to students, however teachers and administrators tend to, at a visceral level, equate marketing with selling, where selling is antithetical to the purposes of schooling. This train of thinking was clearly expressed by administrators at Long Island School.

The first challenge for long standing school administrators is to recognize our emotional investment in the welfarist paradigm. Administrators working within a competitive market begin to divest themselves from this by intellectually recognizing that a new managerial approach does not sacrifice the needs of the student in favor of the organization. Philosophical alignment with this new way of thinking may come when administrators experience the successful adoption of the new managerial paradigm, or it may never happen. For certain administrators, possibly nearing the end of their careers, their personal biographies may be too firmly invested in a welfarist approach to show much change. If this is the case, perhaps the best fit for these administrators would be at schools whose markets show the lower levels of competition conducive to a welfarist approach. Other administrators may readily transition to a new managerial approach, due perhaps to an instinctively business-oriented outlook or administrative socialization in a competitive education market encouraging new managerial practices. It would be interesting to consider the personal and biographical characteristics that predispose independent school administrators to thrive in the various levels of
competitive markets seen across the Canadian independent school spectrum. For search teams engaging in administrator searches or when administrators are considering a job change, what key administrative characteristics would be useful when considering the market realities of a particular school?

In addition to the implications of this study for long-standing independent school administrators, this study is relevant for administrative training programs and those new to senior administrative roles. Study results suggest that different schools flourish with different philosophical approaches depending on the local education market in which they exist. If this is true, it makes the job of leadership training more challenging as a ‘one size fits all’ approach will not address the diverse needs of different school communities. The majority of new administrators are trained first as teachers, and as a result have traditionally held a strongly welfarist attitude toward the roles and purposes of educational leadership. Increasingly, new administrators may be familiar with a new managerial schooling paradigm through personal experience as either a student or a teacher. To what degree then, are new administrators espousing a new managerial approach? If new administrators are turning to new managerialism to structure their administrative approach, it may be that these administrators are self-selecting into jobs in highly competitive markets. This would suggest a difference in administrative tenure between schools in a competitive market as compared to one enjoying relatively less competition. Another possibility might be that these administrators, finding themselves in a school with minimal competition, struggle to determine marketing strategies appropriate to the community. Considering the job placement of new managerial novice administrators and their subsequent success in terms of marketing strategies and orientations would therefore be an interesting area to investigate.

If future findings suggest that a significant number of new administrators remain predominantly welfarist in their approach, it will be important for organizers of the CAIS Leadership Institute and university faculties offering principal’s qualification programs to educate new administrators on new managerial techniques and examine the increasing transfer of private sector business objectives to educational administration in certain school contexts. Training programs should dedicate time to acquainting new administrators with business practices and ideologies potentially relevant to their new
roles. A useful pedagogical technique may be to have new administrators examine the marketing practices of schools in both highly competitive markets and those with lower levels of competition to gain an understanding of the varying effectiveness of different marketing strategies and leadership approaches.

New CAIS Heads of Schools are assigned a mentor who will assist with socialization in their new role. Mentors are matched based on number of key factors including size and location of school, as well as aspects of the new Head him or herself. This study suggests that a variety of leadership practices, including the relative reliance on welfarist versus new managerial practices, vary considerably among schools. To what extent therefore, would it be beneficial for CAIS mentors to be assigned on the basis of the school market and resulting alignment with welfarism or new managerialism? It seems likely that this is a key differential among school administrative teams, and this alignment may therefore ensure relevant and valuable support for new school Heads.

An ongoing challenge for administrators working within competitive markets is to facilitate the changes required to adopt a new managerial approach within their schools. In addition to philosophical alignment with this new paradigm, there are a number of practical, organizational requirements for strategic marketing. If existing administrators do not share the skill set required, new personnel may be required to enable the required change. Marketing changes in a competitive environment will however spread beyond the administrative team. Teachers will be influenced by a shift toward new managerialism, and like their administrative colleagues, will respond in a variety of ways. What is the impact of the new managerial paradigm on teachers who have watched the transition from welfarism to new managerialism in highly competitive markets? Some teachers may struggle with cynicism, believing that the marketing oriented activities of administrators corrupt the loftier goals of educating students. Other teachers will likely be more pragmatic about this change, recognizing the challenges facing schools in a highly competitive market. To some extent, this transition might be easier for independent school teachers than for their public counterparts, since independent schools have long relied on word-of-mouth marketing and relationship oriented marketing. It seems reasonable that the administrative approach in shifting
from a welfarist to a new managerial paradigm will have a considerable impact on the way teachers respond to this transition. How then, can administrators accomplish this paradigm shift with their schools in such a way as to ensure maximum buy-in to the change process from the teaching faculty? While resistant faculty may not have an effect on large-scale marketing practices, they are able to undermine marketing efforts with both current and prospective students and their families, as well as negatively impact faculty cohesion.

For teachers who began their careers within the new managerial paradigm, it seems likely that they, like those socialized to administration within a new managerial context, will demonstrate acceptance of the paradigm. To what degree then, are new teachers espousing a new managerial approach? Differences may be observed based on such factors as the market environment in which the training university is situated, the placement schools visited by teacher trainees, personal biographies prior to entering the teaching profession (including previous employment and schooling experiences), and the local market of the hiring school and accompanying administrative approach(es) to marketing.

Of course teachers and administrators will not be the only ones affected by the introduction of a new managerial paradigm at schools in competitive markets. Given that new managerialism directly involves the consumer, both parents and students will be impacted by changes in the way education is delivered. Independent schools, as non-public, fee-paying environments, have always had to attract and retain parents through relationship marketing. The marketing orientation to school promotion increasingly common in competitive markets however, gives parents considerable power to shape their child’s educational experience. This power extends beyond simple school choice, and allows parents varying levels of control over academic programming. How are parents responding to this power? Some parents may appreciate being wooed as educational consumers, and feel capable of shaping the academic product they are purchasing. Other parents may feel intimidated by the prospect of overseeing their child’s education, and may prefer to leave the program related decision making to the professionals; in this case, the teachers and administrators. What determines this response? Are business people more likely to appreciate a market orientation to
educational delivery? Does the level of parent education impact their response? Do culture, race, or gender play a role? How important is the educational experience of parents in determining this response? Does it matter if the parents were educated in a school governed by a new managerial approach to administration? For example, did the parent(s) attend an independent school? How long ago were they in school? Each of these factors would be usefully explored in determining the potential impact of a new managerial paradigm on parents.

In order to improve relationship marketing and hence word-of-mouth marketing, communication between administrators, teachers and parents may increase in frequency or change in nature. How are these changes received by parents? Is more information and feedback about their child’s academic and social progress appreciated? To what extent do parents take advantage of the available opportunities for contact? Answers to these questions will provide more information on the way in which parents are responding to the marketing orientation of new managerialism.

Just as parents may be impacted by a new managerial approach to administration in competitive markets, students may also be affected by changes in the way education is being delivered. To what extent are students or the student experience changing as a result of new managerialism? Any impact of new managerialism will likely be most visible with middle and secondary school students, who are increasingly targeted by school promotion efforts. It is possible that curriculum and curriculum delivery are altered in order to make it more attractive to student consumers or to differentiate a school’s program from that of its competitors. Such efforts would also hopefully be well-grounded in pedagogy, thereby improving the educational product provided by the school. Perhaps one of the most significant changes of a marketing orientation would be the potential it has to empower students as active decision makers in their own educational journey. Enabling students to shape the educational product that is best for them has the ability to help students make thoughtful choices, gain confidence in their ability to control important aspects of their lives, and be accountable for the choices that they make. All of these effects would be of considerable value in both post-secondary education and the workplace. In contrast, it is possible that the degree of choice available through new managerialism may instill
or strengthen a sense of entitlement in these students. They may also view the attempt to enable student decision-making suspiciously, taking it as simply a ploy to attract students. The manner in which students respond to the ability to determine their own educational product would be of considerable interest in determining the effects of new managerialism on consumers of education. Do any changes that take place (confidence, accountability, cynicism, entitlement) carry forward into post-secondary education and the workplace? With what effect? It would also be useful to consider the student characteristics and background that may lead to the various possible responses to new managerial control of their high school education.

**Implications for Research**

In addition to the practical implications of this study for administrators, teachers, parents and students, this study is relevant to a variety of related research areas. First, this study relates to the wealth of literature relating to school leadership in that it addresses the changing role of school administrators. While the magnitude of change may be greatest with independent school administrators, changes are also occurring within the public sector. Depending on the school’s competitive market, school administrators may work as business managers, effectively differentiating and promoting the educational product provided by their school. Increasingly administrators in competitive markets have to balance educational and economic demands, and many are experiencing a considerable push to follow the neoliberal demands of marketization, accountability and consumer responsiveness. Economic demands may vary based on the local market context and intensity of competition, but norm seeking behaviors among administrators and expectations from consumers may encourage other independent school administrators to integrate the business of education with pedagogical leadership. This changing role of school administrators has at its core the philosophical shift from a welfarist to new managerial approach to educational administration. The speed with which this transition is occurring depends upon the school’s local competitive market, but is also strongly dependent upon the professional biographies of school administrators.
Second, this study is closely linked with the school choice literature describing the impact of neoliberalism and globalization on education. The increasing prevalence of market rules in education has allowed parental choice to flourish, and middle class parents are now highly knowledgeable about schools and educational products and services, and are clear about the high status credentials they desire. This study provides insight into how schools are responding to intensified parental choice and adapting to the demands of the market. Using the IB program as an example of a high status credential in the education marketplace, this study demonstrates that administrative responses to school choice vary considerably depending upon the local competitive market of the school. Administrators are deciding to adopt the program for pragmatic, market-driven reasons as well as for its strengths as a university preparatory program. Many schools recognize, and choose to exploit, the marketing advantages provided by program adoption, but the extent to which marketing considerations affect adoption decision making appears to depend upon the school's competitive market. Schools in highly competitive regions (High Competition schools) use IB adoption as a strategic marketing tool, while schools experiencing lower levels of competition are less focused on the marketing potential of IB adoption.

Proponents of school choice look to the market to improve the quality of education in schools, while critics cite the challenges of increased inequality among schools. There is some evidence to suggest a new managerial approach to school marketing may reduce the tension between improved quality and inequality. According to the former Executive Director of CAIS, Canadian independent school administrators now talk about targeting the “best” students: “There's been quite a shift in the thinking of these schools compared to 25 years ago. Now they are really keen to get the best students possible, from all demographics” (Hazell, 2012). This type of thinking has been echoed in the media:

The truth is times have changed since the days when [independent] schools were seen as a bastion of learning for the country’s privileged class. Today the picture is shot with a wider lens with more middle-class families entering the fray…It's important that parents are aware of a surprising truth: independent schools want your kids. As long as parents pay what they're capable of, many schools are willing to work with families. (Vemond, 2012)
Theoretically a wider market, looking for the “best” students regardless of demographics, could improve the quality of education provided since all students would benefit from a richer learning environment. More choice for students could lead to an improved student-school fit, thereby improving the student’s ability to succeed and hence improved quality. Targeting the “best” students has the potential to decrease inequality as less wealthy students would be able to attend independent schools as a result of scholarship or bursary support.

Despite potentially improved access, there is still inequality on the basis of wealth. Canadian independent school tuition currently ranges from $20 - $30 thousand annually for day programs. One urban single sex school claims that tuition costs at their school are now affordable by approximately 2% of the Canadian population (UCC website, 2014). While financial aid may be available, schools still expect families to contribute to tuition costs in a meaningful way; financial aid makes independent school tuition only marginally more affordable. Canadian independent schools continue to engage in social targeting through such methods as advertising on the basis of postal code; areas near the school or other affluent areas continue to be the focus of advertising efforts, leading to continued student homogeneity based on wealth. Cultural capital also reinforces inequality. Not all families consider independent school education or have the cultural knowledge or skills required to navigate the application process. As a result, even if family wealth is ignored, independent schools are not equally assessable to all.

Targeting the “best” students, while unlikely to significantly increase class diversity, has the potential to increase cultural diversity. However, the Executive Director of CIS (Canadian Independent Schools of) Ontario, relying on statistics from independent schools in the United States, predicts an increasing disparity between demographic diversity in Canada and diversity in independent schools:

NAIS day schools in 2010-2011 consisted of 74 per cent European-American students, while boarding schools for the same period consisted of 62 per cent European-American students. Canadian independent schools do not collect data on the diversity of their student populations, but if we assume that these statistics would hold true for Canada, these numbers are almost the polar opposites of the predicted composition of Canada’s three major urban centres for 2031. As such, Canada’s
independent schools would not be representative of the country’s population as a whole by 2031. (Briggs, 2012)

This lack of diversity of may be even more striking for boarding schools; particular regions in the world tend to be targeted by schools, and boarding costs are even more prohibitive for the average family.

Given that the study focuses on Canadian independent schools, this study most closely relates to literature relating school choice and independent school education, but is also of increasing relevance for public schools. Given the current state of charter schools, magnet schools, and the variety of program options available within the public sector, the need for administrators to differentiate their educational product, to market their schools effectively, and to compete for students makes these study results relevant for all school administrators. The concept of school choice is also important for international schools, and as a result this study is equally germane for international school research. Literature that considers the changes to educational administration, whether in public, independent or international school systems, can benefit by incorporating this analysis of marketing, school choice and leadership.

Finally, this study relates to the domain of marketing research. Here we have seen marketing principles and orientations applied to the quasi-market system of schools. Across the Canadian independent school system, the marketization of private education has intensified. Administrators who previously focused exclusively on relationship marketing are now promoting their schools through product and market oriented activities. Unlike business contexts, the quasi-market of schools results in concurrent marketing orientations. The predominant orientation(s) appears to depend on the competitive intensity of the local school market. Schools such as Goodwin College in highly competitive markets (High Competition schools) are increasingly demonstrating the personalization of education, where this market oriented approach attempts to demonstrate total responsiveness to the needs and wants of their student-customers. In contrast, markets with lower levels of competition (Minimal Competition schools) where Long Island School is situated, demonstrate predominantly product oriented marketing. Other school types, illustrated by Mountain Heights Academy, fall somewhere in the middle. It has been shown that while certain marketing concepts
such as product, sales, market and relationship orientations apply directly to the school context, other theoretical ideas do not. The application of sequential marketing eras has limited usefulness when considering the independent school market. Marketing theory tells us that “companies adopt one of four philosophies when deciding on how to create an organizational marketing process. The four philosophies are production, sales, marketing and societal marketing orientations” (Lombardo, 2014). This study has demonstrated that the various marketing orientations can co-exist in educational quasi-markets, where the marketing mix is dependent in large part on the local competitive market of the school. Interestingly, recent business case studies support this idea that marketing orientations co-exist, and this shift provides greater alignment between marketing practices in industry and education (The Times 100: Business Case Studies, 2014). Co-existing marketing orientations have also been demonstrated in health care, a field that is often compared with education. In a study of 31 hospitals, the Center for Health Services Education Research found that no hospital's marketing-related practices fit neatly into a single category but rather demonstrated an integrated approach of multiple marketing orientations (Stensrud & Arrington, 1988).

Another challenge in aligning market theory with education is the onset of relationship marketing. Marketing theory indicates a 1990s onset, but independent schools have long focused on relationship marketing. The relationship era is characterized by a desire on the part of organizations to establish and maintain individual long-term relationships as demonstrated by loyal, repeat customers. This is accomplished in large part by responding to information about customer needs. Greater alignment between industry and education may result from separating the objective (customer loyalty) and method (responding to customer wants) of relationship marketing. In both contexts, organizations have demonstrated a desire to have long-term relationships with consumers. In the first decades of the twentieth century, despite a clear focus on product marketing, Ford was committed to establishing and maintaining customer loyalty toward the Model T automobile (Collins, 2007). In a similar manner, Canadian independent schools have long worked to foster loyalty with students, families and alumni. A significant difference appears when we consider the way in which organizations respond to customer needs. It is difficult to find instances of this type of
response in industry prior to the 1990s, resulting in the generalization that a marketing orientation began at this time. In education however, responding to individual need has had a long history (for example, individual education plans (IEPs) for students with special needs). This individualization has not always existed to the extent that we now observe, with increasing personalization in certain independent schools and certain markets. This difference may demonstrate how relationship marketing in education also began in earnest in the 1990s or beyond, similar to that seen in industry.

Future Research

On April 5, 2013, a letter was sent to all Canadian Independent School (CAIS) heads beginning, “With declining school age population and shifting demographics, all schools are facing enrolment and marketing challenges. One of the requests we hear most often from CAIS members is for Canadian-based research into the independent school market to help our schools better confront these challenges” (CAIS, 2013a). Echoing my observations from almost a decade ago, independent school administrators are now willing to talk openly about school marketing, and many are looking for help. CAIS states that their “member schools identify market research as the most important service that we as a national organization can offer” (CAIS, 2013b). From a list of the top ten issues facing CAIS schools, the top two are concerned with sustainability and school marketing (Figure 5).

![CAIS Index](image)

**CAIS Index**

Top 10 Issues Facing CAIS Schools

1. Developing Financial Plans for Long-Term Sustainability
2. Marketing to Attract New Students

Figure 5: Top two issues from the 'Top 10 Issues Facing CAIS Schools' list (CAIS, 2013b).
As a result, market research has become an important priority for CAIS. In May 2013, the CAIS National Market Research Study was launched, beginning with the first National Parent Survey. The survey will provide an analysis of the potential school market, the independent school market overall, what key audiences believe, and how they behave. Through the use of market data, the overall goal of the survey is to acquire a “more clear understanding of the independent school market in Canada, what motivates this market, how they make decisions, and what our schools can do better to reach them (CAIS, 2013b). CAIS researchers have identified two main areas of focus; building the profile of CAIS parents, and understanding the population of non-CAIS parents. Research questions relating to these areas of focus are included below (Figures 6 and 7).

A. CAIS Parent Profile

- What is the profile of a Canadian parent who has chosen a CAIS school?
- How did parents learn about their school?
- Why do parents look to independent education?
- What are they looking for that differentiates one school over the other?
- What are the national and regional trends?
- What programs should CAIS schools improve to add more value for today’s parents?

Figure 6: CAIS research questions regarding CAIS parents (CAIS, 2013a).

B. Non-CAIS Parent Profile

- How can CAIS schools attract a more diverse student body?
- What are non-CAIS parents’ perceptions of independent school?
- What type of student/family is the most likely candidate for my school?
- Do schools that offer a JK-12 experience have the same marketing issues when marketing to parents with younger children vs. older children?
- Would increased knowledge about financial aid and scholarship options encourage more parents to explore CAIS schools as an option for their children?
• What marketing messages resonate with Canadian parents? What marketing trends do our schools need to be aware of?
• How can we harness the power of word of mouth?

Figure 7: CAIS research questions regarding non-CAIS parents (CAIS, 2013a).

Prioritizing marketing concerns represents a shift in the thinking and practices of independent school administrators. Increasingly conceptualizing school systems and quasi-markets, school administrators as a group are demonstrating movement toward an increasingly new managerial outlook. CAIS study results will be presented at the Heads Conference in October 2013, including overall benchmarks for satisfaction. Heads of schools will have the option to purchase a custom report that analyzes their school’s results against the Canadian averages. These results could subsequently be used by school heads to inform marketing strategies.

The CAIS study provides an excellent avenue for exploring the extent to which different administrative teams are shifting towards a more new managerial approach to school leadership. Which schools will request customized reports? To what extent will different schools incorporate the findings of this national study in their own marketing strategies? Following from the results of the present study, it is expected that some schools, likely schools in Groups 1 and 2, will make great use of CAIS study results. In contrast, it seems likely that schools in Groups 4 and 5 will make less use of the data provided to them since their less competitive markets tend to accompany a welfarist approach to decision making. It is possible however, that the norm seeking tendencies of Canadian independent schools will encourage Low/Minimal Competition school administrators to make changes to their current marketing practices as a result of this clear national message regarding the importance of school marketing.

Regardless of the immediate response of schools to the CAIS market research, longitudinal research relating to Canadian independent school marketing seems warranted. Marketing ideals will continue to influence independent schools to varying levels. Whether or not convergence occurs among the identified marketing groups, or whether a difference in marketing strategy and the welfarist-new managerial approach to leadership remains differentiated is yet to be determined.
Comparisons with other school systems will also be useful to fully explore the influence of marketing ideals on schooling. While perhaps at lower intensity, public school systems are also transitioning toward a more business-like approach to school administration. International differences are also worthy of study, in particular similarities and differences between the Canadian context and such countries as Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX 1

Telephone Protocol/Administrative Consent Letter

June, 2008

My name is Jennifer Elliott, and I am a Doctoral student in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. I am conducting research as a requirement of my Ph.D. on marketing in Canadian Independent schools. This study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Nina Bascia, Professor, Department of Theory & Policy Studies.

In response to increased competition, independent school administrators have begun to market their schools in more systematic and formalized ways, including such strategies as school branding and product differentiation. My intended study will explore how schools attempt to establish a market niche attractive to middle class parents and students, and will use the IB diploma program as a specific instance of a differentiation strategy. In doing so, this study will work towards developing a greater understanding of current school marketing practices and their impact on school programs.

The current marketing practices of Canadian Independent schools have yet to be systematically examined. From the results of this study, educational researchers will gain an understanding of how market rules affect school marketing practices and program delivery. Educational administrators will benefit from the overview and analysis of current marketing practices across Canadian independent schools. Administrators in the schools involved in the study will have an opportunity to reflect on their own choices related to IB program implementation and marketing strategies, evaluating successes and strategizing around areas for continued improvement. The results of this study will be provided to your school, and other participating Independent schools, at your request.

Please see the attached outline for procedural details of the study, including requirements for participating schools. If you have any questions now, or at any point during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at (416)949-8874 (email: jennifer_elliott@tys.on.ca).

Thank you in advance for your time,

Jennifer Elliott
Attachment to Administrative Consent Letter

The study design has two components.

- An online survey will be distributed to all CAIS schools in order to determine general trends in current independent school marketing.
- The second and more substantial component of the study will be three case studies. Three Canadian independent schools, of which you are one, have been selected as candidate schools, each of which has recently adopted the IB diploma program.

The three case studies will be based on in-school observation, document analysis, and several interviews with administrators.

- I would like to attend school open houses, IB information nights for parents and/or students, and other similar events in an attempt to determine how the diploma program is marketed to prospective and current families.
- I would ask for access to all marketing-related information, including admission packages, annual reports, strategic plans, and any available CESI (Canadian Educational Standards Institute) accreditation documents.
- I would like to conduct semi-structured interviews with yourself and other administrators at your school who are familiar with the decision making surrounding IB adoption and implementation. Interview participants may include, but are not limited to the following administrative positions: Heads of Schools (Head/Assistant Head), School board chairs, Directors of marketing and/or admissions, Directors of advancement, Directors of finance and/or human resources, Directors of communications, Directors of academics, and IB diploma program coordinators. I will ask them to share with me their understanding related to school marketing, as well as the relationship between marketing and school programs and practices.

These interviews, along with document analysis and in-school observations will help me explore the following research questions:

1. How do Canadian independent school administrators market their schools?
2. What changes are administrators making to attract middle class families?
3. How do administrators determine what is attractive to middle-class parents and students? How does this interpretation impact the evaluation, selection and implementation of programs such as the IB diploma program?
4. How do administrators understand their school’s relationships with individuals (e.g. parents, students) and organizations (e.g. competitors, IB organization)?

My intention is to visit case study schools on two separate occasions, once in the spring and once in the fall of 2008. The first visit will likely last 3-4 days, with the second visit of a somewhat shorter duration. During this time I would require approximately 1-2 hours with
each interview participant, access to school documents, and would attend scheduled meetings, information sessions, and/or other marketing-related school events.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no anticipated risks, and at no time will participating school administrators be judged or evaluated. Since participation in this study is strictly voluntary, you or your administrative team do not need to give any reasons for not choosing to participate.
APPENDIX 2

Study Overview for School Heads

In response to increased competition, independent school administrators have begun to market their schools in more systematic and formalized ways, including such strategies as school branding and product differentiation. My intended study will explore how schools attempt to establish a market niche attractive to middle class parents and students, and will use the IB diploma program as a specific instance of a differentiation strategy. In doing so, this study will work towards developing a greater understanding of current school marketing practices and their impact on school programs.

The current marketing practices of Canadian Independent schools have yet to be systematically examined. From the results of this study, educational researchers will gain an understanding of how market rules affect school marketing practices and program delivery. Educational administrators will benefit from the overview and analysis of current marketing practices across Canadian independent schools. Administrators in the schools involved in the study will have an opportunity to reflect on their own choices related to IB program implementation and marketing strategies, evaluating successes and strategizing around areas for continued improvement.

The study design has two components. An online survey will be distributed to all CAIS schools in order to determine general trends in current independent school marketing. The second, and more substantial component of the study will be three case studies. Three Canadian independent schools have been selected as candidate schools each of which has recently adopted the IB diploma program. Each case study will be based on in-school observation, document analysis, and several interviews with administrators. Specifically, I would like to attend school open houses, IB information nights for parents and/or students, and other similar events in an attempt to determine how the diploma program is marketed to prospective and current families. I would ask for access to all marketing-related information, including admission packages, annual reports, strategic plans, and any available CESI (Canadian Educational Standards Institute) accreditation documents. Finally, I would like to conduct semi-structured interviews with members of the senior administrative team. Interview participants may include the following administrative positions: Heads of Schools (Head/Assistant Head), School board chairs, Directors of marketing and/or admissions, Directors of advancement, Directors of finance and/or human resources, Directors of communications, Directors of academics, and IB diploma program coordinators. Each of these techniques would allow me to collect data to address the following key questions:

- How do Canadian independent school administrators market their schools?
- What changes are administrators making to attract middle class families?
• How do administrators determine what is attractive to middle-class parents and students? How does this interpretation impact the evaluation, selection and implementation of programs such as the IB diploma program?
• How do administrators understand their school’s relationships with individuals (e.g. parents and students) and organizations (e.g. competitors, IB organization)?

It is my goal to complete all data collection between April and October of 2008. My intention is to visit case study schools on two separate occasions, with each visit lasting 3-4 days. During this time I would require approximately 1-2 hours with each interview participant, access to school documents, and would attend scheduled meetings, information sessions, and/or other marketing-related school events.

As a requirement of my doctoral degree, this study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Nina Bascia in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.

If you have any questions now, or, should you choose to participate, at any point during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at (416) 949-8874 (email: jennifer_elliott@tys.on.ca).

Thank you in advance for your time,

Jennifer Elliott
APPENDIX 3

CAIS MARKETING SURVEY – April 2008

1. Have your marketing techniques changed in the last five years?
   □ Yes □ No

   If yes, please tick all of the following changes that apply.
   □ increased human resources
   □ decreased human resources
   □ increased financial resources
   □ decreased financial resources
   □ diversification of marketing strategies
   □ focus on fewer marketing strategies
   □ increased reliance on technology
   □ increased desire to learn about constituent needs
   □ increased focus on accountability and transparency
   □ use of new media, e.g. podcasts, facebook, RSS feeds
   □ other - please specify: __________________________

2. How many personnel do you have working in communications and marketing-related positions? Please list current job titles, and tick if the position was newly created within the last five years.*

   Job title
   1. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
   2. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
   3. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
   4. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
   5. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
   6. ____________________________ □ new in last 5 years
*Include Web managers if the majority of their job responsibilities relates to communication.
*Include any outsourced personnel positions

3. In your estimation, how has the marketing and communications budget changed over the last 5 years?

   - [ ] increased substantially
   - [ ] increased slightly
   - [ ] no change
   - [ ] decreased slightly
   - [ ] decreased substantially

4. Which of the following statements best characterize how you market your school? Please tick your top three.

   - [ ] we stress the delivery of quality programs
   - [ ] we believe a good program will sell itself
   - [ ] we work hard to convince parents and students about the advantages provided by our school
   - [ ] we use powerful advertising campaigns to attract prospective families
   - [ ] we rely on input from families to decide how we do things at the school
   - [ ] we adopt a program because it satisfies the desires of our families
   - [ ] we focus on establishing individual relationships with our families
   - [ ] we customize our programs and services to meet individual needs
   - [ ] other - please specify: ____________________

5. (a) Which of the following changes have your school’s senior administrative team made in the last 5 years in an attempt to make your school more attractive to current and prospective parents and students? Please tick all that apply.

   - [ ] adopt a new academic program (e.g. IB, AP)
   - [ ] introduce changes to the existing academic program
   - [ ] expand the athletic program (e.g. introduce a new sports program)
   - [ ] expand the co-curricular/extra-curricular program
   - [ ] expand the arts program (music, art and drama)
   - [ ] introduce new faculty positions (e.g. counselors, ESL teachers)
   - [ ] improve professional development opportunities for faculty
   - [ ] alter the organizational structure of the school
   - [ ] expand the school facility (e.g. new gymnasium)
   - [ ] renovate the school facility
   - [ ] alter the size of the student population
   - [ ] add grade levels
Remove grade levels
- Diversify the student population (e.g. socioeconomic diversity, cultural diversity)
- Partnerships with external organizations (business, charitable, etc.)
- Other - please specify: ________________________________

(b) Who was the most influential group(s) in deciding to make these changes? Please tick all that apply.

- Senior leadership/admin team
- Teacher leaders/heads of department
- Faculty and staff
- Parents and students
- Board of trustees/directors/governors
- Accrediting agency (CESI, CIS, etc.)

6. Why did you believe these changes would be attractive to parents and students? Please tick all that apply.

- Intuition based on experience
- Social / political trends
- Increased parental awareness of globalization and its impact
- Visits to other schools which had implemented the proposed change
- Visits to other schools which had rejected the proposed change
- Surveys of constituent groups
- Focus groups
- Qualitative information groups
- Demographic study
- Other - please specify: ________________________________
Please identify the following features of your school:

(a) Date the school opened

- ☐ since 1995
- ☐ 1960 – 1995
- ☐ 1920 – 1959
- ☐ prior to 1920

(b) Location by population size

- ☐ >2 million (Toronto and surrounding area, Montreal and surrounding area, Vancouver and surrounding area)
- ☐ 1-2 million (Ottawa, Calgary, Edmonton)
- ☐ 250 000 – 1 million (e.g. Halifax, London, St. Catharines, Winnipeg, Victoria)
- ☐ <250 000 (e.g. St. John’s, Sherbrooke, Barrie, Saskatoon, Kelowna)
- ☐ rural

(c) Trends in student enrollment over the past three years

- ☐ increasing enrollment
- ☐ static enrollment
- ☐ decreasing enrollment

(d) Current student enrollment

Does your school have a waiting list?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Does your school have empty spots?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No
Does your school have a gender imbalance (if co-ed)?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

If you would be interested in a follow-up interview, please indicate your interest by completing the following:

Name ____________________________
Email ____________________________
Phone ____________________________

If you would like a copy of the report summarizing the results of this study, please provide your email address below.

Email ____________________________

Thank you for your time in completing this survey.
APPENDIX 4

Interview Protocol

January, 2008

The following eight questions are those that were posed to study participants. The bulleted questions are probes that were asked as required in order to clarify and/or elaborate on key details.

Sub Question 1: Action & Agency

1. How do you determine what is attractive to parents and students?
   - What type of data do you collect?
   - Frequency of data collection?
   - Who creates/administers data collection tool?
   - How is the need for data collection identified? By whom?
   - How is anecdotal ‘data’ collected? By whom?
   - Why do you collect data?
   - How has your reliance on data changed/evolved in recent years?
   - From whom do you collect data (parents, students, alumni, etc.)?

2. How has this changed/evolved?
   - When did you start collecting data?
   - Why? What changed/was going on at the time?
   - Why did you choose your current method(s) of data collection?

3. How do administrators interpret this information?
   - How is collected data aggregated?
   - What statistical processing is performed on the data?
   - Who performs data processing?
   - Who determines the key variables of interest? How is this done?
   - How is the data presented? To whom?
   - How has this interpretation of data changed over time?
4. How does this interpretation impact school programs / processes?

- What is done with the results from data collection?
- What changes have been made from data?
- What aspects of school life (academics, athletics, extracurricular, etc.) have been affected as a result of data?
- Who decides what changes to make from data? What is the process?
- What changes have been made in anticipation of consumer preferences/desires?
- Historically, what factors have impacted school programs/processes?
- When did the interpretation of data begin to play a role?
- Why? (marketing considerations?)

**Sub Question 2: Relationships**

5. Describe your school’s relationship with other schools.

- Who do you see as your (main) competitors? Why? How is this determined?
- How do you gather information about your competitors
- (How) do you differentiate your school from its competitors?
- What do you see as your school’s main strength?
- Has the need to differentiate intensified in recent years? Why do you think this is?
- In what ways do you interact with your competitors?
- How has your relationship with your competitors evolved/changed? Over what timeline? Why?

6. Describe your school’s relationship with consumers (parents/students).

- How do consumers see your school? How would they characterize it?
- How do you cultivate this reputation?
- What mechanisms are in place for outreach, linking consumers with the school?
- How do you involve parents in the school? To what end?
- How do you market your school to parents? To children?
- Describe parent involvement in the school (volunteers, fundraisers, advertising, etc.)
- How has your relationship with parents and students evolved/changed? Over what timeline? Why?
- What do you see as the benefits/challenges to these changes?
7. Describe your school’s relationship with external organizations.

- With what organizations does your school maintain (important) relationships?
- Why are these relationships important? (Do they provide/strengthen a competitive advantage for your school?)
- Characterize these relationships
- How has your relationship with external organizations? Over what timeline? Why?
- What do you see as the benefits/challenges to these changes?

8. Is there anything else I need to know about or that you would like to share with me?
APPENDIX 5

Survey Request Letter

January 14, 2008

Dear School Administrator:

My name is Jennifer Elliott, and I am a PhD. student in the Department of Theory and Policy Studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. As a requirement of my doctoral degree, I am conducting my dissertation research on marketing in Canadian independent schools. This study will be conducted under the supervision of Dr. Nina Bascia. It is the purpose of this study to gain an understanding of what Canadian independent schools are currently doing with regard to school marketing, as well as how marketing practices have changed in recent years.

As a key component of this study, I am conducting the accompanying survey in conjunction with the Canadian Association of Independent Schools (CAIS). I ask that you, or an appropriate member of your staff whom you identify, complete this survey, consisting of 14 restricted-response questions. The survey questions ask for information regarding your current marketing program; none of the questions require confidential information. If, however, any of the questions prove to be uncomfortable, they do not have to be answered.

I anticipate that the survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The results of this study will be available to participating schools. At the conclusion of the survey, there will be an opportunity for participants to request study results by providing their name, email address and phone number.

The survey will be completed anonymously. If, however, participating school representatives indicate a desire to have a follow up interview or to receive a copy of the study results by providing their name and contact information, I will be able to identify the completed survey with a given CAIS school. In order to keep the information obtained in this study in strict confidence, this identifying information will be separated from the survey responses. Survey data will be presented in the final report in aggregate form; in no way will the responses of individual schools be identifiable.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. There are no anticipated risks, and at no time will schools and their administration be judged or evaluated. Since participation in this study is strictly voluntary, you do not need to give any reasons for not choosing to participate.
If you have any questions either prior to or following survey completion, please do not hesitate to contact me at (416) 949-8874 (email: jelliott@oise.utoronto.ca) or my advisor, Dr. Nina Bascia at (416) 978-1159 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort.

Jennifer Elliott
APPENDIX 6

Informed Consent Letter for Head of School

September 25, 2008

Dear Head of School:

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of changing marketing practices in Canadian independent schools. In response to increased competition, independent school administrators have begun to market their schools differently. My study will explore how schools attempt to establish a market niche, and will use the IB diploma program as a specific instance of a differentiation strategy.

Your school is one of three CAIS schools that have been selected for participation in this study because of recent IB diploma program adoption. As a senior administrator, you have knowledge of the decision making surrounding IB adoption and implementation, as well as the general approach to marketing at your school.

This study will be carried out under the supervision of Professor Nina Bascia, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto. The data is being collected for the purposes of a PhD thesis and perhaps for subsequent research articles.

I will be conducting approximately 6-8 individual interviews at each school site, asking administrators like yourself about your understanding of the relationship between marketing and school-based decision making. I was given your name by your head of school. I invite you to participate in one 60-minute interview at school during my arranged visit to your school at a time that is convenient to you. During this interview, I will ask you questions about marketing practices at your school, decision making regarding the IB diploma program, and their interrelationship. As the interview proceeds, I may ask questions for clarification or further understanding, but my part will be mainly to listen to you speak about your views and experiences with administrative decision-making and marketing.

It is the intention that each interview will be audio-taped and later transcribed to paper; you have the choice of declining to have the interview taped. All records will be coded and your name will not appear on the transcripts. Identifiers will be kept separate from raw data. Your transcript will be sent to you via email to read in order for you to add any further information or to correct any misinterpretations that could result. You will have one month following the receipt of the transcript to make any additions or deletions, and revised transcripts should be returned to me via email. The information obtained in the
interview will be kept in strict confidence and stored in a locked filing cabinet in my office. All information will be reported in such a way as to prevent the identification of individual persons and schools. Despite efforts to maintain confidentiality, given the relatively small population of Canadian independent schools, school-level confidentiality may be limited if someone reading the study has specialized knowledge of Canadian independent schools. Every effort will be taken to maximize confidentiality. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the raw data, and all raw data (i.e. transcripts) will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer a question or withdraw from the study at any time. You may request that any information, whether in written form or audio-tape, be eliminated from the project. At no time will value judgments be placed on your responses nor will any evaluation be made of your effectiveness as a school administrator. Finally, you are free to ask any questions about the research and your involvement with it, and may request a summary of the findings (aggregate-level results) of the study.

If you have any questions at any point during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at (416) 949-8874 (email: jennifer_elliott@tys.on.ca), or my supervisor, Dr. Bascia at (416) 978-1159.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Jennifer Elliott
Ph.D. Candidate
Theory and Policy Studies in Education
OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 949-8874
jennifer_elliott@tys.on.ca

Dr. Nina Bascia
Professor
Theory and Policy Studies in Education
OISE/University of Toronto
(416) 978-1159
nbascia@oise.utoronto.ca
By signing below, you are indicating that you are willing to participate in the study, you have received a copy of this letter, and you are fully aware of the conditions above.

Name: ___________________       School: ___________________

Signed: ___________________       Date: ___________________

Please initial here if you agree to have your interview audio-taped: _

You have the opportunity to receive a summary of the findings of the study upon completion. Please indicate if you would like a copy of the findings by initialing below:

I would like a copy of study results: _____

Please provide contact information for sending you this summary. I will only use this information to send you the summary.

Send summary via email (provide email address): ___________________

Send summary to this address (mailing information): ___________________
APPENDIX 7

Informed Consent Letter for Interview Participants

June, 2008

Dear School Administrator:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study, the purpose of which is to gain an understanding of changing marketing practices in Canadian independent schools. In response to increased competition, independent school administrators have begun to market their schools in more systematic and formalized ways, including such strategies as school branding and product differentiation. My study will explore how schools attempt to establish a market niche attractive to middle class parents and students, and will use the IB diploma program as a specific instance of a differentiation strategy. In doing so, this study will work towards developing a greater understanding of current school marketing practices and their impact on school programs.

I would like you to explain to me the decision making process surround IB diploma program selection, adoption and implementation. I would also like to discuss what your school is doing to market itself effectively, and if/how this has changed in recent years. The information from this study will be analyzed jointly with data from a marketing survey distributed to all CAIS school heads. Study results and findings will be provided to the CAIS head office, and Independent schools like your own.

This study is being conducted as a requirement for my doctoral degree and will be carried out under the supervision of Professor Nina Bascia, Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. For this study, I will be talking with administrators from 3 CAIS schools that have recently adopted the IB diploma program.

I will be conducting approximately 6-8 individual interviews at each school site, asking administrators like yourself about your understanding of the relationship between marketing and school-based decision making. I invite you to participate in one 60-minute interview at school during my arranged visit to your school at a time that is convenient to you. During this interview, I will ask you questions about marketing practices at your school, decision making regarding the IB diploma program, and their interrelationship. If any of the questions make you uncomfortable, you do not have to answer them.

The interview will be tape recorded with and transcribed. From the beginning of the study, all records will be coded and your name will not appear on the transcripts. Tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet and only I will have access to them. My supervisor, Dr. Nina Bascia, will have access to all research data. Five years following the completion of the
study, all tapes will be destroyed. The information collected will be kept in strict confidence, and your name will be disguised in the final reports of the study.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time from the study. There are no anticipated risks, and at no time will you be judged or evaluated. You do not need to provide a reason for withdrawing from the study; upon your instruction, all taped and/or transcribed data will be destroyed and removed from the study.

Please sign both attached copies to indicate that you are willing to participate in this research on Canadian independent school marketing. Return one copy to me, and keep the other for your records.

If you have any questions at any point during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at (416) 949-8874 (email: jennifer_elliott@tys.on.ca).

Thank you very much for your time and effort.

Jennifer Elliott
Interview Participant Consent Form

I, ________________________________ (name), agree to participate in the study of Canadian independent school marketing being conducted by Jennifer Elliott under the supervision of Dr. Nina Bascia from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto. I have read the Informed Consent letter that was attached to this consent form, and am fully aware of the conditions stated in the letter. I have been informed about the nature of the study. I understand that participation is completely voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time. I understand that only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the data which will be destroyed five years after the completion of the study. I understand that every effort will be made to keep my identity anonymous.

I, ________________________________ (name), DO NOT agree to participate in the study of Canadian independent school marketing being conducted by Jennifer Elliott under the supervision of Dr. Nina Bascia from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

________________________________________
Your signature                                      Date

Please initial here if you agree to be audio-taped during the interview process. ________