Cosmopolitanism in SAIS schools

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NAIS President Pat Bassett refers to cosmopolitanism as one of the important elements of a 21st Century Education. In this FastStats a snapshot of some of the elements that define cosmopolitanism is presented. Specifically, 5 or 10-year trends for student, teacher and senior administrator diversity are presented. Also, programmatic indictors such as global education programs and international partner schools are offered.

The graph below shows student diversity in NAIS and SAIS schools over the past 10 years. The most apparent trend is that although Caucasian students comprise the largest segment of the student population for both NAIS and SAIS schools, the percentage of students who are Caucasian has steadily decreased over the past 10 years. As the graph depicts in 2002-2003, 73% of all NAIS students were Caucasian, whereas by 2012-2013 that number had dropped 15% to 58%. Similarly, SAIS dropped 13% in that same time frame. Although it is hard to tell by this graph all the other diversity groups increased in both NAIS and SAIS schools during this time, led by the Students of Color category who increased 7% in NAIS and 6% in SAIS schools.

Faculty diversity shows a similar, albeit more moderated trend. Since 2002-2003 the percentage of Caucasian teachers in NAIS schools has decreased 5% from 78% to 73% and for SAIS teachers the drop has been 6% from 88% to 82%. Whereas, Teachers of Color have increased by 4%, from 7% to 11%, in NAIS schools and by 3%, from 4% to 7%, in SAIS schools.
Diversity trends among senior administrators over the past 5 years were also investigated. During this time frame there was a modest 1% decrease in the number of NAIS senior administrators who were Caucasian and a similarly modest decrease of 2%, from 93% to 91%, for SAIS schools; whereas, there’s a very modest increase in the percentage of non-caucasian senior administrators that, although hard to tell from the graph, is more spread out among the various non-caucasian groups in 2012-2013.
We shift now to data that reflects programs that reflect diversity, especially international diversity. Unfortunately trend data is not available so we have to be content with 2012-2013 data only. Most would likely agree that the data for 2012-2013 is significantly different from 5 or 10 years ago, it is just a matter of degree. Thus, as the pie chart to the left indicates, 26% percent of SAIS schools have a formal Global Education Program. This may not sound like much, however, it is likely a much higher percentage than 5-10 years ago.

Similarly, the graph below indicates that over 50% of SAIS schools in 2012-2013 have at least one international partner school. In fact, many schools in this data set have multiple international school partners. Ten years ago this percentage was no doubt much less.

This is just opinion based on my experience and thin data, but it seems programmatic initiatives that promote cosmopolitanism are moving faster than hiring/staffing practices that promote cosmopolitanism. With regards to personnel only, it is clear from this data that diversity among students is changing more rapidly in both NAIS and SAIS than diversity among faculty and diversity among faculty is changing more rapidly than diversity among senior administrators. Perhaps this is a case of the diversity working its way through the system? I would love to get your thoughts on the matter.