

SUSTAINING LONG-TERM
ATTENTION TO ASIA
THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE
FOR K-12 STUDENTS



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Executive Summary

This report is a follow up to the report entitled *Making the Most of K-12 Educator Study Tour Programs to Asia*. The earlier report described the nature of K-12 educator study tour programs funded by the Freeman Foundation. It ended by addressing three ways to sustain the work of the programs long term: focusing on enhancing the long-term impact of extant study tour programs; developing administrative support for teaching and learning about Asia; and extending the influence of program alumni through teacher-led networking and coaching. This new report provides a conceptual framework for planning ways to sustain attention to Asia through these means. It is a tool that may be of assistance in strengthening sustainability.

Following various conversations about sustainability, we decided to undertake a small exploratory study to look at sustainability from the perspective of how students' attention is directed to Asia as they move through their K-12 years. This study suggests that it is a dynamic, evolving, multi-faceted, and sustained pattern of attention to Asia by K-12 educators and others close to the students that helps students gain an understanding of Asia and its importance in their lives. Integral to this pattern is the dynamic interaction of three components that generate sustainability: student learning goals about Asia; K-12 educators and others actively engaged in attending to student learning about Asia; and certain types of activities focused on bringing about student learning. Examples in the sidebars of the report show approaches teachers, schools, and districts are using to build and sustain attention to Asia for their particular students.

- Student learning goals: Students reach major learning goals through their cumulative K-12 experience. Successfully sustaining attention to Asia appears to involve having all students reach one or both of two goals regarding Asia: (1) attitude of respect for Asian cultures and (2) content knowledge about Asia. Success is heightened when students have the opportunity to reach a third goal – intensive content knowledge and understanding about Asia. Some, not all, students will choose this option. Which goals are given priority varies from school to school.
- Internal agents: It appears that when an Asia focus is successfully sustained in the students' environment, students learn about Asia from a variety of "internal agents": program alumni; other teachers and administrators; and community members, students and other individuals interested in Asia. All in all, teachers are at the heart of sustaining attention to Asia within any given classroom, school, or district. The actions of others support and enhance what is provided by teachers. External agents such as organizations offering Asia-focused learning opportunities help build the capacity of teachers and other internal agents to attend to Asia.
- Activities: Internal agents collectively use three types of activities to build sustainability: providing content and resources; building relationships; and offering experiential learning. Within each of these three categories, a range of activities are taking place. The examples of program activities that we provide in this report show that external programs

support the sustainability of Asia within the K-12 education system through an array of these types of activities.

For sustainability, it is important that professional development for educators and other programmatic activities of external agents align with the situation in a given school situation. To assess that alignment, the report provides questions that programs might use to review the status and nature of sustainability in a specific school/district and their own work in relationship to those situations. Such information gives programs a basis on which to determine actions to support attention to Asia that are appropriate for particular locations and for their particular organization. Local conditions matter.

The perspective of this report is that a primary location of sustainability is within the setting where the teaching-learning process is occurring for students. K-12 students are the ones whose attention to Asia is ultimately sought as a result of these educator professional development programs.

This report does not address other means by which programs sustain their own work nor does it address broader national and state level economic and social conditions that help build momentum for attention to Asia. These also are important but are outside the scope of this particular report.

By reflecting on what has been accomplished and continuing to talk about patterns that enhance sustainability (with the perspective in this report being one), the programs, K-12 educators, and the Foundation develop a shared understanding about multiple ways to sustain attention to Asia and achieve the Foundation's long-term objective of "strengthening the bonds of friendship between this country and the countries of the Far East."

Continuing the Conversation

This report builds on the October 2006 conversation among study tour program leaders at a meeting InSites convened in conjunction with the Asia in the Curriculum symposium. It also builds on Mr. Houghton Freeman's urging during the symposium that programs take a deep breath and reflect on what has been accomplished in the schools and districts with which they are or have been working.

At the October meeting of study tour program leaders we looked together at the findings from InSites' inquiry into the study tour programs for K-12 educators funded by the Freeman Foundation.¹ Those findings are presented in our report, *Making the Most of K-12 Educator Study Tour Programs*. That report identified ways that the learning of individual teachers could be leveraged to multiply the effect of their learning among their colleagues. Those ways included enhancing the impact of extant study tour programs, developing administrative support for program alumni's teaching and learning about Asia, and extending the influence of program alumni through teacher-led networking and coaching. The focus primarily was on increasing the influence of individual program participants.

At the end of that conversation, we asked, "What more do we all need to know about sustainability?" One of the participants responded with a three-word question that shaped our course as we continued our investigation of study tour programs: "What is success (in regard to sustainability)?"

This question brought into sharp focus that the answer depends on the perspective taken. Are we determining success by whether program alumni bring the knowledge and other benefits of their experience in the programs back into the classroom? By what students learn in that classroom and what they do with what they learn? By the influence of program participants on students? By the reach of program participants to their colleagues? By the longevity of programs external to the K-12 system? By how programs link to or build national movements and activities related to Asia? Or by other measures?

Given the many possible perspectives on sustainability we looked to the parties who are ultimate recipients of the work—the K-12 students. We decided to investigate sustainability from the perspective of students' whole experience in a given level of education (elementary, middle, or high school) and/or their collective experience over their K-12 years rather than their experience in individual classrooms and/or with individual teachers. This is done with the recognition that an individual teacher who learns about and visits Asia can have a strong influence on students. Teachers are the primary agents for directing attention to Asia in schools/districts. However, their work is within the context of the school, district, and community where they are located. It

¹ We gratefully acknowledge the insights of those who engaged in a lively exploration of these findings. A large part of the conversation focused on the issue of sustainability of attention to Asia within classrooms, schools, and districts. The conversation among the 34 people in the room was captured visually (see Attachment A). The visual representation emphasizes the multiple ways people are approaching sustainability as well as the complexity of such an endeavor.

is students' cumulative K-12 experience that is the orientation taken in this report, with the work of teachers (individually and collectively) as a primary component being considered.

Data for Study

Soon after the October Asia in the Curriculum symposium we interviewed 23 school/district administrators who had been in K-12 administrator study tour programs (including those referred to as key actor tours) and 21 teachers who participated in study tour programs and whom we had surveyed previously. We conducted these interviews to supplement information we already had collected and to build a student-based orientation to sustainability. We asked these administrators and teachers what they desired students to learn about Asia by the time the students leave their school and what actions support such learning. We talked with them about what students see of Asia in their school and how Asia figures in their environment, their focus, their reality. Note that we did NOT focus on if and how student learning is measured or tested.

Next, we interviewed all of the program leaders of the study tour programs and nearly all of the program leaders of the NCTA national, partner, partner-like, and regional sites, whether or not they had led a study tour program. We conducted interviews with a total of 49 program leaders² in December 2006 and January 2007. In these interviews, we focused on what we had learned about sustainability in the interviews with teachers and school/district administrators. We found many program leaders eager to discuss the topic.

Through these conversations with teachers, administrators, and program leaders, we learned more about sustainability as it is expressed closest to the K-12 students and teachers in their daily context and what might be considered success from this vantage point.

The October conversation and our previous work focused primarily on the nature of the study tour programs and on teacher participants. In this report we focus on the K-12 students' experience in the local school/district setting in order to get closer to the infrastructure and context within which program alumni work to incorporate Asia into their classrooms and schools. Considering the school/district level in no way diminishes the importance of the role of the teacher participants. Instead it provides a way to look at the broader context in which teachers are working and the local structures and connections that support their work.

In highly complex situations such as that of sustaining attention to Asia within the daily context in which teachers work and K-12 students learn, it is especially useful to look at emerging patterns and how to influence the dynamic evolution of these patterns. Many of these patterns cannot be centrally controlled and only can be partially planned. The patterns are largely shaped by many actors responding to one another and to their context in big and little ways. Small adjustments can have huge effects. Big adjustments may have only small effects. The particular conditions at a given point in time can have a significant impact on what happens.

2 We counted NCTA national, partner, partner-like, and regional site leaders all as program leaders in this figure. On three occasions, two people were involved in a single interview so the total number of interviews was 46.

Conversations among those who are involved in the effort are important since it is through those conversations that people start to see their work from multiple perspectives and recognize ways of adjusting their work in both large and small ways to influence what is happening. Thus you will see that this report, like its predecessor, does not provide specific recommendations of actions to take but rather is designed to stimulate reflective conversations among those who shape the patterns of sustainability that make a difference for K-12 students.

Understanding Sustainability

Examples of Sustainability Issues Affecting K-12 Students

Example 1:

Attention to Asia. In an urban district, program alumni incorporate content about Asia into their high school history and literature courses. They are especially concerned about stereotyping and misunderstandings among the ethnically diverse student population. Therefore they use lessons in which students write about their ethnic backgrounds. They bring parents and community members into classrooms to talk about life in Asia.

The district curriculum director emphasizes the importance of Asian students learning to value their cultural heritage and all students learning to respect other cultures. She sees a great opportunity for incorporating Asian stories and examples in basic skills areas, especially in middle and elementary schools.

Sustainability Challenges. The district curriculum director faces challenges in promoting attention to Asia throughout the schools in this district. Schools focus on basic skills due to the No Child Left Behind legislation and the state's emphasis on assessment of basic skills. Because leadership for curriculum issues rests with the principals and changes at the school level are based on the efforts of school teams, the district curriculum director doesn't expect much progress until there is a way to provide principals and team leaders/members with a basic understanding of Asia. Neither the district leader nor the program alumni have time to create such programs in their district.

A Definition of Sustainability

The definition of sustainability that arises from this study is that sustainability is the dynamic, multi-faceted pattern of attention to Asia within the immediate context in which teachers teach and students learn, i.e., in the schools. Our interviews with teachers and administrators who participated in study tour programs indicate that such a pattern is created by program alumni, other teachers and administrators, students, and community members who attend to content, relationships, and experiences to help students (a) develop a basic recognition of the importance of Asia in their lives, seeing themselves as living in one of many cultures, each with its own values and contributions to a world where all societies are interdependent and respected; (b) gain an understanding of the cultures, histories, and geographies of one or more Asian countries; and (c) have the opportunity to gain relatively in-depth knowledge about one or more Asian countries or the region as a whole. Teachers and administrators recognize that they are working in a challenging context due to the many special interests and competing priorities concerning what to teach students. Maintaining attention to Asia is no simple task. It requires continual vigilance since typically it is not supported strongly by state policies. Such policies tend to give much greater attention to reading, writing, mathematics, and science.

Components of Sustainability

Through the analysis of our recent interviews plus previously gathered data, we identified three components that appear to be integral to sustainability that makes a difference for students. These components—goals, agents, and activities—interact dynamically. It appears that with careful leveraging of these components, educators can sustain attention to Asia in ways that matter for students. However, these educators recognize the need to be ever vigilant to maintaining attention to Asia and ensuring that multiple pockets of interest in Asia exist.

Example 2

Attention to Asia. The focus on Asia at a suburban high school began with a group of program alumni who incorporated content about Asia into their world history and literature courses. Stimulated by the teachers' interest and the leadership of a faculty member at a local university, administrators from the district and high school traveled to China and began the two-way teacher/student exchange program now in its fourth year. Because Chinese exchange teachers and students are active at all school levels and in the community, they have developed personal relationships with many students and community members. The exchange has built interest and support for learning about Asia among students and the community. As momentum grew, Asia-related content was included at the elementary and middle school levels.

Fluency in a second language now is a priority in the district. Four levels of Chinese language are offered at the high school with plans to establish a K-12 program. The importance of content, relationships, and experience are evident in the principal's comment: "We have to have Asia in the curriculum but we also have to have the exchange.... We need the person to person contact to make [China] come alive."

Sustainability Challenges. The superintendent and an active group of teachers see the balance between school and community interest in Asia as very important. They are attending to three issues that might jeopardize its long-term sustainability: finding Chinese language teachers; funding the exchange long term; and expanding the general understanding of China and Asia among educators and community members.

Goals of Student Learning about Asia

In locations where attention to Asia is being sustained, students are expected to reach one or both of two goals: attitude of respect for Asian cultures and content knowledge about Asia. With respect to a third goal—intensive content knowledge and understanding about Asia—if educators provide this opportunity, it is available to all students but the school/district recognizes that some, not all, students will choose this focus. Here is an elaboration of these three goals for student learning. Although these goals are emphasized in certain courses, they are not seen as specific to a given course or subject area but are achieved through cumulative experiences in the school.

- **Attitude of respect for Asian cultures.** Students recognize the common humanity among all peoples of the world and develop an attitude of respect for Asian and Asian-American people and cultures, including those of Asian descent whom they encounter in their own lives. Students develop a global understanding and an international perspective that enables them to be open to other cultures. Students recognize the importance of Asia in their lives, seeing themselves as living in one of many cultures, each with its own values and contributions to a world where all societies are interdependent and respected.
- **Content knowledge about Asia.** Students gain a basic understanding of the history, geography, literature, and/or cultures of one or more Asian countries; the diversity of Asian countries/cultures;

the roles of one or more of these countries in contemporary life; and their influence on the U.S. This understanding helps students recognize the opportunities to work with Asians in a global marketplace and be responsible global citizens.

- **Intensive content knowledge and understanding of Asia.** Students gain a fairly in-depth knowledge about one or more Asian countries, including an emphasis on areas such as history, geography, literature, arts, current issues, and possibly language. These students are especially well-prepared to pursue further education about Asia after high school graduation.

Example 3

Attention to Asia. Over a period of many years, the high schools in a small city have developed a Chinese language program that has been especially attractive to its large Asian population. This program was initiated in the late 1980s by a teacher who had lived in China and had learned Chinese. Later when he participated in a program where he taught in China, he enhanced his Chinese language skills and built relationships with many Chinese teachers, students, and community members. The language program has grown because of student interest and the availability of Chinese teachers to teach the Chinese classes. Recently, one elementary school developed an international focus with specific attention to Asia because an elementary teacher spent a year teaching in China. An active sister city committee also sustains community interest and support.

Sustainability Challenges. Program alumni and key district leaders think broader attention to and support for Asia is needed in three areas: district commitment to permanently fund another Chinese language teaching position; integration of Asia into multiple high school courses so all students develop a basic understanding and knowledge of Asia; extension of Asia into all elementary and middle schools. They expect that attending to the latter two issues has the potential to tip the balance toward getting a second permanent teacher of Chinese in the schools.

Agents of Sustainability

When a focus on Asia is sustained in a school/district, students learn about Asia from a variety of teachers and in a variety of subject areas and grade levels—supported by the actions of administrators and the community. Attention to Asia by these multiple agents from multiple role groups helps to highlight the importance of Asia in the minds of students and sustain the work. External agents act in support of those working in the school to build the capacity of internal agents to attend to Asia.

- **Internal agents of sustainability.** Internal agents are people across role lines within the school, district, and community with the motivation and ability to maintain attention to Asia. Collectively they foster student learning about Asia directly through provision of learning activities to students and indirectly through activities that enhance the Asia-related learning of other agents. In regard to sustaining attention to Asia, the internal agents can be thought of in terms of three groups: program alumni; other educators in the school/district; and community members, students, and other individuals interested in Asia.

– *Program alumni.* The alumni of Freeman Foundation-funded K-12 educator study tour and other programs are primary players in bringing Asia into classrooms, schools, and districts. Within the category of “program alumni,” we include those who gained both content knowledge and experiences in

Asia through participation in the study tour programs, and those who have had intensive exposure to Asia through summer institutes offered by a variety of programs or through seminars such as the 30-hour seminars offered by the NCTA. We distinguish program alumni from other educators because their learning and

experiences regarding Asia make them uniquely qualified to bring Asia into their classrooms and to share their learning with their peers in the school/district.

Example 4

Attention to Asia. The typical student in this isolated rural district has limited exposure to the world beyond this small community. The students tend to think that all Chinese dress in gray and march to work or school. The contemporary pictures and videos shared by two program alumni have done much to counter these stereotypes.

Due to the efforts of two program alumni, all students in the district receive an introduction to Asia through science and art courses. The science teacher includes a major focus on ecology in various parts of the world, including Asia. In a four-week unit on China, the art teacher includes calligraphy, origami, cloisonné, and bonsai. The bonsai unit draws on a local community bonsai specialist.

In addition, students have a school-wide exposure to China during Chinese New Year's week with a large Chinese Dancing Dragon (made by the art students) and Asian food on the cafeteria menu. The Asian food turned out to be so popular that the cafeteria kept it on the menu. Until a few years ago, students also attended an international festival in a nearby city.

When this festival was relocated to a more distant city, students no longer could attend.

Taking advantage of the state requirement for 60 in-service hours for teachers, the two program alumni have team taught Asian curriculum workshops for all teachers in the school system. They vary the presentation according to grade level and ensure that the teachers obtain useful materials to use in their classrooms.

Sustainability Challenges. Program alumni are concerned that administrative interest may not endure, but move on to another emphasis. They see a need to continue to work with other teachers, build community support, and provide students with relationships with Asians and experiential learning opportunities to enlarge the support base.

– *Other educators in the school/district.* “Other educators” includes teachers, administrators, and other personnel beyond program alumni who contribute to student learning in a school/district. Teachers who understand the importance of student learning about Asia, even though they are not as knowledgeable as program alumni, play an important role in bringing attention to Asia and sustaining it. Although these agents may not have acquired the Asia-related experiences and knowledge of the program alumni, they serve as important agents of sustainability when they possess an awareness of basic information about Asia that they use in their classrooms. If students hear from multiple teachers about the importance of Asia, they begin to see a pattern that runs through their whole experience of school. The regular, be it small, references to Asia keep reminding students of the importance and presence of Asia in their lives.

– *Community members, students, and others interested in Asia.* Others who are playing an important role in influencing student learning about Asia include community members, Asian and Asian-American residents in the community, family members, and students who have a special interest in Asia. These agents often have a special interest because they or family members have been to Asia or they have other personal connections to an Asian country or its culture. The composition of this group and the ways in which members contribute to student learning depend on the local school/district and community.

• **External agents of sustainability.** Two types of external agents are important.

– *Organizations that provide Asia-focused learning opportunities for K-12 educators.* Because educators typically acquired very little knowledge about Asia in their teacher/administrator preparation programs, these external programs are

Example 5

Attention to Asia. Program alumni in a suburban district have taught in China at various times over a number of years. During that time, Chinese teachers have taught in the district. At the high school level, resistance from a key teacher limited the extent to which Asia could be integrated into social science courses. Consequently, the district focused its efforts at the elementary level, creating a geography unit that used China as the basis for teaching about climatic regions.

As personnel changed, a Chinese culture class was added at the high school. Introductory Chinese language classes also were introduced at the initiation of a program alumnus who had been to China. Two study tour alumni and an assistant superintendent keep in touch with each other to strategize about how to continue the emphasis on China across the district. A sister city committee provides community support.

Sustainability Challenges. To deepen attention to Asia, the district wants to include more levels of Chinese language at the high school. To broaden attention to Asia, some teachers want to involve the middle schools where currently little is being done related to Asia.

vital in initiating involvement and building the capacity of internal agents to create and sustain attention to Asia. These organizations have influenced content knowledge about Asia through study tour programs, summer institutes, and seminars; provided Asia-related resources to program participants and their schools/districts; and built a commitment to attending to Asia in the school and classroom. In addition, some schools/districts obtain other Asia-related learning opportunities from organizations such as local universities; community resources such as museums; and other schools focused on bringing attention to Asia.

– *Other external agents.* State and federal departments of education and policymakers, publishers, Asian governments, and online resource providers also are agents that shape what internal agents know and do related to Asia and the resources they have available to do so. State policies shape curriculum, learning goals for students, and assessment practices.

Activities Offered by Internal Agents

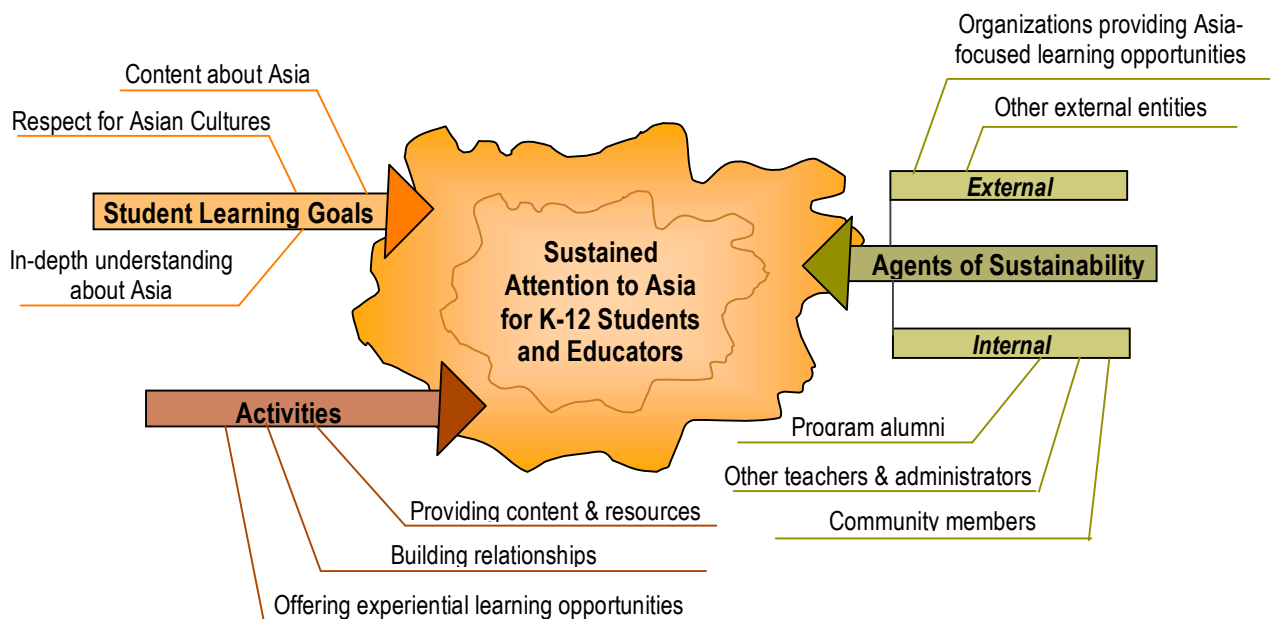
Internal agents are using three types of activities to build sustained attention to Asia: providing

content and resources; building relationships; and offering experiential learning. These agents bring learning about Asia to students both directly and indirectly. The direct means is through activities targeted at students. The indirect means is through activities for other agents who then bring learning about Asia directly to students. Within each of these three categories, a range of types of activities are taking place.

- **Providing content and resources.** Program alumni and other educators in the schools incorporate Asia content into instruction in a variety of classes; provide access to and develop Asia learning resources; and offer Asia-specific elective courses and Asian language programs for students. To enable educators to do so, the school/district offers, encourages, and/or allows activities through which teachers and other educators obtain an understanding of Asia that makes it possible for them to contribute to one or more of the goals of student learning. Educators sustain motivation and increase knowledge about Asia over time through activities such as workshops that provide grade-level or discipline-specific materials for teaching and accessing online resources.

- **Building relationships with Asians.** Program alumni, educators, community members, students, and/or others in the schools have personal experiences with Asians. The relationships may or may not involve multiple contacts in a single year but are especially important in shaping attitudes about Asia and Asians and keeping Asia “alive.” Relationships are formed through electronic communications or personal contacts with Asians (e.g., Asian visitors or community members; exchange students or teachers; and study tour programs).
- **Offering experiential learning.** These activities engage teachers, students, and others in the schools/districts in some type of hands-on or interactive learning experience such as interactive presentations in schools; visits to hands-on museums; involvement in Asia-related events; Asia-related festivals; extended field trips; study tour programs, or school exchange programs. These resonate with students and teachers to create meaningful learning. They may be one-time events or ongoing programs.

The diagram below summarizes these three components that create sustained attention to Asia in the daily lives of students and teachers in a school. These components provide a framework that programs, alumni, and school/district leaders can use to shape activities, such as those identified in the *Making the Most of K-12 Educator Study Tour Programs to Asia*, that help sustain the impact of study tour programs. (As noted earlier, those activities include enhancing the long-term impact of extant study tour programs; developing administrative support for teaching and learning about Asia; and extending the influence of program alumni through teacher-led networking and coaching.) These activities are not the only avenues of sustainability.



Dynamic Interaction of Components of Sustainability

Classrooms and schools (and other aspects of the K-12 education infrastructure) are dynamic, highly complex systems with multiple forces simultaneously encouraging and discouraging attention to Asia. Sustained attention to Asia involves a dynamic interplay and balance among and within the components (i.e., goals, agents, and activities) of sustainability. Attention to Asia in the daily lives of students and teachers is sustained through an evolving integrated mix of all three types of internal agents working towards all three student learning goals through all three types of activities with a recognition that teachers are the ones in the most direct contact with students and thus tend to be most influential. It is grounded in having an understanding about Asia sufficiently woven into the curriculum and learning experiences of the school/district that it becomes a basic value. There is a shift from building individual components to the components blending in and becoming a regular ongoing part of “how things are done around here.” It becomes a habit, a way of being.

The understanding of sustainability presented here provides a flexible way for program leaders, teachers and administrators to tailor their approach to sustain attention to Asia amid competing demands and responsibilities. It takes into account the infrastructure that is needed within a school/district to support program alumni and build sustained attention to Asia in the context where teachers work and students learn. Program leaders can increasingly align their work with the needs of alumni and their students when they have an increased awareness of what is happening in the locations where their study tour program alumni work.

Examples of Sustainability Issues Affecting K-12 Students

The sidebars in the preceding pages contain examples of sustainability issues in K-12 situations that we have learned about in our work. Although these do not represent a comprehensive picture of the issues, they illustrate ways K-12 educators are building and sustaining attention to Asia and the type of challenges they face. For example, in some cases, program alumni successfully incorporate Asia-focused content into their high school courses but district-wide structures or lack of knowledge about the importance of Asia stymie its spread to elementary and middle schools.

In trying to bring Asian languages to students, some schools/districts are successful whereas others encounter resistance to bringing in Asian languages. In other cases, a few teachers have developed strong expertise about Asia, but the majority of teachers have little knowledge about Asia so they are unable to reinforce its importance in the minds of students. Sustainability in some schools/districts calls for broadening the opportunities for students to engage in Asia-focused learning activities; in others, the challenge is bringing more depth to the Asia-focused learning activities.

Program alumni have proven to be very resourceful in finding ways to continue Asia-focused learning activities, including enlisting the help of community members. These brief portraits

illustrate that the issues and patterns of sustainability are unique to each setting. Consequently there is no one way to build sustainability but the components of an approach to sustainability identified earlier in this report provide a framework for developing plans specific to a given situation.

Program Support for Sustainability

Freeman Foundation-funded programs that provide Asia-related learning opportunities to K-12 educators have made substantial contributions to bringing Asia to K-12 students. Because of the influence of these programs, many educators and their colleagues have built attention to Asia to the level where they can now talk about how to sustain that attention. In Attachment B we have summarized a number of ideas we have heard from program leaders about how they are shifting some of their attention to encouraging and supporting sustainability. We have organized these into four groups. Three are based on the three types of activities described above (content, relationships, and experiential learning). The fourth includes general ways of supporting schools and students regarding Asia. Each of the examples shows the link to student learning goals and the internal agents of sustainability within the K-12 setting.

Review of Opportunities and Capacities for Sustainability

A major task facing a program is how to learn enough about the schools and districts in which their alumni work to help build sustainability effectively. A second task is for programs to assess their current work with K-12 educators and their capacity to continue and/or extend that work. As the examples in Attachment B show, there are many ways that programs might adjust their work to align with the realities of what is happening in the schools/districts that they serve. The power is in finding the ways that are appropriate for the given situation.

The programs/organizations involved in this study span a wide range in terms of the extent to which they already engage in understanding the situation in the schools/districts they serve. Some are in regular contact with several parties within their schools/districts; others only have contact with program alumni.

We found considerable interest among program leaders in visiting schools/districts they serve to learn more about the nature of sustainability in these locations and how they can best contribute to sustainability. Just over half of the program leaders we interviewed were very enthusiastic about getting into schools to learn more about what was happening in terms of sustainability; about 30 percent were interested but with some reservations; and about 20 percent were not interested. This latter group felt they simply could not provide any service(s) other than the one(s) they were providing.

In this section and Attachment C, we identify some questions for a program (individually or in partnership with others) to ask as they consider sustainability in schools/districts and their own work. The questions are intended to help a program get to know the schools/districts they serve well enough to help the K-12 educators develop sustainable attention to Asia for their students. Attachment C contains two tables. The first table presents a series of questions to address to understand the status and nature of sustainability in a specific school/district. It is followed by a table that presents a series of questions for those within a program to ask themselves about their work in relationship to the situations in the schools/districts they serve.

Review and Reflection on Sustainability Factors in K-12 Schools and Classrooms. The questions address (a) the extent and balance among the components of sustainability—goals, agents, and activities; (b) how the structures and processes present are working together dynamically to create sustainability; and (c) what opportunities exist for strengthening sustainability in a specific setting. Since these questions do not have simple or single answers, it is useful for program personnel and educators and others in the school/district to address these questions jointly in order to learn from a variety of perspectives.

Review and Reflection on Offerings of External Programs. We use the term “program” but this may be either a Freeman Foundation-funded program or the larger organization where the program is located. The entities involved in this work span a wide range of situations. Programs occupy varying positions within organizations and have differing strengths and capacities.³ The questions for program review and reflection address (a) how programs currently support attention to Asia in the schools/districts they serve; (b) their capacity to address new opportunities in schools/districts; (c) their interest and capacity to adjust their current services to address school/district opportunities; and (d) how to help schools/districts locate services that the program is not positioned to provide. In the course of the review and reflection, programs may identify opportunities in schools/districts that no available programs/resources are prepared to address. These opportunities may generate new directions that programs may want to pursue individually or with partners.

For more detail about the questions and process, see Attachment C.

Concluding Comments

In these concluding comments, we point out two patterns that we think might emerge as the people involved in the work of sustaining attention to Asia continue their reflections and

³ In this section, we are treating NCTA national, partner, partner-like, and regional sites all as individual (albeit networked) programs. That is, the notion of understanding and reflecting on the situation in schools/districts served might be done by each of these sites for the schools/districts it serves. Additionally, the national sites might look across all sites to determine if changes are needed in the basic structure and focus of NCTA.

conversations. The first pattern is about ways of addressing increasing complexity. The second is about engaging people in schools/districts in the issues of sustainability.

First, as the interest in Asia increases and a growing number of people and organizations become involved in Asia-related work nation-wide, the task of sustainability becomes increasingly complex. To address this complexity, schools/districts and external programs might collaboratively determine ways of using technology more extensively (e.g., creating online learning modules with high-quality basic content about Asia; and/or offering distance learning with web-based resources). Also, programs might make adjustments in their work to help engender greater sustainability in the schools/districts with which they are already involved. If so, some programs may choose to temporarily reduce their program activities for educators from additional schools and districts in order to focus on the needs of the schools/districts of current program alumni. Another modification that might emerge would be programs changing the cycle of their work from an annual cycle of program activities to a two- or three-year cycle of working with participants to ensure that the program activities are well positioned to support sustainability. This change would allow a program time to work collaboratively with the teachers and schools/districts it serves to determine how to differentiate program offerings, tailor them to the needs of a school/district at various points in time, and/or build more coherence across the K-12 spectrum. Other programs may focus more attention on maintaining the momentum for attention to Asia at state and national levels. Others may attend to ways to bring in resources from other sources or more firmly build their work into the core mission of their organizations in order to support sustainability.

Secondly, attention to Asia in a given location is sustained largely by the energy and interest of those involved and through expanding the numbers of people who share that interest rather than being driven by state mandates (as happens in subject areas such as math and reading). With this in mind, schools/districts and programs might continue to strengthen their study tour programs and, at the same time, might focus on providing more experiential learning opportunities for those who cannot participate in study tour programs (e.g., weekend or weeklong trip that involves travel to a large U.S. city with a substantial Asian population and other resources). The schools/districts and program may build a pattern of engagement by finding innovative ways of building relationships with Asians in Asia and those visiting the U.S. Or they might focus on building the interest of broad groups of teachers within a school through engaging activities and intriguing facts and resource materials about Asia that provide a basic understanding about Asia and help them in their work with students.

The conversation continues. We hope that the information in this report gives program leaders, educators, and the Foundation a few more ideas about the evolving nature and dynamics of sustainability. Success is in continuing the journey. We look forward to further conversations about how to build on the strong work that already has been accomplished in bringing attention to Asia among K-12 students so that in both the short- and long-term the Foundation's major objective is achieved: "strengthening the bonds of friendship between this country and the countries of the Far East."

Attachment B. Examples of Program Support of Sustainability

Program Activities That Emphasize Providing Content/Resources

<p>Local Asian Resources. The program identifies local Asian people and resources and helps teachers bring these resources into classrooms (e.g., guest speaker, performing artist, business person). <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = P, S]</i>⁴</p>
<p>Resource Kits. The program develops Asia resource/cultural kits to loan out to teachers. The kits include Asian artifacts, lesson plans, books, videos, primary sources, photos, and/or other resources. <i>[Goals = A, C Agents = P, S]</i></p>
<p>Program Resource Center. The program has a library/resource center with varied and rich Asia-focused materials, including curriculum units, that are available to teachers to use, and/or the staff advises schools upon request (e.g., how to plan an Asian cultural event) <i>[Goals = A, C, I; Agents = P]</i></p>
<p>Mini Grants. The program awards mini-grants to teachers to develop a project (e.g., for curriculum development, presentations to schools, community, professional organizations). <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = E, S, O]</i></p>
<p>Distance Learning. The program operates an intensive course on Japan for high school students via distance learning. It brings in Japanese experts and officials to teach and interact with students. <i>[Goals=A, I; Agents = S]</i></p>
<p>Alumni Enrichment and Networking. The program offers enrichment activities to increase alumni’s content knowledge and to encourage networking among teachers (e.g., conducting reunions, workshops, conferences, and field trips; providing newsletters and electronic communication to alumni such as listservs, websites, and online book group discussions; and/or connecting multiple Freeman Foundation-funded activities). <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P]</i></p>
<p>Curriculum Development/Review. The program brings alumni together to work collaboratively on developing Asia curriculum, and/or recruits alumni to field test and review its new curriculum units. <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P, E, S]</i></p>
<p>Asian Language. The program provides assistance to schools that want to establish and sustain an Asian language program (e.g., help to find, certify, and prepare Asian language teachers). <i>[Goals = A, I; Agents = E, O]</i></p>
<p>Advisory Committees. The program convenes a group of key educators to discuss curriculum issues and school needs for teaching Asia and/or to produce curriculum and resource materials. <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = P]</i></p>
<p>In-District Workshops. The program collaborates with schools to conduct tailored on-site workshops and other learning opportunities for teachers and/or helps with Asia curriculum development. <i>[Goals = C; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>Collegial Assistance/Leadership Development. The program involves alumni, including retired teachers, in taking leadership roles in the organization’s programs; in conducting Asia professional development and coaching in the schools; and/or making presentations in schools or at professional conferences. <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>Other Organizations. The program collaborates with other cultural and educational organizations to reach out to teachers and school/communities with resources and opportunities regarding Asia. <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>Outreach. The program works with state departments of education to adapt material to state curriculum and encourage use of Asia-related material. <i>[Goals = C; Agents = E, O]</i></p>

4 At the end of each example are two codes. The first indicates the type of student learning goal that is primarily emphasized in this example. The second indicates the Agents toward whom the activity is primarily directed. The codes for Student Learning Goals are: A = Attitude of respect for Asian cultures; C = Content knowledge about Asia; I = Intensive knowledge/understanding about Asia. The codes for Agents are: P = Program alumni; E = Educators; S = students; O = Others (e.g., community).

Program Activities That Emphasize Building Relationships with Asians/Asian Americans

<p>Speakers Bureau. The program operates a speaker's bureau that sends international graduate students (including Asians) into K-12 classrooms to make presentations on their language and culture. <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = S, O]</i></p>
<p>School Exchanges. The program assists schools/districts in establishing two-way student and teacher exchanges with schools in Asia and/or it operates student exchanges that are open to a number of schools in a state or region. The program helps connect partner schools, facilitates logistics, advises on itineraries, and/or runs pre-trip sessions for travelers. <i>[Goals = A, I; Agents = P, E, S, O]</i></p>
<p>Hosting Visitors. The program invites U.S. teachers to host Asian teachers of English who are visiting the U.S. through the Fulbright program. The Asian visitors interact with program participants and visit schools. <i>[Goals = A; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>Teachers from Asia. The program invites teachers from Asia to come to the U.S. where they are placed in schools to help teachers teach about Asia, to make presentations, and to interact with students and the community. <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = E, S, O]</i></p>
<p>Teacher Shadowing. Asian teachers attend a program focused on teaching and learning; then visit a U.S. teacher's school, stay in the teacher's home, and shadow the teacher in his/her school for a week. <i>[Goals = A; Agents = P, E]</i></p>

Program Activities That Emphasize Experiential Learning

<p>Field Trips. The program takes teachers on field trips to Asian museums, cultural centers, etc. to enrich their learning and encourage them to take their students to these places as well, creates teacher guides and offers workshops related to local Asia events and resources. <i>[Goals = C; Agents = P]</i></p>
<p>Mini-Grants. The program awards mini-grants to teachers to develop a project that is experiential (e.g., Asia-focused school events, performances, and/or field trips for students). <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = E, S, O]</i></p>
<p>Travel Study. A U.S. team and Japanese team of science teachers and students travel on an exchange program focused on environmental study in the two countries. <i>[Goals = A, I; Agents = P, S]</i></p>
<p>Arts Exchange. Every year, the program brings students from Asian countries to give performing arts events in the schools. <i>[Goals = A; Agents = E, S, O]</i></p>
<p>Outreach to Asia. The program helps U.S. schools make personal connections to groups or villages in Asia to understand their situation and provide assistance (e.g., after SE Asia tsunami). <i>[Goals = A; Agents = P, E, S]</i></p>
<p>Other Organizations. The program collaborates with other cultural and educational organizations to reach out to teachers and school/communities with resources and opportunities regarding Asia. <i>[Goals = A, C; Agents = P, E]</i></p>

Program Activities that Emphasize General Support of Schools and Impact on Students

<p>School Teams. The program recruits and supports teams of educators from a school or district to build a critical mass of people with commitment and expertise to teach Asia. <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>On-Site Visit/Support. Program staff observe in schools, visit classrooms of program alumni, and provide on-site support. They meet with administrators and other teachers; give presentations to teachers and students; and/or gather information about school needs/issues regarding teaching Asia. <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P, E, S]</i></p>
<p>School/District Collaboration. The program facilitates collaboration between schools/districts (e.g., resource development and sharing, teachers/leaders sharing expertise with others). <i>[Goals = C, I; Agents = P, E]</i></p>
<p>Program/District Partnerships. The program engages in a formal partnership agreement with schools/districts to provide a variety of learning opportunities for teachers and administrators focused on Asia. Schools agree to incorporate and sustain the study of Asia in their curriculum. <i>[Goals = A, C, I; Agents = P, E, O]</i></p>
<p>Educator Committees. The program establishes a committee of key program alumni from the schools/districts it serves. This group meets on a regular basis to talk about the changing needs of schools, advise the program on its offerings, and provide oversight on implementation of Asia into the curriculum and the life of the schools. <i>[Goals = A, C, I; Agents = P, E]</i></p>

Attachment C. School/District and Program Review and Reflections

School/District Review and Reflections

Focal Areas of Review	Specific Topics for Review
<i>Components of sustainability</i>	1) Review the components of sustainability in the school/district by determining: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. what student learning goals are being addressed? b. which agents are working within the school/district to bring attention to Asia? c. what learning activities for students and educators are being employed to address the goals? <p>Reflection Question: Does the balance among these components provide a dynamic interplay that is likely to maintain students' and educators' attention to Asia in this situation?</p>
<i>Structures and processes to support sustainability</i>	2) Review what structures and processes are in place to support sustainability. What is the pattern over time of how the school/district is: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. integrating Asian content and learning activities into various locations in the curriculum? b. maintaining means of updating their curriculum to incorporate new knowledge? c. providing access to web and other resources to continually renew how Asia is addressed? d. ensuring that new teachers have/receive basic knowledge about Asia and its importance? e. building peer relationships and networking between those within the school and those outside the school with an interest in Asia? f. learning from other schools/districts about successful means to adapt to changing conditions in the school and community? g. having a definable group of people (program alumni, other educators, community members) who are attending to work related to Asia and its sustainability within the school/district? h. determining when and how to make requests of external programs for assistance? <p>Reflection Question: In what ways does the pattern of the presence and use of various structures and processes appear to support (or not support) sustainable attention to Asia?</p>
<i>Areas of opportunity</i>	3) Identify areas of opportunity for schools/districts to build or maintain sustainable attention to Asia. Consider the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What student and educator learning goals offer the greatest opportunity for increasing the sustainability of attention to Asia? b. Which internal agents can most benefit from assistance from external groups? c. What combination of activities will be especially effective in positioning educators to reach the school/district's goals regarding Asia? d. What overall support structures and processes will be especially helpful to the school/district as it monitors its situation and requests assistance from external groups when needed?

Program Review and Reflection

Focal Areas of Review	Specific Topics for Review
<i>Program Activities/ Services Mesh with Schools/ Districts' work</i>	1) Review your program's activities/services and how they have supported the work in the schools/districts. Consider questions such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What student learning goals do we address? b. Toward which agents within the school/district are we directing our attention? c. What types of learning activities do we employ to address the learning goals for educators and their students?

Focal Areas of Review	Specific Topics for Review
	<p>Reflection Question: What is the relationship between our activities/services and the components, structures, and processes of sustainability that our schools/districts are or have used to date?</p>
<i>Program's current capacity</i>	<p>2) Review your program's current capacity to address school/district opportunities. Consider the match of your program's capacity to the opportunities identified within the schools/districts you serve (as identified above):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is the current capacity of your program to support the learning goals that provide the most opportunity in the schools/districts you serve? b. What is the current capacity of your program to work with the agents of sustainability that provide the most opportunity within the schools/districts you serve? c. What is the current capacity of your program to support the learning activities that provide the greatest opportunity to encourage sustainability within the schools/districts you serve? <p>Reflection Question: Overall, what is the mesh between our current capacity and the opportunities to support sustainability in the schools/districts we serve?</p>
<i>Capacity/Interest in adjustments</i>	<p>3) Review your program's capacity and interest in adjusting its services/activities to meet your schools/districts' opportunities to support sustainability. Consider questions such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What adjustments might we consider in our program offerings to better align with school/district opportunities to support sustainability in regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) their educator and student learning goals? 2) the agents within the school/district we direct our attention toward? 3) the types of learning activities we employ to address the learning goals for educators and their students? b. What structural or resource allocation changes may be needed to make these adjustments? For example, what adjustments would we need to make in <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) resource allocations? 2) who we collaborate with? 3) how we collaborate with others? 4) how we recruit program participants? 5) how we relate to schools/districts generally? c. What new ways of working do we need to consider given <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the cadre of alumni who are now available to play roles in our work? 2) the technological capabilities that are now available? 3) the resources we have built over the years of operating our programs? 4) new networks that exist or are possible? 5) new programs that exist or are possible? <p>Reflection Question: Overall, what adjustments in our services/activities are likely to be powerful enough in supporting sustainability in the schools/districts we serve that we are willing to commit to these adjustments?</p>
<i>Relations to other programs/resources</i>	<p>4) Review your capacity for addressing the opportunities to help the schools/districts you serve build a sustainable presence for Asia in relationship to the capacities of other programs/resources which your schools/districts can access. Consider such questions as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What other programs/resources are available to these schools/districts? b. Does it appear that other available programs/resources can address the schools/districts' opportunities to support sustainability? c. Are new pilot programs/needed to serve the schools/districts that neither we nor existing programs are available to meet? d. Are other entities needed to address the schools/districts' opportunities?