INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO:

An Examination of the Academic, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Students in Ontario High Schools

by

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Abstract

Increasing numbers of international students are attending high schools in Ontario. These students are tuition-paying adolescents coming to Ontario unaccompanied, living with Canadian families, and studying in English-speaking high schools. Although few studies have examined adolescent international students, many studies have been conducted on mobile students and immigrant students who face many similar challenges. These studies provided the starting point for defining the kinds of supports that could be present in programs designed for unaccompanied adolescent international students. One purpose of this current research was to assess the range and scope of this educational phenomenon by looking at International Student Programs (ISPs) offered in Ontario by publicly-funded school boards. After surveying the school board web sites, I determined which publicly-funded English-language school boards accepted international students. I compared the size of 18 programs. I invited the 16 school boards that were members of Ontario Association of School Districts International (OASDI) to participate in the study. I conducted one set of telephone interviews with the managers of eight of the 16 international student programs (ISPs), and received two written responses to the interview questions. I then conducted three longer face-to-face interviews with the managers from three diverse school boards. Two orientation manuals were analyzed as a part of this study. I examined the supports that 10 programs provided for international students. Some of the participating boards had well-developed ISPs that provided academic supports, well-monitored homestays, comprehensive orientation, social activities, and had procedures to monitor student well-being. A few of the larger boards with higher enrolment were not able to offer social activities and did not provide their own homestay.
The results of this study reveal that it was difficult to find accurate data concerning the number of international students in Ontario high schools. However, it was clear that ISPs are run as businesses and contribute to the economy in Ontario. More boards have started ISPs since 2012 and have joined the provincial and national associations. The results show that many supports such as language assessment, academic tutoring, well-monitored homestays, and social events varied widely across the province.
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my wonderful parents, William and Helen, and my husband, Perry, who believed in me and gave me so much support and encouragement. Although my mother left us in May 2014, I still heard her voice as I wrote the final chapters of this piece.

Two strong women always encouraged me to carry on, and I owe a debt of gratitude to my mother and my dear friend, Ann Faldermeyer.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2008, Citizenship and Immigration Canada issued study permits to a total of 30,431 temporary foreign students to study in Ontario (CIC, 2008). These international visa students arrived in Ontario to study at the elementary, high school, and post-secondary levels. Of those international visa students, 11,432 were enrolled in secondary school or elementary school in Ontario in the same year (Kunin, Roslyn & Associates, Incorporated, 2009). By 2013, the total number of international visa students studying at all levels of education in Ontario had increased by 18,857 temporary foreign students to a total of 49,288 students (CIC, 2013). International visa students arrive in Canada each year to study in English to improve their English language skills. Thousands of these visa students are unaccompanied adolescents from the age of 11 to 18 who arrive here with no family. Some of these students attend Ontario high schools for multiple years in order to graduate with an Ontario secondary school graduation certificate whereas others come for shorter stays of English immersion. Both long-stay and short-stay international students arrive here for English language development and immersion into Canadian culture while attending school in Ontario. International students who plan to stay in Ontario for six months or more are required to get a student visa or study permit. The short-stay (less than six months) international students do not require a student visa. The statistics cited above, therefore, do not include those international students who arrive for these shorter stays.
The large number of students coming into Ontario to study is having an economic effect on the province. International students spend money on tuition, housing, student visas, food, trips, clothing, and transportation. If their parents or families come to visit them while they are in Ontario, they also spend a considerable amount of money while they are visiting. These economic benefits are discussed in a study commissioned by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (Kunin et al., 2009). School boards, private families, homestay agencies, the Canadian Government, restaurants, and retailers are amongst the many that stand to benefit financially when international students come to Ontario. As so many stand to benefit from these programs, it is in the best interest of many Canadians to understand how well these international students are being supported.

After teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to many international students in a publicly-funded high school in Ontario for more than 10 years, I have worked closely with the organizers of the International Student Program (ISP) in my school board. Over the years, I have developed a familiarity with the kinds of services our board provides for these paying students. I knew the overall structure and delivery of our ISP, but wanted to discover how programs differ across the province and the manner in which each provides the supports needed for unaccompanied adolescents as indicated in the literature on adolescent development and English language acquisition.

I have been involved in English language assessment, teaching ESL courses, teaching ESL summer camps, accompanying international students on dozens of field trips, working as an ISP guidance counsellor, and tutoring international students at lunch and after school. I have worked closely with international students on a variety of
community events and have witnessed the many contributions they have made to our community. I have had many opportunities to talk to international students about their experiences including homestay situations, their observations about our school system, and their cultural adjustments. I became curious about the range and scope of other international student programs (ISP) in Ontario high schools. Many questions presented themselves: How many international students come here? How many school boards in Ontario have an ISP? How long has each of these school boards had an organized program set up specifically for international students? How do these programs differ from each other? Are students well supported academically and emotionally in Ontario’s publicly-funded high schools?

**Research Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to describe this educational phenomenon that has received little research attention so far in Canada. I wanted to know if it was possible to track the number of international students enrolled in high schools in Ontario. How long are most students studying in Ontario? Although these specialized programs exist in private and public schools in almost every province in Canada, I restricted my work to publicly-funded English-speaking school boards in Ontario.

Another purpose of this study was to determine how many boards in Ontario offer this special cohort of students an organized program that is designed to serve their educational, social, emotional, and cultural needs. By comparing existing programs, I discovered how they are similar and how they are different with regard to their delivery of special services to international students.
Ultimately, in the last phase of the study I examined three diverse boards in greater detail to assess the differences and similarities between three distinct programs. The three boards I chose to study differed both in size and geographical location. I examined the scale and structure of each program.

In sum, school boards that actively recruit unaccompanied adolescents to their schools must understand the special academic, emotional, social, and cultural needs of these students in Ontario’s schools. The special academic considerations stem from the fact that these students are English Language Learners (ELLs) with a wide variation in their English Language Proficiency (ELP). As unaccompanied adolescents, they have special emotional needs as they travel away from home at a vulnerable age. International students need to make peer to peer connections and may need assistance socially. Culturally, these students are in need of supports related to adjusting to Canadian culture and living with a Canadian family.

Since few studies exist in this area, this study aimed to bridge the gap. I considered the distinct challenges facing these students, and then examined possible supports that have been used elsewhere that could assist them adapting to their new circumstances and ultimately experience success. My research sought to describe the extent to which these supports are present in the programs involved in this study.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

In this chapter, I have examined the research regarding the specific needs of adolescents for healthy development, the social challenges facing unaccompanied adolescents, and academic challenges for English Language Learners (ELLs). Since there is little research specifically on international students in Ontario’s high schools, I have included pertinent research concerning adolescent development, immigrant youth, mobile youth, and second language acquisition studies for learning English. The second part of this chapter looks at research related to emotional and academic supports that have been used successfully to assist all adolescents and adolescent ELLs specifically.

Currently, thousands of unaccompanied adolescents are going to English-speaking countries such as Canada to learn English and study in English. For example, in 2012, there were approximately 120 adolescent international students accepted into my school board. This figure represented 0.007% of all high school students in the board (Canadian Association of Public Schools-International, 2011). In the literature, these students are referred to as visa students, international students, temporary foreign students, unaccompanied sojourners, unaccompanied minors, and unaccompanied adolescents. In this thesis, I will refer to them as unaccompanied adolescents or international students. When I use the term “international students”, I am not referring to older university age students or younger students, but unaccompanied adolescents who range in age from 13 to 19 years old.
In an effort to increase flagging enrolment, many Ontario school boards are looking worldwide to solicit international students who would consider attending high school in this province. The Declining Enrolment Working Group (2009), a research group of the Ontario Ministry of Education, suggested that “more intensive marketing of our schools as a valuable resource could help attract and retain students, including foreign students” and that “Ontario should be more proactive in recruiting foreign [international] students – a step already taken by a number of boards and provinces” (p. 50).

The proliferation of International Student Programs (ISPs) in Ontario high schools has resulted in many unaccompanied adolescents leaving home at a critical time in their personal development. As with all young adolescents, they are entering the transition into adulthood, and they face many new and potentially stressful situations. International students will face additional stressors since they arrive in a new place without the normal supporting network of family and friends around them. Most of them will move in with host families and go to new schools in a new language and culture.

What should school boards consider when designing their international programs? Have participating school boards examined the following: What are the major causes of stress for adolescents? What will the academic and social challenges be for international students? What emotional, social, and cultural supports should be in place for them as they enter new schools and a new culture? How will a student’s level of English language proficiency affect their adjustment? What are the main supports that should be in place for their academic success?
Adolescent Development

Around the age of 13, children mature and enter adolescence. At this point, they will experience many emotional, social, and cognitive changes. Teenagers begin to spend more time with their peer group which Cobb (2010) described as “one of the most important socializing forces in the lives of adolescents . . .” (p. 221). As this cohort leaves childhood behind, they begin to move away from their families and “experience a heightened need for connection and belonging, and they seek to affiliate themselves with, not distinguish themselves from, others” (p. 207). Adolescents traveling away from their families will have to adjust to joining a new peer group without the usual supporting network of a familiar language, place, and culture.

In their comprehensive review of the literature regarding adolescent health and well-being, Call, Riedel, Hein, McLoyd, Petersen, and Kipke (2002) noted that adolescence is the time of increasing independence when many young people are “…out of the direct control of parents and guardians [and] living away from home” (p.72). This is the time when adolescents begin to “explore new identities” and “assume new roles and responsibilities” (p. 72). One of the stressors facing unaccompanied adolescents is caused by moving to a new community with “fewer resources to draw on” (p.73). The authors explore the variety of pressures adolescents may experience that could lead to poor health and diminished well-being. They recommend that caring neighbours, peers, teachers, and other community members “…take responsibility for the healthy upbringing and socialization of adolescents” (p.73). The authors suggest that families and communities need to “…engage and invest” (p. 89) in the well-being of adolescents.
In his study of immigrant adolescents, Tartakovsky (2009) found that they reported being lonelier after they immigrated. Like international students, they arrived in a new country unaccompanied by friends or family. They left behind the support networks of home. This study found that students reported their loneliness increased, emotional and behavioral problems increased, social and school competence decreased, and their self-esteem decreased (p. 189). As Cobb (2010) asserted, adolescents need to spend time with their peers because they “...provide much-needed emotional and social support. Adolescents also learn many social skills from peers that they would not learn from parents or teachers” (p. 221). If, as Tartakovsky (2009) found, their own sense of psychological well-being suffers, they will find it difficult to make friends at the time in their lives when it is critical to learn to identify with peers.

**Social Challenges**

Although few studies have examined adolescent international students, many studies have been conducted on mobile students and immigrant students who face many of the same challenges that young international students face. In this section, I will look at studies concerned with the causes of adolescent stress and how these stressors affect mobile youth, unaccompanied immigrant youth, and English language learners (ELLs). From this collected research, I will create a picture of some of the challenges facing unaccompanied adolescents in ISPs.

One of the first challenges an adolescent faces is how to make social connections and one specific group of adolescents that faces challenges in this area is the children of military personnel. In a qualitative study, Bradshaw, Sudhinraset, Mmari, and Blum (2010) examined three broad areas that create stress for military youth. These children
move into new communities and often stay only two or three years before they have to
move on. To succeed socially, they have to make new friends and learn a new school
culture quickly. They based their areas of inquiry on the results of 11 focus groups at
eight military bases in the United States. The main stressors on mobile military students
were determined by in-depth interviews of students, parents, and school staff.

Like all young students, military students “...must adapt to normative
development stressors (e.g., puberty, formation of peer relationships, parent/child
relationships, [and] increasing academic demands” (p. 85). Due to their mobility, they
also experienced additional stressors such as transition-related stressors when moving to
a new school. From the results of this study, a set of themes emerged that express the
worries of and the common stressors for mobile adolescents that include “strain on their
relationships with peers, academic challenge, student/teacher relationships and becoming
involved in extracurricular activities” (p. 89). One student said, “It is hard to get into
sports, hard to get involved in school and stuff” (p. 93). Like military adolescents,
international students face similar stressors. As newcomers to the school, they are
unfamiliar with the routines and norms of the school and may find it difficult to get on
school sports teams or participate in extracurricular activities around school.

The study of mobile military students (Bradshaw et al., 2010) found that it was
hard for mobile students to make and keep friends. One interviewee stated, “It is really
hard moving to a different high school because everyone already has their cliques” (p.
90). One can draw parallels between children of the military who move into new schools
and international students.
South and Haynie (2004) conducted a study to look at friendship networks of mobile adolescents. This longitudinal study was based on a population of 13,000 students from 132 schools in the United States. They used self-report questionnaires and follow up interviews to examine the impact of mobility on the structure of adolescent friendships. They found “... that mobile youth have fewer friends, are less popular, and are more likely to be isolated than adolescents who have resided in their schools or communities for a longer period of time” (p. 343). They also found that “...females and older youth are likely to have particular difficulty breaking into peer networks” (p. 343). The authors suggest that future research is needed to see if mobile youth are more adept at making new friends after they have been through frequent moves. As mobile youth, international students may be “less popular” and feel “more isolated” at school.

In a study focused on the experiences of eight ELLs in two Ontario high schools over a three year period, Han and Cheng (2011) found that the participants in their study experienced many socio-cultural challenges such as the difficulty in making Canadian friends. Many students in this study acknowledged the “…isolation they felt from the mainstream community” (p. 91). Han and Cheng (2011) noted the lack of English language proficiency (ELP) made it more difficult for the ELLs to get involved in and benefit from school activities and resources (p. 92). ELLs in Ontario’s ISPs may experience feeling isolated and have many of the same difficulties with making friends and finding ways to participate in curricular and extra-curricular activities at school as the students featured in these studies (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Han & Cheng, 2011; South & Haynie, 2004).

**The Causes of Adolescent Stress.**
In a study on adolescent stress in Australia, Byrne, Davenport, and Masanov (2006) also found that things such as student/teacher relations and academic challenges created stress for adolescents. Byrne et al. (2006) developed a questionnaire to determine the main causes of stress for adolescents. In the first part of this two part study, 32 adolescents were chosen for a focus group to discuss and determine the factors that they felt contributed to adolescent stress. From this process, 58 questions were developed. Then 1,000 adolescents were asked to complete the Adolescent Stress Questionnaire (ASQ). Whole classrooms representing a broad socio-economic population completed the study. From the self-reported data, the researchers found nine significant items that create the most stress in adolescent lives. Of these nine, seven can be viewed as relevant to international students. These are: having to study things you do not understand, pressure to fit in at school, student/teacher relationships, concern about your future and having to make decisions about future work or education, not getting enough time for leisure, not enough money to buy the things you need or want, and getting up early in the morning to go to school (pp. 402-3).

As international students arrive here without their parents, necessity dictates that they need to make many difficult decisions such as communicating with their new homestay family, budgeting and allocating their money, and buying and wearing appropriate clothing. Many will experience the challenges of how to dress for a new climate. They will have to make travel arrangements, open bank accounts, go shopping, and be concerned for their personal safety. As with the participants in Byrne et al. (2006), international students will be facing the challenges of studying things they may not understand, feeling pressure to fit in, developing relationships with teachers, and
experiencing concerns about their future. These are just a few of the new challenges they will face. This new independence can create stress.

A study consisting of a series of semi-structured interviews of three high school graduates who arrived in Israel as unaccompanied immigrants three years earlier (Mirsky & Wittenberg-Szekely, 2007), illustrated the important contributions host families make in the adjustment of unaccompanied adolescents. One student said, “During that first month, I had to make more decisions than I would have made at home in four years” (p. 111). This study explored the feelings and experiences of the students when they first arrived and met their new host family. One interviewee said that, “the children [of the host family] did not realize that we don’t understand the language well...” (p. 111). When ELLs who “don’t understand the language well” arrive in any English-speaking country, they will face significant stressors at home as well as at school.

One other factor that may add stress to international students is when they are here against their wishes and would rather be back at home. Tartakovsky (2009), mentioned earlier in this chapter, conducted a longitudinal three-year-long study involving 211 students from Russia and the Ukraine who were immigrating to Israel and 489 Russian students who remained in Russia. He examined the changes in adolescent psychological well-being brought about by immigration. He developed a questionnaire that he used once a year for three years and compared the data. The results showed that students felt less competent socially and scholastically after they immigrated. Like the immigrants of Tartakovsky’s (2009) study, those who “...are sent abroad against their will ... suffer distress in the premigration period, [and] decline in their psychological well-being may be more profound...” (p. 200). When international education is pushed upon
students by parents who see the value of sending their child away from home to study in English, it may be difficult to help the student find a positive side to their new-found independence if the choice to switch school systems was not the student’s.

In addition to the strain of moving to a new school and having to make friends, international students are also faced with the daunting task of making decisions about many things. An additional stressor for international students is related to not getting enough sleep as discussed in the next section.

The Need for Sleep.

It has been well-documented (Mitru, Millrood, & Mateika, 2002) that sleep is a critical component of adolescent health and well-being. The side effects of sleeplessness are “...tardiness, sleeping during class time, and memory loss” (p. 712). Lack of sleep adds another potential level of stress for international students. Mitru et al. (2002) used the available research on sleep to show that lack of sleep in adolescents makes it harder for them to learn when they “...are too tired during the day” (p. 705) and affects the “...regulation of complex tasks, creative-thinking and goal-oriented behaviors” (p. 715).

Mitru et al. (2002) explained that on average, adolescents would naturally go to bed later in the evening and get up later in the morning and that the early start time for schools makes it difficult for many adolescents (p. 707). Most adolescents get about seven hours of sleep each night, but would probably sleep about nine hours if they were to sleep without the pressures of early school start time, home work, part-time jobs, family involvements, sports, leisure activities and social opportunities. Most adolescents have many demands on their time and often, sleep is not given priority. Many adolescents “…tend to sleep less and less and as a result are excessively sleepy” (p. 708).
Like all adolescents, the home-life of unaccompanied adolescent students is very important for their health and their success in school. They need enough sleep in order to function well cognitively. Sleep studies (Mitru et al., 2002) have shown that “…students who were struggling or failing at school were getting less sleep than their counterparts who were achieving A’s and B’s” (p. 713). Mitru et al. (2002) suggested that the home environment should be conducive for healthy sleep. Some of the most important factors that account for late bedtimes are “…increased access to telephone, computerized games and the internet” (p. 709). In order to assist students to achieve optimal results in school, students need to learn about the importance of getting enough sleep and become aware of the potential of electronic media to have a detrimental impact on sleep. Many of the tasks they will be expected to perform during the school day will be complex and require creative thinking. Sleep deprivation may lead to increased academic challenges.

**Academic Challenges**

As seen in mobile youth (South & Hayne, 2004; Bradshaw et al., 2010), moving into a new school presents many challenges for adolescents. In Stern’s (2009) essay, he offered a critical analysis of the school system and noted that mobility causes problems for adolescent students. As in Canada, the schools and the curricula in the United States differ from place to place. This creates challenges for mobile students who need to adjust “to new curriculum, textbooks, bell schedules, classroom norms and rules” (p. 223). They also have to adjust to a new peer group and “these academic and social challenges are reflected in the lower levels of academic achievement…” (p. 223). His essay expressed the concern that when a school system is not responsive to modern teenagers, mobile youth are amongst those who may encounter more difficulties. He explored new ways of
giving students opportunities to learn and achieve skills in the 21st Century. Although he did not look at international students specifically, it is clear that they have to face all of the challenges he cited in addition to adjusting to a new home and making the adjustment to communicating in English.

Language Assessment.

When schools prepare to educate ELLs, one important academic support is an initial comprehensive language assessment. This should aid the schools in determining what Cheng, Rogers, and Hu (2004) defined as the “…progress and language development” (p. 363) of the ELLs. In their comparative three-year study, they surveyed 267 ESL or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors about the purpose of assessing their students, and the methods and procedures involved. Cheng et al. (2004) noted that one of the purposes of assessment is to reveal the students’ “…attainment of and progress towards desired learning outcomes” (p. 361). This collected information can be used as a basis for instruction as well as grading. The results of the assessment would be used to assist with placing the student into appropriate courses.

The Ontario Ministry of Education (OME, 2010) described one purpose of assessment as a method to help “… students understand how they can improve” (p. 8). The OME (2007b) further stated that schools need to have ELLs assessed for their English language proficiency (ELP) as they enter the school system. School boards are expected to assess a student’s oral language, and their ability to read and write in English as well as their Math skills. The OME (2007b) recommended using assessment criteria developed by the ESL/ELD Resource Group of Ontario (ERGO) who have “…initial language assessment tasks” (p. 32) that are available from their web site.
Even though most incoming students may have studied English in schools in their home land for a few years, they will arrive with differing levels of English language proficiency. Both listening and speaking skills are necessary for success in an all-English classroom. Roessingh (2006) found that “...parents and students alike overestimate their English language proficiency (ELP) and underestimate the level of ELP required for engagement with the academic demands of high school” (p. 582). Assessments provide critical information that helps the school counsellor and the ESL teacher decide which students require ESL and which mainstream classes they are ready to take.

The Role of School Counsellors.

Second language acquisition theories such as the one developed by Cummins (2008) provide insights into the length of time it may take an ELL to acquire sufficient English language skills to perform successfully in Ontario’s schools. Guidance counsellors, in consultation with ESL teachers, should be able to use the results of the initial language assessments to place the students in appropriate classes. Cummins (2008) developed a distinction between conversational fluency and academic language proficiency (p. 71) that supports the idea that ELLs need to spend many years developing their English language skills to achieve success in an English-speaking school. Cummins (2008) noted that it takes about two years for basic interpersonal communication (BICS) or conversational language to develop. The cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) could take additional 5 to 7 years. Only then can ELLs “…approach grade norms in academic aspects of English” (p. 73). Counsellors with this information will have a deeper understanding of the schooling needs of ELLs.
In California, action research was conducted (McCall-Perez, 2000) to assess the need for school counsellors to be given special training for the purpose of helping ELLs with their distinct schooling needs. Over three and a half years, three student cohorts in two school districts were studied using a variety of data. Based on the California language census, marks, questionnaires, and an analysis of course enrolment data, this study was able to show the need for language assessment as key information for school counsellors who help ELLs choose courses. Counsellors were encouraged to see students in classroom settings. McCall-Perez (2000) noted that “after classroom observations, some counselors were surprised to note that they had greatly misjudged the levels of English proficiency of their own advisees” (p. 5). This study indicated that the time students spent with the counsellor did not provide accurate assessments of the students’ ELP. McCall-Perez (2000) suggested that ELLs should be encouraged not to think of high school as a four year goal, but be encouraged to focus on learning English well before rushing through school.

Since all international students will join mainstream classes at some point after their arrival, most teachers will have these students in their classes. In his manual for new teachers of ELLs, Jesness (2004) recommended training teachers to help ELLs to make adjustments to assist them with language comprehension and achieve success. He states that “mainstream teachers should allow English learners to use appropriate reference materials, including bilingual dictionaries, even on tests” (p. 91).

In an effort to gain insight into the challenges faced by adolescent international students, Popadiuk (2009) studied the positive and negative experiences of unaccompanied minors who were living in Canada. The author conducted semi-
structured interviews with 21 students from three large high schools in Vancouver. Each participant was interviewed for 35 to 50 minutes about incidents that helped or hindered their transitions as they began living in Canada. The participants were either volunteers or were asked to participate by a teacher or counsellor at one of the schools.

Most of the students, who were from China, Japan, and Korea, had been in Canada for an average of two years, although the length of time varied from one to five years. The researcher used the Critical Incident Method (CIM) for collecting and analyzing data. The interviewees were asked to give details about experiences at school, at home, in their native countries, and in daily encounters. After each incident was recorded, the researcher reread the transcripts numerous times to try to identify “discrete critical incidents” (p. 233) that could be categorized. In an emergent design, five categories stemmed from the reported incidents. The categories were: a) receiving encouragement; b) appreciating others; c) being accepted; d) making friends, and e) having fun with others. This study has key insights for school counsellors. She recognized the need “...for school counsellors to be proactively engaged in supporting adolescent international students before they arrive and throughout the duration of their sojourn” (p. 238).

Roessingh (2006) stressed the need for those “...who work with ESL learners to provide the support and experiences necessary for successful engagement in the cultural and educational milieu of high school” (p. 583). Roessingh (2006) advised that teachers and counsellors need to be aware of the special challenges facing unaccompanied adolescents. Mainstream teachers need to be made aware of which students in their classes are international students and acknowledge that these students may require
accommodations for language such as bilingual dictionaries as recommended by Jesness (2004).

**English Language Support.**

Like other mobile youth, international students who come to Ontario to graduate from high school will encounter different expectations for graduation requirements compared to their home country. This complication along with their need to be proficient in English may make their stay in high school longer. Roessingh (2006) interviewed 10 immigrant students in Alberta. The study looked at the perceptions of ESL graduates and their families about their ESL program and teacher. Using open-ended interviews, artifacts, archival records, and participant observations, Roessingh sought to understand why so many immigrant youth thought of English as a second language (ESL) classes as unimportant. Some saw them as a waste of time that kept “...the student out of mainstream academic course work” (p. 570) that they needed to fulfill graduation requirements.

The OME (2007b) guide for schools with ELLs noted that many “…international, or visa students who have paid fees to attend school in Ontario…are often under great pressure to do well…and progress quickly” (p. 7). These students often feel pressure from home to finish school in the shortest amount of time possible. When they arrive with low level English language skills and are instructed to stay in ESL class, some feel cheated and held back by the system. Gunderson (2008) also found that some immigrant ELLs felt “ghettoized” (p.187) when they were put into ESL classes.

However, if those ELLs with lower English language proficiency do not spend the time in a sheltered ESL class focusing on learning English, they may have more difficulty
in using “…English to achieve academically in all content areas” (OME, 2007b, p.10). An ELL who spends more time in ESL, may take longer to get through high school and be older than their Canadian peers at graduation.

Gunderson (2008) described the wide variation in English language proficiency in the immigrant population of high school-aged ELLs in Vancouver. The immigrant ELLs ranged from those who never learned to read in their first language or attended school before arriving in Canada to those “…who have learned to read and have studied advanced academic subjects in their L1s [first languages]” (p. 186). Similarly, Coelho (2004) clearly outlined the differing needs of ELLs as they navigate Ontario’s schools. She reminded the reader that”… it is important to remember that most have already developed age-appropriate levels of proficiency in at least one language and that students who have received some schooling in their own country may be highly literate in their own language” (p. 17). International students have received varying amounts of English-language instruction in their home countries before they come to Ontario. She explained that some may have attended a school where the language of instruction was English whereas others may have only been exposed to English language instruction for a few hours a week.

In the OME (2007b) policy manual for ESL/ELD (English Literacy Development) instruction, international students are acknowledged as having a broad range of English language proficiency. Teachers are warned that although “some have had instruction in English but may still have considerable difficulty learning English in Ontario classrooms” (p. 10).
One of the largest challenges for ELLs is the need to acquire enough English vocabulary to be able to understand and participate in daily life at school, in the community and at home. Coelho (2004) explained that, ELLs have a challenge catching “…up to their peers, who sometimes have a huge head start” (p. 91). Learning the required vocabulary could take years and “…because English-speaking children are adding about 1,000 words a year to their vocabularies, the second language learner is constantly trying to catch up” (p. 91).

International students that plan to graduate from an Ontario high school also need to pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) or the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course (OSSLC). This is a requirement for graduation. Cheng, Klinger, and Zheng (2007) examined the test performance results of ESL/ELD students for the years 2002 and 2003. The study found that this graduation requirement created an additional challenge to this group of students and many of the students did not perform well on the test. Overall, their “…poor performance indicates the challenging nature of this test and potentially hinders their academic success and graduation” (p. 191). Their findings indicated that the ESL/ELD students who wrote the OSSLT had the most difficulty with narrative texts, understanding nuance, and understanding vocabulary (p. 203).

After interviewing eight ELLs about their academic experiences in two Ontario high schools, Han and Cheng (2011) reported that six of the eight participants in their study chose to either defer writing the test when they were eligible to write it or failed the literacy test the first time they wrote it. The study found that vocabulary on the test created the biggest challenge. “Some of them had not completed the reading and writing
tasks because they did not know the words in the test questions, the multiple-choice statements, and the topics for the writing tasks” (p. 86). The lack of necessary vocabulary had many ramifications. It was shown to create challenges for ELLs on the Grade 10 Literacy Test. It also figures prominently when a new international student is trying to decipher their new surroundings.

After students arrive in their new environment, they typically pass through four stages that Coelho (2004) termed: Arrival and First Impressions, Culture Shock, Recovery, and Optimism and Acculturation. She explained that people “… may pass through these stages of adjustment at different rates or even skip a stage entirely” (p. 18). She particularly noted the need to remember the “…visa students, most of whom are living away from home for the first time and may also be doing their own cooking, shopping, banking, cleaning and other daily chores. In addition, they may be coping with loneliness and homesickness” (p. 19). Roessingh (2006) also advised that teachers and school counsellors should be on the lookout for signs of culture shock.

Culture shock and the adjustment to living in Canada were examined by Watt, Roessingh, and Bosetti (1996) when they interviewed 40 former ESL students. Of those interviewed, half graduated from high school and the other half left school early without graduating. They found that the adjustment period came in waves and some students made the adjustment more easily. They also found that those students who arrived with stronger ELP had an easier time making the adjustment to the Canadian school. However, “for some, the feelings of [isolation] persist[ed] through most of their school experience” (p. 206). The study noted the importance of the acquisition of English language skills as a key to adjusting to a new culture and a new school.
Learning the School Culture.

Like the immigrant adolescents studied by Tartakovsky (2009), international students who arrive in English-speaking schools will experience huge changes like the “...massive loss of habitual environment” (p.179). In addition to leaving behind their familiar culture and surroundings, these students also experience the”...loss of parental authority” (p. 180). While adjusting to a new home and homestay parents, some students experienced difficulty with the English language at school since they were studying “...subjects that demand a good command of the new language” (p. 197). This additional challenge is also present for international students.

Roessingh (2006) also found that two of the significant barriers facing ELLs are an “...unfamiliarity with the school culture... [and] ...a lack of English language proficiency” (p. 568). In addition to trying to cope with new food, new surroundings, new people, and a new language, many international students are used to a different style of schooling. Roessingh (2006) provided a concise chart comparing and contrasting Canadian and Chinese schooling (p. 569). In Canada, there was an emphasis on group work and discussion. Canadian schools embedded English grammar instruction in everyday language practice, unlike Chinese schools where students were drilled on English grammar from a textbook. Roessingh (2006) explained that many Chinese students may be uncomfortable with group work and discussion. This may be due to a lack of familiarity with the teaching style and, as newcomers, they may be hesitant to speak and make errors in front of their peers.

Gunderson (2000) found that immigrant ELLs in Vancouver were used to accomplishing tasks by learning “discrete skills” through “rote memorization” (p. 695).
The immigrants reported that in their home country, “…the ones who are rewarded with the best grade” (p. 695) are the students who could remember the most.

**Supports for Unaccompanied Adolescents**

In the first part of this review of current literature, I looked at adolescent development, social challenges facing unaccompanied adolescents, and academic challenges facing ELLs. Many of the stressors encountered by all adolescents are compounded for unaccompanied adolescents as they enter Ontario schools. In this section, I report on the kinds of supports that have been used in studies that have been beneficial for helping adolescents make transitions into new cultures and new schools. International students have to cope with both the normal stressors of adolescence and meet the many distinct challenges that face them as ELLS leaving home and entering a new culture. The forward to the OME Curriculum document for ESL (2007a) states that “…teachers must all work together, within the provisions outlined in all secondary school curriculum documents, to support English language learners, to help them integrate successfully into the academic and social life of the school” (p. 8). In this section of the paper, I outline some successful supports that have been used to help students.

As Boards of Education continue to market international programs around the world, they have to be prepared to provide paying students with the best possible situation for successful integration. Much of the current literature is concerned with slightly older international students such as an on-line study of Canadian university international students. For example, Madgett and Belanger (2008) sought to assess the expectations of international students at Canadian universities. From a convenience sample of 359 students, they found that Canadian universities performed well in meeting
the expectations of the international students surveyed. As compared to England and Australia, Canada was perceived to be more open to foreign students and offered reasonable costs to study here. One key point that arose from this study is that “...universities and colleges [in Canada] must not underestimate the needs of the students/customers” (p. 198). Although this study looked at an older cohort, their conclusions about the needs of programs to offer “...culturally sensitive materials and programmes” (p. 198) to their clients is appropriate for unaccompanied adolescents also. The authors’ final suggestion stemming from their research was that “...these institutions must recognise that student’s needs are sometimes identical, at other times completely different” and that international programs “...must become more accountable for providing suitable services to these individuals who are paying hefty fees to have the privilege of participating in our system” (p. 205).

Social Supports.

When unaccompanied adolescents arrive in Ontario, many of them struggle to make social contacts. Bradshaw et al. (2010) found that military adolescents who moved in the middle of a school year had more difficulty with the transitions. School sports are one healthy way for students to engage in social activities, however, they found that “students who move to a school late in the year often miss tryouts for the teams” (p. 102). Their study found that non-competitive activities in the school such as clubs “...are not exclusive and thus transfers can join at any time” (p. 95). Extra-curricular activities offer opportunities for unaccompanied adolescents who need to spend social time with peers. Schools can help students get involved in social activities around the school such as teams, bands and clubs.
From their interviews with former ESL students, Watt et al. (1996) discovered that many ELLs felt segregated and alone. The study suggested that certain things could take place in schools to assist ELLs with getting involved in their schools. They suggested that “facilitating a link with an L1-speaking friend might do a great deal to ease the initial feelings of overwhelming isolation, loneliness and fear” (p. 206). In addition to this, they suggested developing a buddy system for ELLS with either former ESL students in the school or native English speakers. This would encourage the ELLS to involve themselves more at school in both curricular and extra-curricular activities (p. 217). They also noted that continued ESL support after the students had left the ESL classroom would be extremely beneficial for many ELLs.

Popadiuk (2009) suggested that school counsellors who can “…engage international students … in an open, trusting and empathic relationship [can help] to connect students to peers...” (p. 240). As Roessingh (2006) suggested, schools would be in position to provide organized peer leadership that help all new students become familiar with the building, the expectations and the routines. Schools, and by extension international student programs, could provide opportunities for students to get involved in extracurricular activities. Call et al. (2002) also strongly suggested that adolescents need supports at the school level and in the community.

**ESL support.**

ESL classes are designed to provide the opportunity for ELLs to practice English language skills and international students are placed in a classroom with other students who are in the same situation. Gunderson (2000) reported that immigrant students found positive and negative aspects to ESL classes. The negative comments about ESL classes
came from students in higher socioeconomic schools. The majority of the negative comments about ESL indicated that some students thought it was a waste of time, there was a lack of English being spoken in class, and they often felt segregated (p. 699).

The positive comments from the immigrants regarding ESL classes related a different story. From this perspective, ESL classes gave ELLs a chance to read, assistance with writing, and provided extra time to focus on English in a class where the students are “…all alike” (p. 699). One student reported that after spending six months in mainstream classes, she was invisible but that in the same time period she “…made more friends in ESL class and …[they] studied together like brothers and sisters” (p. 699). Most of the immigrant ELLs had positive comments about the benefits of ESL class.

Volunteering.

Another possible social opportunity for adolescents is volunteer work. Ontario students are required to do 40 hours of community involvement service over the four years of high school in order to graduate. This mandatory service is one way that adolescents will meet different people and get involved with adult-led activities. Call et al. (2002) considered volunteering a “…promising approach to youth development” (p. 89). Cobb (2010) demonstrated that students engaged in volunteer activities that are usually organized by an adult “…report feeling more positive, have higher self-esteem, are more confident, do better in school are less likely to drop out, and engage in fewer risky behaviors” (p. 277). Possible volunteer opportunities could be found in places such as churches, arts organizations, sports teams, schools, community organizations, and service organizations. Cobb (2010) found that each of these possible outlets could
contribute to a student’s skills in teamwork, social skills, development of positive relationships, and adult networks and initiative (p. 279).

With the mandatory volunteer service of 10 hours for each year in high school, international students who plan to graduate from an Ontario school have to find ways to complete their community involvement. The OME (2007a) noted that “ESL/ELD students also bring valuable talents to the community…, and their language backgrounds and cultural knowledge may be a special asset” (p. 65) in some volunteer work. This work may also provide the student with another social opportunity to develop new relationships with people in the community.

Emotional Supports.

Call et al. (2002) advised that emotional supports should come from caring adults. Which adults would be in a position to offer emotional support for international students? In an organized program, the onus for assisting new students to feel happy and safe would fall on three parties: the school board (specifically the international program), the school, and the new homestay family. Popadiuk (2009) suggested that newcomers should have the opportunity to meet “…other international students who were already studying at the school” to help with the transition (p. 240). Popadiuk (2009) noted that very little information could be found on web sites for international programs about “…the psychological and physiological reactions associated with cultural transitions …, even though most people will experience disequilibrium, isolation, distress, and relational difficulties” (p. 238). This raises the question of how programs can help prepare students for the inevitable blow of adjusting to a new culture. What kinds of orientation are useful for the new students and how can schools help students to understand that their feelings
are part of the normal cycles of culture shock? How can school boards prevent what Popadiuk (2009) called “unnecessary suffering” (p. 242)? Mobile youth such as the military youth in Bradshaw et al. (2010) “...feel safe and a sense of membership at a new school when they are familiar with the physical layout of the school and feel connected to other students...” (p. 99). Giving school tours and helping new students make connections with peers are two supports that would help with developing a sense of safety and belonging.

Since the international student is without his or her parents, host parents may act as surrogates for the unaccompanied adolescent. In Mirsky’s study (2007), students “...sought the support and advice of their host parents in a variety of spheres: the new language, their schoolwork, their plans for the future and so on” (p. 112). Host families were able to provide stability in lieu of the international student’s family. These studies have shown that caring adults at home and at school offer help for unaccompanied adolescents.

One important consideration is that unaccompanied adolescents are placed in well-monitored homestays. Popadiuk (2009) found that negative experiences “...could include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuses by the people they come into contact with, through the home-stay families with whom they live or strangers” (p. 240). Popadiuk (2009) suggested that counsellors, teachers, and board personnel need to be aware of the potential for abusive situations.

The host-family has a specific duty to provide a caring environment for the international students, and this host-family relationship was studied from the point of view of the host parent by Doerr (2013) who interviewed four host parents in
Aotearoa/New Zealand. In this study, host parents were asked about their experiences as host parents from 1997 to 1998. Also, the researcher examined the handbook prepared by the school board for fee-paying students. This program, set up to attract fee-paying students, had already been in existence for a few years when the researcher went in to observe the situation. From trial and error, the program had evolved over the years and was able to provide new students with a detailed handbook to assist them in getting oriented to their new culture. By outlining behavioural expectations when the students first arrived, the program hoped to circumvent some earlier misunderstandings that had taken place and thereby support the new students with knowledge about their new living arrangements.

The host parents in this study detailed a wide range of experiences—both positive and negative. The positive experiences led to close emotional ties and rich opportunities for cultural sharing. New students were assigned to their homestay family by a school board employee who matched up fee-paying students with host families based on comparing the profiles of the student with her knowledge of the host families. “The fee-paying student program also involved a celebration of cultural difference, which softened the monetary nature, [by] presenting the fee-paying students as cultural ambassadors rather than customers” (p. 65). The study revealed that home stay parents had a variety of reasons for taking in fee-paying students that included cultural sharing, exposing their children to other cultures, “and to gain extra income” (p. 66).

Doerr (2013) looked closely at the detailed handbook distributed to each fee-paying student. The handbook outlined necessary information about the school and the community. It also included “minute instructions of how to go about daily life with the
host family” (p. 67). The handbook was devised after the board had hosted international students for a few years, and many of the suggestions were based on actual incidents that had created misunderstandings between host parents and the fee-paying students. This handbook was tailored to help the incoming students adjust to the different culture and their host family. It explained many daily activities in careful detail such as using a fan in the bathroom while showering.

While the students did make adjustments to their behaviour, the homestay parents also reported adjusting their own behaviours to accommodate the students. One homestay mother started to cook rice and provided hot sauce as a condiment for every meal. Doerr (2013) noted that homestay parents in the study “... all changed their behaviour to accommodate the fee-paying students they were hosting” (p. 71). This give and take suggested that the living arrangements had an impact on both the students and the homestay parents.

Many of the experiences cited by the homestay families in this study were positive. There were some negative experiences also such as pornography found in the student’s bedroom or an incident involving physical violence. These negative experiences resulted in a student being moved to a new homestay or in the more serious case, the student was sent back to their home country. So, although the handbook provided helpful information and guidance for most students, some were less successful in making the transition into the new culture and the new family.

**Spending Time with Native Speakers.**

In his review of second language acquisition research, Krashen (1987) concluded that the two things that are beneficial for ELLs as they learn English are pleasure reading
and the opportunity to speak with native speakers (p. 41). Gunderson (2000) reviewed the data collected from interviews with immigrant students in British Columbia stemming from two large-scale studies involving 35,000 youth. With regard to learning English, the participants overwhelmingly indicated that “…they thought practicing English with a native speaker was essential” (p. 697). However, many also reported that they did not have that opportunity. Gunderson cited “sociolinguistic” reasons for this lack of opportunity (p. 697). Students reported feeling intimidated by “white kids…who think they own the school because they were born [t]here” (p.697). Other students in the study reported hearing a lot of Cantonese being spoken in the hallways and this situation made it difficult to practice English. Although many students in the study acknowledged the importance of after-school activities, most did not get involved for a variety of reasons. Gunderson strongly suggested that schools must develop “…programs that allow and encourage immigrant students to meet, communicate with, and interact with native English speakers” (p. 705). This, he suggested, is the best way for ELLs to learn the English language and Canadian culture.

**Summary**

Based on the literature, unaccompanied adolescents require additional academic, social, and emotional supports to achieve academic success, and to establish and maintain healthy development and well-being. As ELLs, the students require varying amounts of support depending on their ELP. Guidance counsellors and ESL teachers need to have comprehensive language assessments and knowledge of each student’s educational background in order to help place international students in appropriate courses.
Additionally, international students, like all ELLs, would benefit from occasions where they can converse with native English speakers.

As adolescents, these students are becoming more independent, but still require the support and guidance of caring adults. As mobile youth, they need some assistance getting involved with their new peer group. Host families are in a position to offer these unaccompanied adolescents a safe and healthy environment. With the possible distractions of computer games and the internet, international students also need to be encouraged to get enough sleep so they can function well in school.

The wide scope of research related to adolescent development, immigrant adolescents, mobile youth, and ELLs specifically, can act as a foundation for ISPs who are in a position to plan programs that acknowledge the many academic, social, and emotional needs of unaccompanied adolescents.
Chapter 3
Methodology

Research Purpose

This mixed methods study compared different International Student Programs (ISPs) by using both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data were gathered from publicly-available sources. The qualitative data were collected from two series of interviews. Data sources were purposefully sampled by inviting representatives from 16 School Boards in Ontario to participate. I invited a cross-section of Ontario’s publicly-funded School Boards in an effort to describe an educational phenomenon that has received little research attention so far in Canada. I wanted to know if it was possible to track the number of international students enrolled in high schools in Ontario. I set out to determine the size and scope of ISPs in Ontario Publicly-funded high schools through web site analysis. Another purpose of this study was to determine how many Boards of Education in Ontario offer this special group of students an organized program that is designed to serve their educational, social, emotional, and cultural needs. The other purpose of this study was to identify the main challenges facing ISPs.

Research Questions.

The following were the research questions for this study:

1. What is the range and scope of ISPs in Ontario?
2. What academic, social, cultural, and emotional supports for international students are offered by three ISPs in Ontario?
3. What are the biggest challenges facing ISPs?
Data Collection Phases and Research Method

The data for this study were collected in three phases.

The first phase included gathering information from the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME) web site and individual school board web sites. This information was publicly available. Using the OME web site, I was able to get the web site addresses for 59 of the 63 Boards of Education in Ontario. I compiled the data about publicly-funded English language school boards in Ontario into tables. I went to each web site and searched to see which of them accepted international students. From that initial search, I created Table 3 which can be seen in the “Findings” chapter.

As I began my research, it was suggested that I look at the Canadian Association of Public Schools-International (CAPS-I) web site. This Canada-wide association has detailed information about many ISPs in Ontario and Canada. By looking at available statistics on Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), school board web sites, and the CAPS-I web site, I was able to determine which boards accepted international students, the number of international students attending each CAPS-I-member school board, an estimate of the number of visa students in Ontario, and the nature of the services provided for ELLs. I compiled statistical data from OME, CIC and CAPS-I to gauge the number of school boards and international students involved.

Choosing Participants.

In phase one, when I was conducting the web site analysis, a colleague involved in international education told me about Ontario Association of School Districts International (OASDI). This not-for-profit organization has developed standards of practice for all boards offering an ISP in Ontario. I chose my participants from the list of
OASDI member-boards because, as voluntary members of OASDI, they have agreed to adhere to the standards their organization has developed. These standards can be found in Appendix A. This provincial association also offers the opportunity for member-boards to exchange information with regard to best practice and international marketing opportunities.

I cross-referenced all the OASDI members to see if they were CAPS-I members also. At this point, by cross-checking with the CAPS-I and OASDI web sites, I could also determine which boards in the earlier table were members of either, both, or neither of these associations. My original table, that included all 63 school boards in Ontario, was then altered to include only the boards that accepted international students and two additional columns were added entitled OASDI Member and CAPS-I Member. To view this table, please see Table 4 in the “Findings” chapter.

The second phase of the research consisted of approaching the OASDI member school boards to find participants. Upon a search of OASDI’s web site in February 2012, I found 16 publicly-funded school boards in Ontario listed as members of the association. Part of my selection criteria was to examine publicly-funded boards that offered established programs. Since these 16 belonged to OASDI, I knew they had established programs.

After receiving GREB clearance, I sent out a Letter of Information and a request to participate via email to all OASDI member school boards in Ontario. See Appendix B and Appendix C. This amounted to sending out 16 email requests with a Letter of Consent. I contacted one person from each member board using the contact information that was available on the OASDI web site. From there, I received approval from 10
school boards to conduct a short, eight-question telephone interview. The telephone interview protocol can be found in Appendix D. I sent the interview questions to the participants in advance of the interviews. Two of the 10 school board representatives chose to answer the questions via email. I conducted the remaining telephone interviews with eight board representatives. Each telephone interview lasted for approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

In phase three of the research, I invited three of the participants to answer more in-depth questions about their programs. The three school boards I approached were located in three diverse geographical areas and the ISPs ranged in size from a relatively small program with 125 students in a mostly rural community, to a very large program with over 1200 students in a large urban centre. I then conducted hour-long, face-to-face interviews with one representative from each of three school boards.

**Procedure.**

When I first conceived of this research opportunity, I planned to use an electronic survey to gather this data. However, after some consideration and discussions with other researchers, I decided to use a telephone interview with the expectation that I would encounter more willing participants and possibly gather richer data. After I received consent from 10 Boards of Education, I asked each board the eight questions found in Appendix D. The semi-standardized, open-ended questions were designed to yield qualitative data. Using a digital recorder, I recorded the audio from the telephone interviews. I then transcribed each recording verbatim.

After this set of telephone interviews was completed, I realized that many boards in Ontario used an agency to provide services such as homestay. So, I modified the
questions for a homestay agency in Ontario and e-mailed the relevant questions from the telephone interview to them after they indicated that they were willing to participate. The questions for the homestay agency are included in Appendix E.

The next stage in the research design emerged from the initial interviews conducted with the School Boards in phase two. In phase three, I invited three participants from phase two to participate in a longer face-to-face interview to discuss each of their programs. These three represented School Boards of varying populations and geographical locations. After they consented to participate, I conducted face-to-face interviews with each participant lasting approximately one hour. The interview questions can be found in Appendix F. In an effort to create varied, probing questions, I used the interview matrix developed by Patton (2002). These questions were e-mailed to the participants beforehand so that they had the opportunity to prepare their answers. The Letter of Information and Consent Form can be found in Appendix G. I have mapped out most of the interview questions I asked onto the original research questions in Table 1.

**Table 1: Mapping the Interview Questions onto the Research Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions</th>
<th>Interview questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What is the range and scope of International Student Programs in Ontario?</strong></td>
<td>1. How many years has your board offered an International Student Program for high school-aged students? Elementary school-aged students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. How many high school students were involved in the first year of the program?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. How many visa students were enrolled in the 2010-2011 school year?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. What percentage of those visa students came for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What academic, social, cultural and emotional supports for visa students are offered by International Student Programs in Ontario?</td>
<td>6. Does your program arrange billeting with homestay families for your students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Which of the following supports does your program offer: ESL, after school tutoring, TOEFL tutoring, special Guidance teacher, social events, trips, orientation to Canada, airport pick up, other?</td>
<td>8. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing your ISP?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the more detailed questions, such as those concerning the benefits of having international students and program revisions that boards may consider, were addressed in the longer face-to-face interviews. I visited each interviewee at their workplace. Each interview took approximately one hour. I recorded the interview using a digital recorder. Since we met at their workplace, I requested a copy of any written materials that students are given when they arrive in Canada. I received one printed
orientation manual for students from one of the three boards and a second board directed me to their web site for their online orientation manual.

I transcribed each hour-long recording. I read each transcription over as I listened to the interviews again to ensure accuracy. The documents from this stage of the research were limited to the single printed orientation manual and the online orientation mentioned above.

The sequence of events that comprised my research method is detailed in Table 2.

**Table 2: Overview of Research Method**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct a literature review as a basis for establishing emotional supports and educational standards necessary for unaccompanied ELL adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Research to determine which boards accept international students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemble data from publically available information about OASDI and CAPS-I member school boards in Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review CIC statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete GREB application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After GREB clearance, conduct phone interviews with consenting School Boards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach one homestay agency to participate in the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach program managers from three of the School Boards above to conduct longer in-depth interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise interview protocol for longer interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription of 8 shorter phone interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine the written response from the homestay agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct longer interviews at their work places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request documents from interviewees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcription of three longer face-to-face interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code transcriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document analysis of orientation manuals from two boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare data from each transcript in terms of headings based on interview protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing process of coding data and searching for emergent themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-order findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write up method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write up findings and discussion for the first draft of the thesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise literature review to reflect newer studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reread draft and revise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write up thesis in draft form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revise and submit to committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analysis

The first phase of the study rendered more quantitative than qualitative data. Phases two and three allowed me to gather detailed, richer qualitative data from the interviews and document analysis. Over the course of the study, the data collected consisted of the examination of various school board web sites, statistical profiles complied by CAPS-I and CIC, interview responses from two sets of interviews, and document analysis of two orientation manuals.

Each program/interviewee was given an alpha-numeric code to protect anonymity. As much as possible, all identifying characteristics such as geographical location were removed from the thesis. The data were sorted alpha-numerically and rearranged so that each interview question was followed by multiple responses. As Patton (2002) suggested, by “grouping together answers from different people to common questions” (p. 440), I was able to use the interview protocol to begin to develop patterns that were emerging in the data. The reordered data were reexamined and established the foundation for the next inductive analytical step that Patton (2002) refers to as finding “patterns, themes and categories” (p. 453) in the data. In my initial analysis, I developed three categories called “Student Issues”, “School-related Issues” and “Program Issues”. However, from this early sorting of the data, I noted that the categories did not help explain the phenomenon under study. This first effort at grounded theory (Patton, 2002) revealed that although there were several distinct themes that emerged repeatedly in numerous responses, some themes did not fit into the first conceptual ordering (p. 490). In an iterative process, I revisited the data numerous times to test my categories and
ultimately understood that every issue raised by the participants was connected to the concerns of all ISPs.

The last phase of the analysis began after I finished transcribing the three in-depth interviews and conducting a document analysis of the two orientation manuals. The patterns that emerged when I completed a more intensive cross-case analysis (Patton, 2002) were then reordered into Figure 1. The data analysis was a cyclical process that was based on my reflective practice and was reviewed and affirmed by my thesis advisor.

In this stage of the analysis, I noted the convergence of three categories that would help to explain the phenomenon under scrutiny. The emergence of Business as a distinct category was prompted by the numerous references to business in the phase two and three interviews. The newest framework is organized in a flow chart entitled Figure 1. The super-heading, “ISP”, shows that every theme and subtheme is related to the ISP. The three main themes that were determined from the super-heading are “Academic Supports”, “Social/Emotional Issues” and “Business Concerns”. Under each main heading, I have placed the related sub-themes. The two main themes of “Academic Supports” and “Social/Emotional Issues” relate directly to students. Although most of the sub-themes acknowledge the distinct concerns of international students, those subthemes under the “Business Concerns” relate primarily to the issues of size and scope, the purpose of the program, and the organization of the program.
Figure 1: Emergent Categories Clustered in Relation to Each Other
Chapter 4

Findings

This chapter presents the findings for this study. The data collected in phase one are reported at the beginning of this chapter. These data were collected while I waited for ethics approval. I have provided a summary of the data that were publicly available on the web sites of the OME, school boards on Ontario, as well as OASDI and CAPS-I web sites. In Table 3, I listed all the school boards in Ontario and noted which ones accepted international students as of February 2012. I then composed Table 4 which shows only the school boards that accepted international students with two additional columns added that indicate which boards were members of OASDI and CAPS-I in February 2012. This table shows the extent of international education in Ontario high schools at the time I conducted the study, i.e., how many boards were participating and which ones were members of either of the two associations. Table 5 shows the Ontario CAPS-I member school boards, the age of each program, the average fees being charged at that time and an estimate of the number of students involved.

In the next section, I summarized the collected data from the eight telephone interviews from phase two and the three longer face-to-face interviews from phase three. I also summarize the data from one homestay agency and the document analysis of the two orientation manuals I reviewed in phase three. The results are organized under three categories called Academic Supports, Cultural and Emotional Supports and Business.
Phase One: Data From Publicly-Available Sources

In February 2012, when I was looking for participants, 33 of Ontario’s 63 English language publicly-funded school boards accepted international students as shown in Table 3 (OME, 2012). The boards that accepted students have been highlighted. One school board stipulated that they only accepted international students in the summer. The other 32 indicated on their web sites that they accepted international students full-time. This does not necessarily indicate that the school board had a specific program set up for international students, only that that the school board accepted international students.

Table 3: English Language Publicly-Funded School Boards in Ontario 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Web Site</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>District School Board</th>
<th>Accepts International Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.adsb.on.ca">www.adsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Sault Ste Marie</td>
<td>Algoma DSB*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.alcdsb.on.ca">www.alcdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Napanee</td>
<td>Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://blog.amdsb.ca">http://blog.amdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Seaforth</td>
<td>Avon Maitland DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bwdsb.on.ca">www.bwdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Chesley</td>
<td>Bluewater DSB</td>
<td>Summer only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.blnhcdsb.ca">www.blnhcdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Brantford</td>
<td>Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bgcdsb.org">www.bgcdsb.org</a></td>
<td>Hanover</td>
<td>Bruce-Grey Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.cdsbeo.on.ca">www.cdsbeo.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Kemptville</td>
<td>Catholic DSB of Eastern Ontario</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.dsbn.edu.on.ca">www.dsbn.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>St Catharines</td>
<td>DSB of Niagara</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.dsb1.edu.on.ca">www.dsb1.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Timmins</td>
<td>DSB Ontario North East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.dpcsdb.org">www.dpcsdb.org</a></td>
<td>Mississauga</td>
<td>Dufferin-Peel Catholic DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.dcdsb.ca">www.dcdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Oshawa</td>
<td>Durham Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.durham.edu.on.ca">www.durham.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Whitby</td>
<td>Durham DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.granderie.ca">www.granderie.ca</a></td>
<td>Brantford</td>
<td>Grand Erie DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.gecdsb.on.ca">www.gecdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>Greater Essex County DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.haltonre.edu.on.ca">www.haltonre.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>Halton Catholic DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hdbsb.ca">www.hdbsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>Halton DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hwcdsb.ca">www.hwcdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>Hamilton-Wentworth Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hwdsb.on.ca">www.hwdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>Hamilton-Wentworth DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hpedsb.on.ca">www.hpedsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Belleville</td>
<td>Hastings &amp; Prince Edward DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hpedsb.edu.on.ca">www.hpedsb.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Huron Perth Catholic DSB</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.hscdsb.on.ca">www.hscdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Sault Ste Marie</td>
<td>Huron-Superior Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>School Board</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kproschools.ca">www.kproschools.ca</a></td>
<td>Peterborough</td>
<td>Kawartha Pine Ridge DSB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kpdsb.on.ca">www.kpdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Kenora</td>
<td>Keewatin-Patricia DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.kcdsb.on.ca">www.kcdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Kenora</td>
<td>Kenora Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.lakeheadschools.ca">www.lakeheadschools.ca</a></td>
<td>Thunder Bay</td>
<td>Lakehead DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.lkdsb.net">www.lkdsb.net</a></td>
<td>Sarnia</td>
<td>Lambton Kent DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.limestone.on.ca">www.limestone.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>Limestone DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ldcsb.on.ca</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>London District Catholic School Board</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
<td>Moosonee</td>
<td>Moose Factory Island District School Area Board</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.nearnorthschools.ca">www.nearnorthschools.ca</a></td>
<td>North Bay</td>
<td>Near North DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.niagarararc.com">www.niagarararc.com</a></td>
<td>Welland</td>
<td>Niagara Catholic DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.npsc.ca">www.npsc.ca</a></td>
<td>North Bay</td>
<td>Nipissing-Parry Sound Catholic DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ncdsb.on.ca">www.ncdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Timmins</td>
<td>Northeastern Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.tncdsb.on.ca">www.tncdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Fort Frances</td>
<td>Northwest Catholic DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ottawacatholicschools.ca">www.ottawacatholicschools.ca</a></td>
<td>Nepean</td>
<td>Ottawa Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.ocdsb.ca">www.ocdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Nepean</td>
<td>Ottawa-Carleton DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.peelschools.org">www.peelschools.org</a></td>
<td>Mississauga</td>
<td>Peel DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Penetanguishene</td>
<td>Penetanguishene Protestant Separate School Board</td>
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<td>Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic DSB</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.rainbowschools.ca">www.rainbowschools.ca</a></td>
<td>Sudbury</td>
<td>Rainbow DSB</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.rrdsb.com">www.rrdsb.com</a></td>
<td>Fort Frances</td>
<td>Rainy River DSB</td>
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<td>Pembroke</td>
<td>Renfrew County Catholic DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.scdsb.on.ca">www.scdsb.on.ca</a></td>
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<td>Simcoe County DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.smcdsb.on.ca">www.smcdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Barrie</td>
<td>Simcoe Muskoka Catholic DSB</td>
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<td>Wallaceburg</td>
<td>St Clair Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.scdsb.edu.on.ca">www.scdsb.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Sudbury</td>
<td>Sudbury Catholic DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.sncdsb.on.ca">www.sncdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Terrace Bay</td>
<td>Superior North Catholic DSB</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Marathon</td>
<td>Superior-Greenstone DSB</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.tvdsb.ca">www.tvdsb.ca</a></td>
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<td>Thames Valley DSB</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.tbcdsb.on.ca">www.tbcdsb.on.ca</a></td>
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<td>Thunder Bay Catholic DSB</td>
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<td>Trillium Lakelands DSB</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.ucdsb.on.ca">www.ucdsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Brockville</td>
<td>Upper Canada DSB</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

```
Table 4 shows which English-language, publicly-funded school boards in Ontario accepted international students and whether or not they were members of OASDI and/or CAPS-I. This table was instrumental in helping me to decide which boards I would approach for this study. In an effort to compare boards with established programs, I chose to invite the 16 boards which were part of OASDI, the provincial association, to participate in the study. Their adherence to the Standards of Practice set out in Appendix A would ensure that these boards were aware of the minimum standards and had deliberately designed their programs to meet those standards. Since one of my research questions focused on the supports that ISPs provided, these boards were selected because they had organized programs that provided a variety of supports that could be compared across the province.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School board</th>
<th>Web site</th>
<th>Head Office</th>
<th>ISP?</th>
<th>OASDI</th>
<th>CAPS-I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic DSB</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alcdsb.on.ca">www.alcdsb.on.ca</a></td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Chesley Georgian Bay</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.dsbn.edu.on.ca">www.dsbn.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>St Catharines</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.granderie.ca">www.granderie.ca</a></td>
<td>Brantford</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>Windsor</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Halton Catholic DSB</td>
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<td>Burlington</td>
<td>yes</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.hdsb.ca">www.hdsb.ca</a></td>
<td>Burlington</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.hwdsb.on.ca">www.hwdsb.on.ca</a></td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings &amp; Prince Edward DSB</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hpedsb.on.ca">www.hpedsb.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Belleville</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>Huron Perth Catholic DSB</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hpcdsb.edu.on.ca">www.hpcdsb.edu.on.ca</a></td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>London</td>
<td>accepts students</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
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Figure 2 compares the tuition fees of the CAPS-I member boards that listed their tuition fees. Two boards did not supply their tuition fee on the CAPS-I web site. B12, a modest-sized program had the lowest tuition fee of $11,000.00 and B15, the largest board had the highest tuition fee at $14,000.00.

Figure 2: Range of Annual ISP Tuition Fees for 16 of 18 CAPS-I Programs in Ontario 2012

Figure 3 compares the percentage of full time enrollment students who were international students that were accepted into the 18 CAPS-I member boards. These data include both elementary and high school students. Four boards were comprised of 0.007% international students and B3 accepted so few students, that the representative bar on the graph indicates that 0.0008% of the students were international. Overall, the percentage of international students in Ontario’s high schools is low. As a comparison, British Columbia, where international education has been promoted widely (BCMEd, 2013), averaged higher percentages of international students in their
schools. The percentage of total FTE student population that were international students accepted at the school boards in British Columbia ranged from 0.0159% in Mission, B.C. to 0.035% at the North Vancouver School District (CAPS-I, 2014).

![Graph showing percentage of total student population that are international students at each CAPS-I school board in Ontario 2012]

**Figure 3: Percentage of Total Student Population that are International Students Accepted at 18 CAPS-I Programs 2012**

Figure 4 shows which CAPS-I member boards provided their own homestay services, which ones used an outside agency, and which ones had no provision for homestay. Eight of the 18 CAPS-I boards had board-supported homestay services. Seven of the boards used one or more outside agencies, and three did not provide homestay.
Figure 4: Comparing Homestay Providers at 18 CAPS-I Member Programs 2012

Table 5 is a comparison chart that lists the data from CAPS-I member boards, the year each ISP was established, the total number of FTE international students at each school board, the costs for annual tuition, monthly homestay, and additional annual fees. There were 3,865 international students attending CAPS-I-member school boards full time in Ontario in 2012.

A few of the fees were not listed on the CAPS-I web site which is indicated by a blank in the table. The earliest ISP in this table was B9 which began to accept international students in 1974. The most recent ISP to be formed was B18 which started a program in 2011. Most of the ISPs in the chart were started after 1997 which indicates that ISPs are relatively new in Ontario schools. The additional fees ranged from $200.00 to $3,250.00 and were charges for things such as a custodial fee, a one-time application fee, a health insurance fee, and a homestay placement fee. Many programs included these extra fees in with their tuition. Homestay fees also ranged from $650.00 to $1,000.00 per month and averaged $798.46. The tuition fees ranged from $11,000.00 to $14,000.00 per year and averaged $12,631.25. When all the figures are added up, the cost of
attending a high school in Ontario for one school year for an international student ranged from $19,150.00 to $26,250.00.

**Table 5: CAPS-I Member Comparison 2012**

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<th>Year Established</th>
<th>Total Number of International Students</th>
<th>Annual Tuition (in Canadian dollars)</th>
<th>Monthly Homestay Fee (In Canadian dollars)</th>
<th>Additional Annual Fees</th>
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**Summary**

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<th>Annual Tuition (in Canadian dollars)</th>
<th>Monthly Homestay Fee (In Canadian dollars)</th>
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<td>Average 12,631.25</td>
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**Phase Two and Three Findings**

In this section, I combined the results from the telephone and face-to-face interviews. I have grouped the finding into three subsections called Academic Supports, Cultural and Emotional Supports, and Business Concerns. The Academic Supports section outlines the varying approaches each program takes with regard to English language assessment, ESL classes, after school tutoring, special guidance counsellors, and English proficiency test preparation. The Cultural and Emotional
Supports section examines the cultural and emotional supports each program provides such as orientation, homestay, concern for the emotional wellbeing of the students, social activities, and trips offered by each of the programs studied. The final part of this chapter entitled Business Concerns addresses the subthemes in this last section which are: fluctuating size of programs, competition, the evolution of programs, the student age range in programs, and short-term study. Finally, I will look at three programs in greater detail comparing the administrative structure, size, and fees of each.

**Academic Supports**

The participant responses to the telephone interview questions varied in length and detail. Each participant received the interview questions in advance of the agreed-upon interview time. As a result, two respondents chose to answer the questions via email instead of participating in a telephone interview. These respondents replied via e-mail and wrote very short or one word answers to the interview question, “Which of the following supports does your program offer: ESL, after school tutoring, TOEFL tutoring, special Guidance teacher, social events, trips, orientation to Canada, airport pick up, other?”. These brief responses indicated they did supply supports, but did not provide any specifics about the extent of their supports. The other eight respondents to the telephone interviews supplied detailed descriptions about the structure of their program and outlined the academic supports they provided. The three longer face-to-face interviews resulted in richer data about the services included in each of the three programs.

I looked at similarities and differences in the responses and noted the outliers. In some instances, I was not able to gauge the full extent of the supports due to the lack of detail provided by some respondents. The findings that follow focus primarily on the more detailed responses I received from both the telephone interviews and the longer face-to-face interviews.
ESL Classes

The Ontario Secondary School Curriculum includes five English as a Second Language (ESL) courses that address varying levels of English acquisition coded ESLAO to ESLEO. These are not grade-specific and range in difficulty from beginner to intermediate. These five levels provide English language development for ELLs who range in English language proficiency. The OME (2007a) recommends that any student entering Grade 10 English should have successfully completed the fourth level, ESLDO.

All 10 school boards that participated in this research offered their international students ESL courses. Although there is a large variation amongst the boards in terms of the number of classes and the courses they provide. At least four of the boards (B10, B12, B15, and B19) offer ESL classes in order to service both the large proportion of immigrant English Language Learners (ELLs) as well as their tuition-paying international students. These boards indicated that they offer distinct classes for each of the five levels of ESL. In some smaller boards, where the number of immigrant students is smaller, ESL courses may be offered as one multi-level class each day or may be offered for their international students only one semester each year. The representative from B1, a smaller board, said, “We have an ESL section in the first semester- so a one-credit course- and often, because we’re not getting large numbers of students wanting to graduate, a lot of them don’t take ESL.”

B9 indicated that “an integrated approach to learning English” for their international students included subject-specific courses that have been adapted for ELLs. These modified courses include Grade 10 ESL Civics and Careers, Grades 9 and 10 ESL Science and Grades 9 and 10 ESL Geography. B9 said
Ours is one of the few boards in all Canada that do an integrated approach to learning English. For example, ESL is not just ESL…we have special programs. We call them sheltered classes, at the Grade 9 and 10 levels. The teacher gets additional training in ESL.

These sheltered classes were tailored for their international students who were grouped together at one school to learn English. One high school in the school board was used specifically to host the international students who require more English language support. This school was used to help new ELLs improve their English language proficiency so that they could then transition into a regular high school. The program was designed so that these students would have a better chance of being more successful later in a mainstream classroom. A few of the other participants also reported offering subject specific ESL classes for ELLs in their schools.

B6 described the function of the ESL teachers in their board.

They’re not just ESL teachers. They provide so much more support. You know they all do different events [such as] take them skating, take them to the [hockey] game, [and] some of them will have one day a week is homework period. And, that ESL teacher will help … [them] with whatever… [they’re] struggling with.

B8 reported using both the classroom and the homestay to provide ESL instruction:

“Again, it [ESL] is sort of part of our in-class but again in terms of additional services, that is offered by our homestay coordinator. They have a comprehensive list of services they provide.”

B10 noted that “ESL [is] in all secondary schools and [they provide a] transient ESL teacher in the elementary schools.” Most of the participants reported that the main focus of the international program is in secondary schools, however, some boards reported that they also accepted elementary-aged international students. The approach to teaching younger ELLs was treated differently than older secondary-school-aged students. The approach to teaching ESL in elementary school also differs across boards. Instead of a daily ESL class, some elementary schools provide what Ochoa and Rhodes (2005) referred to as “pull-out” (p. 78) ESL for the ELLs. In B9, this was accomplished with an itinerant ESL teacher who would visit the elementary
international students regularly. The teacher would take the ELLs out of the classroom to focus on English studies for some time each week. B8 was the only board that did not focus mainly on secondary school-aged students. B8 said, “in the first year of the program we had probably 16 secondary and 35 elementary [students]. We were probably the only school district in the province that embraced the elementary kids.”

**After School Tutoring**

After school tutoring was rarely included as part of the formal academic services provided by the programs in this study. Of the 10 respondents, only one board reported that they paid teachers to provide after school tutoring as a standard academic support (B6). The other boards reported a variety of strategies including using the “student success room”, providing help as part of after school literacy, relying on peer helpers, and homework clubs or an ambassador’s club. A few of the respondents indicated that their homestay providers also provided homework help.

There was no consistent approach used to assist international students with their school work across the boards surveyed in this study.

B6 was the only board in this study that provided qualified teachers as tutors after school. B6 sees it as, “really unique to our program.” This service costs money to run and B6 said, “…we pump so much money back in. I don’t know how much longer… they’re going to let me do it. There’s only one other program in Canada- in Canada- that offers some after school tutoring.”

B9 indicated that their program supports intensive academic supports at two high schools in the board. ELLs who have been assessed as needing more language supports are sent to one of two possible schools. B9 said,

“Anyways, in those two schools, at one school, it’s noon hour and the other school it’s after and it’s two days a week and it’s open to any of the ESL students to come and work with-there’s an English/Math/Science teacher there. And, depending upon the demand, the
teacher may stay for five minutes, or may stay for an hour. If nobody comes in looking for Science help…

At B12, the program arranged after school tutoring “if required or requested”. International students were given the opportunity to work with “peer tutors or peer mentors or ambassadors” unless the students wanted a “more professional approach, then they’ll [hire a tutor].”

**English Language Proficiency Test Preparation**

International students who decided to go on to university in Canada or another English-speaking country were required to write a test of their English language proficiency such as the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). The school boards located in areas with universities were more likely to offer TOEFL support for a fee. B9 reported that TOEFL preparation took place in the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course literacy preparation class. “At one of the schools, there is … the test they have to do? The Grade 10 English test? You can take a course; you know when you get to Grade 12. We use that course to do TOEFL preparation. We put them in there.”

B9 also reported offering the TOEFL course once a year; and one year, they ran it four times. They opened the course up to the community and including the local university and community college. “It’s done specifically so that our kids didn’t have to go to Ottawa or Toronto or Montreal. So it’s done in conjunction with either my department, or the continuing education department: a TOEFL preparation test.” At B10, the TOEFL classes were offered for adult ESL learners only.

**Language Assessment**

Before ELLs can be placed into an appropriate academic timetable, they need to be assessed for their level of English proficiency. Various methods of language assessment were being utilized amongst the respondents. B9 and B12 referred to their on-line assessments.
B9 conducted “an online assessment test and that determines where they [the students] go. That’s fairly new. We used to sort of say, if I was abroad recruiting them, I’d talk to them or if one of my other people was abroad, they’d talk to them.” B9 went on to explain that when recruiters were travelling, they may not have had the opportunity to meet all the students that would apply. Sometimes, very approximate ad hoc assessments were conducted over the telephone. B9 went on to say, “And, of course, from people down in Brazil, for example, the English teacher would write something, the school would write something, and then we’d find out the teacher could barely read or write herself.” B9 indicated that there were three people that recruited in their office and had been working for 10 years in the field, “…so we have a fairly good idea if you’re coming from this area, what your ESL requirement is and we tend to veer on the side of making certain the kid’s successful.”

B12 revealed that they were “…assessing them for English level in advance of their arrival so we can help with timetabling.” As an early assessment, they required that new incoming students write a written test of English proficiency. This test “is a Cambridge-based test. It takes 30 minutes. It is [a] multiple choice, and we piloted it against the Ontario system to see how accurate it is giving us. It is based on the honour system but we are going to assess them when they get here anyway.” B12 used their assessment tool as a way to begin building timetables for new students in advance of their arrival.

B6 said that the language assessment was “half a day…and the partners [agents] prescreen for us. Our partners prescreen and let us know if there is somebody weak.” B6 reported being aware that one student from Austria was going to be “weak”. “So, 99% of our partners screen for us and let us know if somebody is going to be weak.” B6 also said that they would do extra testing at the end when needed. “We tell the kids that they have to come with a minimum amount of
English and every year, we get some weak ones that need extra support.” The agents or the recruiters also conduct a “pre-orientation or assessment” and then “there’s the assessment we do here and on our application, we ask them to describe their English ability as well.” The application form was “revamped” so that applicants would report on their own level of English.

**Guidance and Timetabling**

All ELLs require some accommodations with regards to selecting courses and timetabling as their command of English is developing. For example, the forward in the Ontario curriculum document (OME, 2007a) states:

> English language learners who require ESL or ELD instruction should be placed in programs designed to meet their learning needs. Students, including beginning-level learners of English, should be placed in at least one mainstream class, to allow them to interact with their English-speaking peers. Most students with the necessary background in mathematics, for example, can participate successfully in mainstream mathematics courses, even if they have only beginning English proficiency. Also, the practical and interactive nature of some courses in the arts, health and physical education, and technological education makes them especially suitable for English language learners. (p. 25)

B6 had a special Guidance Counsellor at each of the high schools in their board that hosted international students. B9 had two special teachers who were hired to “deal not only with guidance issues… but everything through to the kids’ love lives to their problems with teachers. They are real counsellors as opposed to just academic guidance people.”

B12 had a liaison teacher in the schools where there are “…more than 10 international students”. The guidance teachers in this program are given “…an orientation to the specific needs of the international students coming in.” B12 also gave each administrator who would be receiving international students “a manual for the administrator that [answers questions like:] Where do they come from? How do they get here? What’s the difference?” The manual explained that “Asian students are slightly different, in terms of passive learning and homework and all different
attitudes.” The manual was designed to “make them aware of the learner[s] they…” had. B15 reported using four centrally-assigned Guidance counsellors for all the international students they hosted at 55 schools.

Registration times and timetabling were mentioned as being two of the biggest challenges for B15. Timetable choices were not very flexible for incoming international students due to full classes and limited choice for them. International students arriving in September or February were registering much later than the local students, so the classes were already set by the time the new students registered. Some students were not getting the courses they required to pursue certain goals because of this. Some students were “…just given the crumbs. Sometimes they don’t get their ESL. Sometimes, they get a section of Math which really doesn’t suit them.”

B15 reported that they were considering creating ghost timetables or partial timetables to act as placeholders for new students. This was being piloted in B6 where the course selections were based on the students’ profiles and their age. Although this system may have helped a few international students to get into some required courses at B6, the system was cumbersome and often inaccurate. This system resulted in students visiting the Guidance counsellor many times subsequent to their arrival often to make multiple changes to their timetable. Even then, the appropriate courses were not always available.

Most of the participants did not provide special guidance counsellors for their international students. The regular guidance teachers were expected to meet the needs of the international students as well as the regular students.

B8 indicated that they provided their students with access to information about post-secondary education in Ontario. B8 reported that they have provided clear …pathways to post-secondary. Many, many of those students who stay through to graduation – their parents are sending them to us strictly because their parents want them to
be successful and go into university, right? And so … all of our marketing material, all of our presentations, all of our discussions with parents- we talk about where do you want to go? And we have had at-length discussions with universities and colleges all across our region who run summer school programs for our students. So everything is designed to demonstrate to parents that we know where your children want to go and it’s not just a money-grab. It’s not- ‘stay with us and too bad about your luck.’

Social, Emotional, and Cultural Supports

In this section of the findings, I look at the ways each program provided social supports that helped international students make connections to their peers. I also look at the supports each program offered that addressed the emotional wellbeing of their international students. I report on the ways each program monitored their students’ emotional wellbeing, and addressed issues such as accommodation. The cultural supports I look at include orientation practices and two orientation manuals. As part of this study, I was able to interview one of the main independent homestay agencies in Ontario. I sent them the questions found in Appendix F. Their answers are included in this section along with the responses from the other respondents.

Wellbeing

How did the programs in this study track the emotional wellbeing of their students? How did each program determine whether their students were adjusting well to their new life? Some programs like B6 used weekly homestay coordinator visits to keep a close watch on the students for any signs of physical or psychological distress. B6 reported that their homestay coordinators visited the students in their schools to discuss how things were going. The homestay coordinators checked in with some of the teachers, the guidance counsellors, and the students each week. “They go as much as needed. If there’s a problem, I call it the kitchen table talk and if things are not going well, then we talk to the students then we talk to the homestay, and then we give some strategies and then, if that doesn’t work, … , then we’ll have further meetings and they’re documented and consequences are put into place.”
B6 said that they, “offer a personalized program for a small city ... and it’s very proactive. We have all these services in place.” B6 indicated that they have monitored eating disorders, signs of depression, and sleepiness in class.

“The homestay parents monitor the student’s health and the teachers will even say ‘the student is sleeping in my class’, right? Or getting too skinny. Those are the top issues - the health and gaming is a big thing too.” B6 found that some students were having difficulty getting themselves to school or arriving late because they were spending many hours at home playing computer games.

B15 spoke about the challenges for the program when a student is not adjusting. “Oh, we’ve had kids that are severely depressed. Our centrally assigned Guidance counsellor gets involved. Out of all the years I have been in this job, there might have been one where this girl was really bad. She was just depressed. Then we called her mother and her mother flew in. I mean everybody kind of pitched in. It was that bad that she was suicidal. She had to be taken to a hospital. In cases like that we return the money because I don’t want blood money. We just tell the family, even if it is like now [May], I’ll say, ‘I’ll refund the second semester fee. And you will have to make all the arrangements. It is in the child’s best interest to go home’. And maybe a year-a year and a half, you can get them to come back.”

One of the larger homestay providers in Canada participated in this study. When asked about monitoring the wellbeing of their students, they responded that they,

meet each student in the first week after arrival, to ensure they understand and are comfortable with customs and routines of their host family. Contact each student and their host by telephone and in person, according to our schedule or as otherwise agreed by the school. In the event of emergency, be available 24X7 to meet and support each student, their natural parents, and agency if any, their host and school. Document all such contacts online in our ‘Student History Notes’ for immediate access by the school, 24X7; ... and meet with student in person at least once a semester, to review their overall experience and well being.
Additionally, the homestay provider indicated that they “obtain feedback from our students and their hosts through written evaluations.”

**Attitude Affects Wellbeing.**

Three of the programs noted that the students who have a difficult time adjusting are those who do not want to be there. They noted that there are many factors enter into the successful transition of an international student into an Ontario high school. B6 indicated that the three most significant ones were personality, attitude, and English language proficiency.

Many of the participants expressed the idea that their students’ well-being was influenced by their desire to be in their program. Those who were in Ontario only because their parents wanted them to have this educational experience were more likely to have difficulty adjusting. Many respondents expressed the opinion that a positive attitude was necessary for a successful transition to a new culture. B6 went on to discuss: “If … parents send the student and the student doesn’t want to be here- that’s a challenge for us. And you can’t always tell … if a student doesn’t want to be here.” B6 indicated that there might be “one or two of those a year out of 126 kids… and they require a lot more support and sometimes I end up sending them home.”

B12 said” If there’s a problem, then I am going to hear about it. I think … they have to be academically confident people, but they also have to be people who want to be here! …You can have people coming here who are not all that academically- on paper, anyway- they don’t seem to be as strong as another person, but they have no problem getting right in there and joining in, getting to know the community and just saying yes all the time. Those people will do much, much better than those people who come in looking [for problems] and [being] judgmental.”
Like B12, B6 indicated that attitude affects students’ success. “So, I find as long as those kids want to be here, then they’re very hard-working and they’re very successful.” B6 also indicated that personality is another factor in each student’s ability to transit into the new system.

Personality factors into it, too—how outgoing you are, just … how resilient you are, if you want to be here, your circumstances… Of course, if your English language level is higher, it’s going to be easier. They succeed. So, all of those things: age, gender, English language, [and] country of origin—each country is different.

B15 mentioned that one of the sessions at the annual CAPS-I conference was about mental health. “A psychologist, Colleen Bratko from Calgary Board,… gave a good kind of presentation. It was things like depression, and some kids with anorexia.”

Accommodation and Homestay.

Unaccompanied minors coming to study in Ontario mostly live with Canadian families in a homestay situation. These students were provided with accommodation and food in exchange for a monthly fee. In March 2011, at the time of this study, there were 18 programs in Ontario that belonged to CAPS-I; eight offered their own homestay, seven used an outside agency, and three provided no homestay to their international students as illustrated in Figure 2. Some of the programs organized their own homestay, whereas others either recommended or used outside agencies to provide this service. Of the 10 programs that I interviewed in this study, six used an outside agency for homestay. Four School Boards in this study provided their own board-supported homestay programs. In some cases, program managers reported that some of the international students came to Canada to stay with family members while they were studying. In most of the programs in this study however, international students resided with Canadian families.

B6 organized their board-supported homestay program. B6 also had weekly homestay coordinator visits. “A lot of programs don’t offer that. So we have two homestay coordinators
who go into the school weekly to support the students. So we do not contract out to have other people run the [homestay] program.”

“So when you go to … any big city centres- you’ll find kids living with …somebody, who’s their custodian and they can be custodian for five Chinese kids and are they really being supported, monitored or anything?” B6 explained that the other under-monitored aspect related to international students living with relatives or people who do not speak English at home was that students would be “… speaking in their native tongue, which isn’t good.” B6 also indicated that many programs use outside agencies to provide homestay services. B6 indicated that their program is

unique here- not only are we running our own homestay program, but we live in a small town so many of our host families are teachers or principals and you can pretty much count on one of us knowing who the homestay family is. Or, if we don’t know, we can ask somebody before we do the home visit and all the other things. So, again that [is the] other layer to our program. So that’s really interesting when you’re comparing other programs…

B6 said “It [homestay] is critical for a variety of reasons. Kids spend a lot of time with their homestay families.” B6 also acknowledged the importance of peers for their students since “… they have to have time and be validated by their peers developmentally. So, I think … we have a pretty successful program.”

B12 raised the idea that “they [Ontario Ministry of Education] didn’t want to get involved in all the liability around homestay, which is kind of the elephant in the room a lot of the time. How do you monitor? How do control? How do you promise? What is that about? How can you be accountable?”

B8 worked “with community partners who provide all of the ancillary services” such as homestay. B8 indicated that they offer it as part of their program, “but …actually … most often I recruit with our homestay coordinator. The parents are quite interested in that.”
B12 used a homestay provider who included the services that B12 wanted to offer to their students. B12 explained that they had a clear understanding that the needs of their students were different because they were here without their parents. B12 explained that the international students did not have anyone here to advocate for them.

So, in some ways the teachers …become a sort of advocate and the host families, we ask them to be very strong advocates to the point where some of the teachers are saying, ‘This host family is unreasonable.’ But what they want, it’s okay because they’re advocating… They just need to recognize an international student should be treated the same as any other student, but remember that they’re going to need someone to advocate for them and they can’t make decisions perhaps as well as somebody who has got their parent here who’s telling them what courses to take and so forth. But, that’s all part of a guide that we have for our schools.

B15 did not arrange homestay and reported that many of their “…students –they know a family friend, or a friend of a friend.” B15 reported that many incoming students were “…living with strangers. They’re living with relatives they’ve never seen.” However, B15 reported that they would recommend a homestay agency. “This is a large Asian community here so if they are looking for homestay, there is a direct link from our…International Student pages.”

The homestay agency interviewed indicated that they were very responsive to the needs of their students. They said:

If a student requests a relocation, [we] investigate and document the issues involved and resolve the issues in association with all the stakeholders involved; If, as and when necessary, work with the school to arrange and attend a case conference, to engage all the stakeholders involved; If necessary, mediate among everyone involved: speak to the host family on how best to support their student; help the student to communicate effectively with their host and resolve difficulties, and communicate with the student’s agent and natural parents. If necessary, after meeting with the student, select an alternative host and arrange to relocate the student.

In 2011 this agency accommodated 738 secondary students across Ontario.

**Custodianship.**
Every international student coming to Canada as an unaccompanied minor needs a custodian. The Citizenship and Immigration web site says:

Minor children who are less than 17 years of age and come to Canada to study without a parent or legal guardian must be cared for by a responsible adult in Canada. This person is known as a custodian. In some cases, a custodian may also be needed for minor children between 17 years of age and the age of majority in the province or territory of the educational institution where they intend to study. This will be at the discretion of an immigration officer. Custodianship requires that legal arrangements be made to give the custodian in Canada permission to act in place of a parent. (CIC, 2009)

B12 raised one concern about the need for a custodian for students aged 17 or older. B12 expressed the concern that young students who may be 17 or older still require the guidance and support of an adult custodian.

The Federal Government is now saying that if you are 17 and older, you don’t require a custodian. And this was put in place because people - this is my own perspective, is that post-secondary institutions have applicants that are coming who may be 17 and older and they don’t want to have the hassle of getting a custodian. So, that raises a question for all of the students who we have- I mean we have to contain them when they say “Well, I am 18. I can live by myself. We won’t allow them to live by themselves. And that’s another question- this is our own practice. We just say, ‘You must be living with a family.’

B12 also went on to point out that “…universities also have to recognize that the kids they’re bringing in at the undergraduate level need a certain amount of support in their first year if they’re only 18 because there is no way that these students are adults.”

**Orientation.**

The programs in this study delivered orientation in a variety of ways such as an on-line orientation to the city and the school system, a printed manual sent by the homestay provider or the school board, a welcome centre, and in-person sessions before school started. B2 indicated that they have a welcome centre and that it is the “very first stop before they go into school. And …, on one day, prior to the start of school, they do get an orientation from our welcome centre.”
B6 discussed the extensive orientation that they provided for their new students. During this time, the staff has the opportunity to get to know the students and can begin to see who may not fit in well. “…In the orientation program, … we do almost two and a half days of orientation with them and you know who’s going to stick out.”

B6 described the package of materials that they sent to each student before arrival. They sent:

- the partner the orientation manual, the school calendar, our school calendar, a list of our monthly events, because we run monthly social events, as well. So they get the monthly social events and I give them the web site to the school and give them a little synopsis … that describes the schools, so they understand the school they’re going to and direct them to go to the web site to look at the school I have placed them in.

B8 and B10 indicated that the orientation is done by the homestay provider and is part of their homestay package.

B9 had an orientation session to Canada “about four days in. We don’t do it before they come. We do it after they’re here and we bring them all together because we’re also trying to get the Chinese to know the Mexicans and the Germans.”

B12 used an online orientation “that takes about an hour and a half to go through but it can be translated easily using Google Translation into whatever language and that’s a pre-arrival orientation.” This electronic orientation manual offered incoming students information about what to expect “… at the airport to where to go. All of that is on there: what homestay is like, what studying in Canada is like, [and] what to bring.” They also provided access to an online English vocabulary-building web site for four months prior to the new students’ arrival.

B15 supported their new students with an extensive orientation. “Everything about the visa operation is centralized to one office, so, we do provide orientation to all newcomers... specifically for visa students because their needs are different other newcomers.” B15 noted that unlike most
newcomers, visa students are not coming with their families. “With visa students, you need to inform them about health insurance, their rights, about study permits, what happens if you don’t keep your permits up to date. Their needs are slightly different.” The orientation at B15 was designed “…specifically for the student as well as their custodian- the custodians that look after them.”

One of the challenges for B6 is the lack of integration “…between the Canadian students and the international students”. B6 expressed hope that it would “…improve and I’ve come to realize that I can’t do that. It has to be within the schools.” The international students were not getting involved in many areas of school life. B6 expressed the philosophy that these international students were “…xxx DSB students “and … I want them to integrate with the Canadian kids.” B6 saw this lack of integration as one of the persistent challenges.

Orientation Manuals.

As a part of the in-depth interview, I asked for orientation manuals from the three school boards that consented to participate in the longer face-to-face interviews. B6 gave me a printed copy of their 45 page manual and B12 gave me a web link to their 25 page online manual. B15 did not have an orientation manual as a part of their program. Each of the manuals is designed to answer questions that a new international student might have about living and studying in Ontario. I examined the manuals to determine which academic, social, and emotional supports were being addressed. The B6 manual was a ring bound book, written in English with colour photographs of smiling multi-cultural adolescents. The orientation manual from B12 was accessible online and had a similar appearance to the printed one from B6. Although the B12 manual is written in English, it could be translated using an online translation service such as Google Translate. This
feature meant that this manual would more accessible to parents especially if they did not speak English.

The two manuals share some common elements such as administrative details concerning contact information and an official welcome from the manager of the program. They also include details about study permits, medical treatment, and insurance. In terms of academic supports, both manuals detailed the dates of Canadian holidays, information about report cards, and mentioned that students will be assessed for their ELP and placed into an appropriate ESL or English course. They provided English language communication tips such as the benefits of joining a sports team and both manuals encouraged the students to communicate openly at school, and with their homestay families, and to make the effort to resolve any difficult situations that may arise in their homestays. They both addressed homestay expectations, curfews, household chores, and the laws surrounding cigarette smoking, and drinking alcohol. The other common section addressed by both B6 and B12 was information about culture stress or shock and suggested ways to cope with this stress.

The manual from B12 placed more emphasis on the many social activities and trips available for international students. This section was one of the first sections in the manual and outlined the monthly trips with the dates. The manual from B6 provided information about Canadian culture such as the benefit of clear and open communication, respecting personal boundaries and privacy, and the roles of men and women. As part of their forward matter, B6 also included a copy of a thank you speech written by a former international student which underlined the many positive experiences that student had had while studying there.

Social Events.
Social events such as barbeques, field trips, festive seasonal parties, and fun athletic nights are some of the kinds of events offered by many of the programs. These provide international students opportunities to spend time relaxing with their peers. In some programs, the school board personnel were responsible for organizing these events. In other cases, the homestay providers offered special events as part of their homestay package.

B1 conducted two trips a year. They went to Wonderland and to Cirque du Soleil. B1 reported that they usually did “… two trips: one in the fall and one in the spring.” In addition to trips, they also “have a community welcome event. This will be going on four years now where all the boards and schools get together and we have an evening of Canadian entertainment…” introducing them from all levels to the community.”

In B6, “the social events are Christmas party, year-end party, bowling, and a sports night. The trips are Niagara Falls, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Wonderland…those are the trips.”

B8 provided lots of opportunities for social interaction.

Our schools have a noon-hour … Ambassador’s Club. So when the international students come, then the ambassador’s club students are assigned to be their guides, and so, every Thursday, they have their Ambassador’s Club and they bring their international student with them and the international program provides pizzas for them.

B8 explained that their community partners also provided social and academic supports for their students.

And then our community partners- again I mentioned they have the social thing that goes with the tutoring. Our other community partner who is responsible for the non-Korean students- she takes her students out- takes all of students out for a meal once a month. She holds a barbeque. She has a barbeque at her house and invites all of the students and all of the homestay families to her house for a barbeque. So she is totally invested in making the experience for the students something special which is a huge benefit for us because we don’t do virtually anything of that other than support them, support them, support them, which we can do because we have the communication with the schools.
B8 also reported running a lot of trips. B8 organized a trip focused on post-secondary institutional tours. “They come to visit us, meet their homestays and within one or two days, they’re off to New York, Washington where they tour Harvard, Yale- all the East coast schools for about five or six days.” This trip was offered to all students whether they were “…10 years old or 16 years old, they all go on the same trip.” This trip was offered as a part of the package. B8 felt that the parents wanted their kids to see the Ivy League schools. This trip allowed the students to see where the schools were located and get a closer look at them.

B9 and B10 indicated that they run social events and day trips for their students. B12 was arranging seven trips that “… the international students can participate in across the board, but they’re also encouraged more to get involved and integrate with the school they’re in. This is just an opportunity to be recognized as a distinct group.” The students from B12 had the opportunity to go skiing and snowboarding, to travel to Montreal, Ottawa, Niagara Falls, and Toronto.

B15 was not in a position to offer their students more than one trip a year.

…We’d like to in the future- plan social events because we’ve got students … at 55 schools. It’s not like we’ve got them in two or three clusters so we could do things like this. I think eventually, we are moving into that model. Uh, field trips- very rare, but this year we do have a field trip planned to St. Jacob’s which has been a headache to organize. How do you get these kids from all these sites? Anyway, it’s a learning curve.

Business Concerns

The more detailed responses to the interview questions indicated that most programs are run as businesses. Merriam-Webster defines business as, “the activity of making, buying, or selling goods or providing services in exchange for money”. Respondents explored many aspects of these businesses including such topics as the fluctuating number of students in each program, the focus and organization of the program, and the purposes of each program. Respondents spoke at length about enrollment, changes in enrollment over the years, the recruiting of international students, and
the competition for these students. Some of the respondents discussed the popularity of short-term cultural language programs. A few programs focused more on elementary-aged students, whereas most were geared toward secondary school. Some of the programs were funded directly as part of a school board while others were run as arms-length operations affiliated with a board. Some of the respondents spoke about the program as a way to add diversity to their communities. Others acknowledged that the international students helped to fill up vacancies in schools and generate money for the board. A few discussed the variety of uses for the money generated by the program.

**Fluctuating Size of Programs.**

Generally, most respondents reported that the number of international students coming to their program has increased over the years, although not all programs expected to grow. B15 noted that “some boards don’t feel that it makes money; they don’t care. So there’s no institutional support to nudge, to grow and nurture a program.” Over the years, B1 has shifted in size and is now only interested in keeping the program small. B1 explained that, “we used to have five employees and now there’s only me”. With 35 students, B1 is one of the smaller programs in this study. The program at B8 has varied in size over nine years. Their numbers have been as small as 51 and as high as 132.

B9 expressed the view that “this phenomenon of International Ed only started in the late 1990s.” Prior to the late 1990s, the number of students coming in to B9 was extremely variable and students were often a result of specific contracts. At that time, they did not recruit or market their program.

Many, like B6 have increased significantly over the years. B6 went from from less than 10 to more than 120 students over a 10 year period. B2 has increased the number of students over the years also. They used to take a “passive” approach to recruiting and marketing and said, “It’s only
in the past three years that we have decided to start marketing.” B12 started marketing and recruiting students in September 1999, and the program has grown significantly. They hosted 605 students in the school year 2010/2011. B12 explained that “you need to know where to go and you need to understand it’s an industry ... there’s lots of people doing it.”

B15 also discussed the positive impact of marketing. In 2001, “International [education] fell off the radar. We didn’t do any marketing. Then, once we started to do the marketing, our numbers again went up.”

**Competition.**

Most of the respondents noted that there was a great competition for students. B6 explained that “it is a business. It’s a big sales job.” When asked about the competitive nature of the programs, B6 said, “It’s very saturated. It’s getting more and more difficult every year to find students because more and more school boards are getting involved.” B6 went on to say that it takes time “to establish your program in a new market.” B6 explained that, “…you need to look at up to three years to be able to… get solid in a market.” Programs from many cities in Ontario are all competing for the same students. Programs from smaller cities may have to sell themselves more aggressively than larger well-known cities vying for the same students. B6 said, “We’re a very small city and the market is very saturated so to compete with “Come to Canada”, you’re competing with Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto- that’s difficult for our little city.” B2 considers one of their competitive advantages is that they “don’t have a high percentage of visa students in any one school, [so] that international students are highly immersed in English.” B8 also mentioned the benefits of their monolingual English-speaking community. “And they come to us because we are a homogeneous area with English, English, English… If you don’t get it with us, you’re not going to get it anywhere.”
The competition to attract international students is not only between school boards within Ontario or within Canada. English-speaking countries are hosting a great volume of international students. B12 explained that “for the most part, you’re competing with the U.K., the U.S., New Zealand, Australia - other countries, you know?” B15 agreed that the competition is from other English-speaking counties. B15 stressed the importance of the federal government getting involved in marketing the benefits of Canadian International education in other countries. B15 explained that Ontario’s education system is a provincial responsibility, whereas the “Australian education system is federal. So, it’s like a trade. It’s their largest export.” B15 also stated that Britain and New Zealand spend millions on promoting international education. B15 believed that Canada’s strategy to attract international students was not as successful as other English-speaking countries because, “there’s squabbling in Ottawa…There’s no strategy. … they realize we are far behind.”

Students from China are coming into Ontario schools in large numbers. Many respondents noted the potential impact of Chinese students on their programs. They discussed the pressure to take more students from China to help bring in more revenue. Considerations of profitability may have the effect of pushing up enrollment from China. B6 said that their program limits the number they

… bring in from each country, which is very frustrating to partners [oversees agents] because they want to keep sending me Chinese students. We’ll still have the kids from all the other countries because it is a business and we still have to have the numbers but I do limit … so I have no more than five to six from each country at each school… you know it’s a cost recovery so I still keep an eye on that.

**Shift in Countries of Origin.**

B6 discussed the shift in the country of origin of their international students over the last 10 years. Their first students came from countries such as Korea and China, but more recently, the program has hosted more students from Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, and Brazil. At the time of
the study, B6 was waiting for their first students from Russia, Spain, and Austria. B6 said, “I really want to diversify. I could fill our schools with students from China and I don’t want to do that. I want to provide diversity to our Canadian kids to learn to become global citizens. “

B9 found that Thailand and China offered many opportunities as a source for students. They were developing Thailand as a very important market. “It’s growing. We have China growing too. We’re sort of going to put a cap on that. Well, it will overwhelm your program and drive away your other kids, if you get too many. In fact, they come in and they manage to speak Chinese. “

B12 has found that “there’s [sic] more than enough students. It’s a matter of determining what kind of students you want and how many do you want. It’s the quality of the students versus the – well, we limit who.” B12 said that they may eventually look at limiting the number of students from China.

B12, like B9 discussed the advantages of exploring new markets. B12 had started getting students from Kazakhstan and Turkey. They were “looking at countries where there’s oil and a bad situation” to find opportunity. B12 went on to explain, “ We … seem to be reliant on a couple of big countries for a good portion of …students and then you have not a smattering, but a sizable number from about six or seven other countries.”

B15 reported that most of the students they accepted were from China. Additionally, they had international students from Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Germany, Singapore, and Turkey. However, the “…bread and butter market is still Asia. And it’s the same for most of Canada. If you even look at the number of study permits issued, you’ll see China is the largest.”

When asked about whether they had students from countries in the Southern Hemisphere like Mexico or Brazil, B15 replied, “We don’t get that many. We don’t market there because those
kids want to go to schools which are like the schools in the 50s with all white faces, white teachers- white kids.”

**Age of Students in the Programs.**

Most of the programs in this study focused their attention on high school-aged students. Although my main focus was to gauge the number of high-school aged international students, I also asked the participants whether they limited their applicants to those in high school. B1 would only take “elementary on an individual basis.” They indicated that elementary-aged children were not their “focus”. The majority of the students at B6 are also secondary school-aged. Of the 123 students at B6, only eight were elementary students. They will consider taking elementary students only when “it fits in terms of class size and a good homestay.”

B9 would also accept some elementary school students into their program. “The approach at the elementary level is basically, throw the baby into the water and see if they sink or swim.” This immersion-style approach in the elementary schools was achieved by limiting the number of international students per classroom to one. The largest elementary schools in this board may only have had three international students. “They’re in like Grade 6, Grade 8, Grade 5, in three different classes. Now, there is an itinerant teacher that goes around and I pay [for the] service … to have that, but it’s not a direct class at the elementary level.”

B12 has been taking both elementary and secondary international students since 1999. The youngest students from Korea came to study in Canada accompanied by their mothers. These students came to study “anywhere from seven months, eight months, a year, two years, depending on how long the mother- generally they’re coming from Korea and it’s how long the mother is prepared to live in Canada.”
B8 was the only program in this study that focused on elementary-aged students. B8 accepted students starting in Grade 4. “…One of the reasons we take these children in elementary, right? We get Grade 7s and 8s come. They love it. They stay here and their parents invest in them staying here the whole time.”

**Short-term Study.**

Many of the respondents noted that large quantities of international students are now coming to study for short-term cultural experiences. Earlier trends seemed to be that students came to Ontario expecting to graduate from high school. B1 has noticed a shift in the length of time their students come to study. “Before, it used to be probably 75% coming for graduation. So now, we’ve got … quite a few kids, especially from Germany and Brazil, who are coming for five months or less just for an experience.” B2 also stressed the importance of short-term cultural programs. They reported that their students are not in Canada for the academic experience, but “visit to get cultural experience, language practice and travel experience.” B2 hosted 65 students in 2012 for a one month stay. B10 and B6 also had short-term international students that stayed in Ontario from one month to five months. B15 had some students from Colombia for two or three months. They reported that they had hosted short-term “groups like that from Colombia and Thailand.”

B12 noted that some students have tried to come for one year and graduate from a Canadian high school, but it is rarely possible for the students to get all the academic requirements in that time. At B12, “some’ll come for two years or three years and then graduate. I think we have about one third come for five months or less.” Most of their international students were enrolled for longer periods of time.

**Purpose of the Program.**
Why did international student programs in Ontario get started? The purpose for starting the programs varied across the respondents. Two of the main reasons cited by respondents were to increase ethnic diversity and top-up flagging domestic enrollment. Some of the boards used international students as a way to fill up empty capacity in schools. B15 saw the great contributions the international students were making to the economy. B15 stated that the international students “… bring in revenue. They generate about 16 million dollars. We’ve got empty spaces in our schools. They contribute to us keeping programs open and plus, if you think about it… the spin offs are: they’re … paying for their housing, their parents are visiting, [and] they’re shopping here. So the spin-off is quite a lot.”

Some boards indicated that they have generated extra revenue by hosting these programs and their schools have benefitted from this by getting equipment like Smartboards and computer labs. B8 spoke about the ways the money generated from the program was used. B8 reported that “for every student that’s here in elementary, we give the elementary schools $400.00 a month. So some schools, for instance, raise 25 to 30,000 dollars a year just by hosting half a dozen elementary students. Every classroom is now equipped with smartboards because of international education.” At B8, the money generated from the program was referred to as “a slush fund”. The money generated from the program did not go into “the black hole”.

Many of the respondents indicated that their program was started to increase ethnic diversity in their school board. Boards in smaller municipalities saw the program as a way to widen the horizons of their students and staff by exposing them to a variety of people from different countries. B17 agreed that with smaller communities, “the profit motive is secondary because they need some cultural diversity because it is an overwhelmingly Caucasian second generation community and they’re desperately needing some diversity to help prepare their kids.”
Other boards such as B12 also reported that the international student programs were used to support teachers, principals, and students by sending them overseas. B6 said “It started to offset declining enrolment. I think one of the rationales for having a program but some other boards were starting it and the current director was interested in the diversity.” B6, a mostly rural geographical region that experiences little immigration, hoped the program would “prepare not just our students, but we want our staff to have those opportunities too.” B6 spoke about the fact that the program there was not an arms-length managed program, but rather that the employees of the ISP worked for the board. B6 felt that “when you run a program at arm’s length, you just plunk those students in.” At B6, they considered the teachers and the homestays as stakeholders.

B8 pursued elementary children as a market because they thought that “…elementary kids would be most impressionable- the ones who would be most impressed by having the international students in their classrooms. The teachers loved it. The classrooms came alive.”

B8, a mostly rural board, also expressed the idea that a program could “…provide a little more world-view for our kids. We’re so isolated here. We have some schools with not a cosmopolitan bone in their system. We have one school with three or four kids- one student is black, one is Chinese and one is Korean and that’s it in 400 kids, you know?”

Unlike the smaller communities, larger urban centres in this study reported that they did not implement the program to add ethnic diversity to their schools.

B12 acknowledged that their program did bring in additional revenue and that “it helps, in terms of supporting some programs, that may need additional funding” but went on to say that they were not “… operating like BC where you now are dependent on the many billion dollars they now get from their students.”
Although B15 saw the potential for the program to fill up empty capacity in schools, they were somewhat concerned with “… how much incremental revenue it brings in, but not at the risk of domestic kids losing a space.” They limited the number of schools they marketed internationally and did not have space available for international students at all of their high schools.

**Looking Closer at Three Programs**

As part of this research, I conducted hour-long, face-to-face interviews with three program managers that had participated in the initial telephone interviews. Many of the responses from these longer interviews have been included with the findings earlier in this chapter. In an effort to compare the three programs in more detail, I asked specific questions about the size and organization of each operation, and the delivery of services and supports. The following three flow charts summarize the staffing hierarchy and organizational structure of each of these three programs to show the resources attached to each program.

These three programs were invited to participate in the in-depth phase three interviews because they were so different in size, scope and organization. The three programs presented a good cross-section of the organization of ISPs in Ontario.
Figure 5 shows the administrative structure of B6. B6 was a board-run program and had the smallest staff of the three programs. The Program Manager reported directly to the Director of Education at B6. The manager was supported by two homestay coordinators, one secretary, and assisted by two retired administrators who travelled overseas to recruit students for the program. In this program, six people, not counting the Director of Education, were employed to oversee the ISP at B6 where they hosted an average of 120 students each year.

![Administrative Structure of B6](image)

**Figure 5: Administrative Structure of B6**

Figure 6 shows the administrative structure of B12. B12 was a mid-sized arms-length program with many staff members. The Program Manager reported to a Board of Directors made up of the Director of Education, the Chief Financial Officer, two trustees, and three community members. The Board of Directors meets three times a year and they are following a business plan. The Manager is supported by a staff consisting of recruiters who work with a wide variety of agents overseas. The Program Manager is also supported by office personnel and the homestay coordinators who work for an agency. At B12, the Program Manager was in charge of hiring necessary personnel to support the 475 students they reported hosting in 2012. The staff consisted of two marketing positions, one financial officer, numerous recruiters, educational consultants,
language program administrators, and guidance counsellors. In addition to the program manager, the staff amounted to 14 people who were employed by the arms-length organization that was established for the B12 school board. This program subcontracted out the homestay provision to an agency.

Figure 6: Administrative Structure of B12

Figure 7 show the administrative structure of B15. B15 was the largest board-run program with relatively few staff members. There was one Senior Manager who reported to the Director of Education. The Senior Manager was supported by a Manager and four Guidance Counsellors who worked together in a central office. The Guidance counsellors were then assigned various schools depending on the location of the highest enrollment of international students. The admission assistants also worked from the central office and assisted with permits, application forms, and other queries. B15 did not provide any homestay or custodial arrangements, so the staff at the centralized office was relatively small considering they hosted over 1300 international students in 2012.
In each case, there was one Program Manager who worked with specific assistants.

Figure 8 shows the tuition fees at each of the three programs. The smallest board, B6 was located in a mostly rural area with seven high schools in the board. Four of the seven high schools accepted international students. They accepted a total of about 120 students each year. The tuition fee per student was $12,400.00 a year. B12, the mid-sized board was located in a larger, mostly urban city in Ontario with 25 secondary schools. They accepted 475 full-time international students each year. International students who required ESL were placed in one of seven schools. The annual tuition fee was $11,000.00 per student. The largest board in the study, B15, was an urban board with 120 secondary schools. This board accepted 1300 students at 55 high schools each year. Their tuition fee was $14,000.00 a year. Tuition fees do not include the cost of homestay in any of these figures.
Figure 8: Yearly Tuition Fees at Three Programs

Homestay was addressed differently in each of the three boards. B6 spoke at length about the personalized approach to homestay this board took for every student. B6 also indicated that they were beginning to conduct surveys of the international students and the homestay parents to gather data. B6 reported that they were “… revising some little things around the homestay program as well. We want to be able to really support those folks [homestay parents] and value those folks. They’re really important and we want to make sure they have all the resources they can get.”

B12 reported that they worked with an agency to provide all of their homestay services. B15 indicated that they would recommend homestay agencies, but other than requiring that students had a custodian, they were not involved with providing homestay.

Table 6 reveals the ratio of full time enrollment international students to the full time enrollment Canadian high school students. Although the largest of these three boards accepted the largest number of international students each year, the ratio of FTE international students to FTE regular students was the lowest of the three boards.
Table 6: Percentage and Ratio of FTE International Students at Three School Boards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Board</th>
<th>Total Number of FTE* students- high school 2012</th>
<th>Total Number of FTE* international students- mostly high school- aged</th>
<th>Percentage and ratio of international students in high school student body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B6</td>
<td>5,598</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>2.14% (1:47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B12</td>
<td>24,000</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>1.97% (1:51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B15</td>
<td>79,779</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1.62% (1:61)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* FTE refers to full time enrollment

**Summary**

The findings reported in this chapter portray a picture of ISPs in Ontario high schools in 2012. The data from the interviews, the documents, and the statistics allow one to view of the size and scope of the phenomenon, the variety of supports that were being offered, and some of the challenges programs faced in 2012. This picture of ISPs in Ontario is one that is largely missing in the literature. The final chapter includes a more detailed discussion of the implications of this research, the limitations of this study, possible future research, and recommendations.
Chapter 5

Discussion

The purposes of this study were to gauge the size and scope of the phenomenon of international students in Ontario’s publicly-funded schools with a focus on high schools, assess the extent to which school boards were offering academic, social, emotional, and cultural supports, and determine which areas the ISPs themselves perceived as the biggest challenges facing their programs. Three themes emerged in the Findings. The first and second themes were Academic Supports and Social/Emotional Issues. The third theme, Business Concerns, was an unexpected finding. I did not fully anticipate that ISPs were run as businesses. In this chapter, I first address the findings as they relate to the research questions and to pertinent studies cited in Chapter 2. Then, I conclude the thesis by discussing the significance of the findings, the limitations of the study, and the implications for future research.

Addressing the Research Questions

Size and Scope.

The first unexpected result I encountered in my findings was with regard to the size and scope of this phenomenon. I expected that the data would be readily available and that I would be able to report those in the findings. Now, I can see that one is unable to report the number of international students accurately. After carefully analyzing the statistics from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and looking at the CAPS-I website, it was clear that it was not possible to calculate exactly how many international students were attending schools in Ontario. International students who come to Ontario for short stays were not counted in the statistics. Using only the CAPS-I statistics, there were 3,865 FTE international students accepted into CAPS-I-member ISPs in 2012. This is shown in Table 5.
Most of the data on the CIC site were concerned with high-school-aged visa students coming for longer study terms or older visa students entering post-secondary institutions which were not relevant to this study. The international students who came for shorter visits such as one, two or three-week summer camps, or three to five months were not enumerated as visa or temporary foreign students. It would only be an estimate if one were to describe the number of international students that came to Ontario to study. The entire phenomenon that I wanted to research included both short-term and longer-term international students. For example, B2 indicated that they had hosted 65 students for a three-week stay and B16 reported accepting 100 short-term students in 2012. B15 reported accepting short-term international students from Colombia and Thailand, but did not reveal the number of students they had accepted. These students coming for shorter stays were not included in the data recorded by CIC.

From my original document analysis in 2012, I found that 33 of the 63 publicly-funded school boards in Ontario accepted international students. Although just over 50% of Ontario’s English-language publicly-funded school boards accepted international students, none of these boards were located in Northern Ontario. All of the boards with international students were located in the higher density population areas of southern Ontario. Of those, 18 were members of CAPS-I and 16 of those programs were also members of OASDI. There were 12 boards that were not members of either organization which accepted international students. See Table 4. They did not indicate that they had a program set up to support them.

**Academic Support.**

There was a wide range of practice in the academic supports provided by the programs. The assessment practices to determine the English language proficiency of the incoming students varied widely across boards. McCall-Perez (2000) felt that the language assessment provided key
information for guidance counsellors who need this information to assist ELLs with timetable choices. I found no assessment tools shared amongst the boards in this study. Although the OASDI web site referred to using admission criteria, it did not specify any particular assessment criteria. The OME (2007b) document for ESL/ELD program planning did refer to the ERGO assessments, but none of the respondents specifically reported using this assessment tool recommended by the Ministry.

Roessingh (2006) found that students often overestimated their ELP and underestimated the amount of academic language required to be successful in school. Han and Cheng (2011) noted the lack of ELP created many challenges for ELLs writing the OSSLT. McCall-Perez (2000) also noted that counsellors often overestimated the ELP of their students until they observed them in the classroom. These studies point to the need for accurate language assessments.

The international students in Ontario’s high schools vary widely in their ELP, and some participants felt that those students with more advanced ELP did not require ESL classes. In this case, ESL classes have been found to provide a social function as well as an academic one. Gunderson (2000) found that ESL classes gave ELLs time to focus on English, a chance to read and write, and the opportunity to make friends. As Popadiuk (2009) suggested, newcomers should be encouraged to meet other international students already at the school and ESL classes provided the opportunity to do so. The descriptions of the variation of ELP of ELLs in this study are consistent in the writings of Coelho (2004), Gunderson (2008), and the OME (2007b). ESL classes give support to those ELLs who have spent less time in English instruction. Most of the boards offered ESL classes in both semesters. Smaller boards only offered one mixed level class per day whereas larger boards with more ELL students offered more ESL classes at various levels. One smaller board reported offering one ESL class for just one semester each year. By accepting
Cummins’ (2008) assertion that it takes five to seven years for academic language to develop, then ESL class and extra academic tutoring can be seen as essential supports for most ELLs who arrive in Ontario’s high schools with a wide range of ELP. As noted by many studies cited in this thesis (Han & Cheng, 2011; Roessingh, 2006; Watt et al., 1996), this variation in ELP results in many international students arriving in Ontario’s high schools with insufficient vocabulary to succeed in many mainstream classes and on the OSSLT.

Since many of the students who come here to graduate may go on to Canadian universities or colleges, they will need to pass either the OSSLT or the OSSLC and then take English language proficiency tests for admission to post secondary studies. The successful completion of the OSSLT or the OSSLC is a requirement of graduation and may present serious academic challenges for ELLs as found in Cheng et al. (2007) and Han et al. (2011). Although one board reported offering TOEFL training in the Grade 12 OSSLC literacy course, many of the boards offered tutoring for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) a few weeks each year for an additional fee to help graduating students get prepared. Not all participants reported offering tutoring for the TOEFL or some other equivalent English language proficiency test.

Ultimately, very few of the boards I examined had specific tutoring services or organized extra academic help for the international students. B6 was the only school board in this study that reported having an organized tutoring system set up to support the international students. Some respondents reported that they would advise their students of places they could get private tutoring or they could arrange for them to work with English-speaking peers. Some advised the international students to visit the school-wide student success room. Others reported that the homestay providers organized tutoring. Overall, the academic supports for international ELLs offered by most of the programs were limited.
Social and Emotional Supports.

With those boards that did have existing programs for international students, I discovered that 8 of the 18 boards who were members of CAPS-I organized their own homestay and the rest of these boards used an outside agency. Additionally, homestay agencies were often responsible for supplying the students with social activities such as trips and barbeques, assistance with finding academic tutoring, and orientation. Issues surrounding homestay were dealt with in different ways in almost every board. Smaller boards such as B1 with 35 international students had one person to run all the social events, arrange homestay, recruiting, and registration. Most of the school boards with over 200 international students used an outside homestay agency to act as custodian, arrange homestay, and organize social events.

When I looked more closely at three boards, it was clear that the size of the region had an effect on the amount of services offered to the international students. The largest board in this study was not set up to offer social supports such as trips and social events. Due to the large number of students they had, they could not navigate the logistics of planning activities for students that attended 55 area high schools over a large urban area. Incoming students were given a recommendation for a homestay agency and the board required that all international students had a custodian. However, their main focus was attracting international students to help fill empty space in schools and boost enrolment in their less-populated schools. In a situation such as this, where there were few adults available to support a large number of students, the psychological difficulties associated with culture shock as alluded to by Popadiuk (2009) are more likely to occur. With the large volume of students, some of them may experience more isolation and less adult care.
By comparison, the two smallest boards had more emotional and social supports in place for their international students. They provided trips and social opportunities, carefully monitored homestays and a more personalized approach. The managers made the effort to meet each new international student and learn their name.

Many school boards solicit international students and then use homestay agencies to provide all the ancillary services for them including monitoring the wellbeing of each student. It was apparent from the study’s findings that different programs placed differing amounts of emphasis on the monitoring of each student’s wellbeing. The respondents differed widely in the ways that they monitored the students at school and at home. Call et al. (2002) suggested that caring adults at home and at school should be present to provide emotional support for adolescents. The importance of the host family is borne out by Mirsky’s (2007) study that found that host parents played a vital role in providing a stable home life. The findings of this study indicate that the supports vary widely across programs.

**Challenges Perceived by the ISPs.**

The three respondents from the in-depth interviews had a variety of answers with regard to the challenges facing each of their programs. Among those was the wide range of English language proficiency and unrealistic expectations of some students to graduate quickly. All three spoke about the fine balance between marketing their programs to parents and the reality of keeping the students in school long-enough to become proficient in English and achieve good grades. As McCall-Perez (2000) suggested, ELLs should consider taking more than four years to finish high school. The expectation for many parents was that their children would achieve credits at the same rate as their Canadian peers and go to post secondary schools directly after Grade 12. It seemed that the parents and the students had unrealistic expectations in terms of the time it would
take for the students to graduate. This indicates the need to clearly inform the international students and their parents about the school system in Ontario. If those recruiting for boards clearly indicated that it is likely that extra time will be required to graduate from an Ontario high school, then the parents and students could make more informed choices about timelines and courses prior to their arrival at an Ontario high school. Parents may not realize that a strong work ethic alone cannot make up for low levels of English language proficiency.

One of the biggest challenges these programs encountered was caused by the parental pressure many students felt to finish their studies quickly. A segment of the visa students who expected to graduate from an Ontario high school were constrained by the costs of the program. Each additional semester amounted to costs for tuition, airfare, homestay, and other fees. Some students often insisted on trying to graduate alongside their English-speaking peers even if their English skills were not sufficient to achieve success in the completion of courses. As noted by Han and Cheng (2011), those ELLS with lower ELP combined with pressure to finish school quickly, often resulted in lower grades which in turn created barriers for post-secondary options.

When students arrived with lower English language skills, they had more difficulty achieving good grades in academic courses and many participants acknowledged that students felt pressure from their parents to achieve high grades. Lower grades also affected the students’ chances of getting accepted in their desired post-secondary option whether in Canada, North America, or in the student’s homeland. With some international students, the options were limited because their grades from an English-speaking school may have been lower than if they had graduated from a high school in their homeland.

Another challenge was the lack of timetable options for international students because they registered later than the rest of the students in the school board. This situation was acknowledged
to have resulted in some students not getting into the courses they wanted or required for future studies. Newly arrived international students may have thought that they could take any courses, but when they arrived, they learned that this was not the case.

Integration was also mentioned as a significant challenge for ISPs. B6 reported that many students, as in Han and Cheng (2011), had difficulty making friends with native English speakers. The program at B6 was still working to find ways to encourage the schools to assist international students with integrating into their new environments.

The respondents who were responsible for providing social, emotional, and academic supports spoke with pride about their systems. B6, B8, B9, and B12 related the extensive checks their program put in place to ensure that the international students were doing well. The program at B6 included careful weekly monitoring, extra academic help offered at no additional charge, many social activities, and careful screening of all potential homestay families.

The programs differed widely in the specific supports each included in their tuition fee. At $14,000.00, B15 charged the highest tuition fee, but provided very few academic, emotional, or cultural supports. By comparison, B12 charged only $11,000.00 in tuition, but charged additional fees of $1300.00 and a higher homestay fee than some other ISPs. This finding reveals that some programs were including more supports in their fees for international students than others. It also reveals that although programs can still adhere to the general standards set out by OASDI, they provide completely different experiences for incoming international students. It is evident that there was a wide variation in the ISPs in Ontario’s schools.

**Limitations**

This study depends on quantitative data collected from Internet research, and qualitative data collected from two series of semi-standardized interviews, web site analysis and documents.
A limitation to this study arose when I was unable to get approval from each board I invited to participate in this study. My data set was reduced from a possible 16 school boards that belonged to OASDI to the 10 that expressed a willingness to participate. A second limitation with the data arose when some participants chose not to answer all the questions in the telephone interview or chose to answer the questions via email. The two email responses I received lacked any detailed description and supplied me with little additional information. However, most participants provided me with enough detailed relevant information that I was able to compare the results using codes that emerged through the data analysis procedure. This data enabled me to provide a rich description of some of the existing ISPs in Ontario.

Although I asked participants questions about international student enrollment, the data concerning numbers of short-term students was difficult to tabulate. The reports from each participant were approximate and many reported that the number of short-term students changed each year. For example, B12 indicated that they were hosting 450 students that year, but later on, in the same interview, reported that they had accepted 605 for the same time frame. It is possible that the 155 additional students mentioned were short-term students and not counted in full-time enrollment numbers.

The number of short-term stay international students was not recorded on the CAPS-I web site and the Canadian statistics recorded at the CIC web site do not include students here for less than six months. This meant that many international students attending high schools in Ontario are not counted in the phenomenon.

**Implications for Future Research**

Many questions need to be answered about how schools and school boards can achieve positive outcomes for unaccompanied adolescent minors. One of the related issues seemed to be
determining whether or not the incoming international students were ready to start an immersion high school program in English. Assessment of language level is crucial for the incoming students. Some prior knowledge of the ELP of new students would be helpful for the school Guidance counsellors who need to create a timetable for incoming students. Sometimes, as discussed earlier, new students miss opportunities to enroll in classes they would like to take because they register later than the rest of the student body. If the school had more accurate pre-arrival assessments of the new students’ ELP, and the registration process was moved forward in time, the Guidance counsellor might be better prepared to devise more suitable timetables for the new international students. Future research could analyze registration practices and suggest better methods to assist guidance counsellors and ISPs to be able to offer more course options for fee-paying students.

A separate but related issue is connected to whether these students are ready to enter post-secondary education upon completion of high school. It also is not clear how many of them are taking a full-year of ESL upon entry into university.

The results of the research raised some questions about the differences between in-house homestay services versus those provided by an outside agency. This is an area for future research. There was a wide variation within programs regarding monitoring student’s well-being. Some boards provided frequent monitoring, whereas others did not report having such rigorous practices. Although this study was primarily focused on school boards and only interviewed one homestay agency, it was not able to investigate this issue in detail, but it is one that merits attention.

Considering so many questions presented themselves, it would be useful for future research studies to analyze the benefits to the students and the community when a board provides its own homestay program. The question of whether the activity of organizing housing and social events for students falls within the purview of the school boards could also be examined.
From the results of phase one, it appears that some school boards that were not interviewed for this study were offering space to international students, but not providing any extra educational or social or emotional supports to assist their international students. These boards had application forms on their websites, but did not have programs set up. None of these boards were members of either the provincial or the national international education associations, OASDI or CAPS-I. Hopefully, these Ontario school boards are in the process of building and modifying their programs as they gain more experience hosting international students.

All of the boards that I interviewed for this study had a well-organized program. Some of the programs were being run as a part of the school boards and board employees were responsible for providing all the supports. Other boards were arms-length organizations that were affiliated with a school board, but operated separately from the board. The ISPs in Ontario were not all organized the same way. Some boards discussed the use of the profits that came from hosting students. Some boards used community organizations and homestay agencies to support the students socially and emotionally. Some also used a homestay agency to provide academic supports. I raise these points as a reminder that ISPs were being run as businesses and the decisions about how to organize them varied widely across the province.

Future research could examine the perspectives of the parents and homestay parents about their experiences with the ISPs. It would also be instructive to hear the students’ perspectives on their experiences in ISPs and compare the differences between the short-stay students and those who come here to graduate from high school. It would be useful to know if they had difficulty making friends or integrating into a new school and community and what they felt they needed the most to be happy and successful.
Considering the age of the international students in this study, future research could also examine the effects of sleeplessness on unaccompanied adolescents. There is an overall lack of information on so many aspects of this phenomenon. Much of the available research is not concerned directly with adolescent international students and many of the studies were done outside Ontario. So there is much to be done.

Recommendations

Kunin et al. (2009) reported that in 2008 there were 11,432 international students in elementary and secondary schools in Ontario, while an unknown number of short-stay international students were enrolled in Ontario’s high schools. Province-wide, thousands of unaccompanied minors have been attending public schools. The lack of systematic data collection and the wide variation in program procedures is not sufficient to ensure that unaccompanied adolescents will be consistently supported academically, emotionally, socially, and culturally in Ontario’s secondary schools. There should be a systematic collection of data from all schools that accept international students and that information should be more widely available.

Although it is evident through the current study that some ISPs in Ontario are providing excellent academic, social, cultural, and emotional supports for international students, there is more to be done such as enhanced supports in the areas mentioned above. Given some of the gaps that have emerged in this study, it seems that some of the issues surrounding supports could be addressed by OASDI’s Standards of Practice found in Appendix A. If this document were to be developed further, it could help to eliminate some of the gaps in service and ensure that all international students are getting the best supports. If OASDI were to revisit their Standards of Practice, and include some more specific standards with regard to supports, they could help address some of these gaps.
These businesses that take place within so many of Ontario’s publicly-funded schools have attracted thousands of unaccompanied youth who are at a critical stage in their development. This phenomenon is unlikely to go away. With so many students arriving here, it is time to examine these programs and ensure that students are well-supported when they arrive. Even when an outside agency is responsible for additional supports, there is an ethical responsibility placed upon the board to closely monitor the procedures. Ultimately, the burden of care should be placed upon the institution that recruits international students.

International program managers and participating schools need to be fully informed of the potential academic and cultural challenges and the emotional stressors in store for these unaccompanied international students. Schools can offer many academic supports to assist students with enhancing their ELP, getting prepared for the OSSLT, extra tutoring support, and access to native speakers. ESL teachers and Guidance counsellors, along with the program managers, need to be apprised of which students will be studying at their schools and given a clear idea of each student’s academic needs considering the high fees these students and their families pay for education. Teachers of mainstream courses should be linked to the ESL teacher and the Guidance counsellor to be made aware of the needs of their ELLs. More emphasis on established criteria for the initial language assessment would ensure that students are placed in appropriate courses that match their English language proficiency. A standardized language assessment that all boards could access would be helpful.

Some international students may be suffering from homesickness and culture shock and be at risk for mental health issues. Programs need to consider the emotional health of their international students. Gaming was also noted as being a distraction for international students and Mitru et al. (2002) clearly advised that all parents should observe adolescents’ behaviour with
regard to electronic media. Nighttime activities such as gaming, watching TV, surfing the internet, and talking on the telephone were responsible for many adolescents not getting enough sleep. International students who are communicating with family and friends in their home countries at very late hours or very early hours may be particularly affected because of the time differences. Homestay parents would benefit from handbooks that include things to look out for such as depression, eating disorders, sleep disorders, or even suicide.

Doerr (2013) noted the usefulness of the student manual designed for international students in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. The many misunderstandings and problems encountered by earlier students and host families were used to create a manual that helped to explain many cultural differences and host family expectations. The orientation manuals that I examined for this study had utility as a means of introducing many diverse topics to incoming students. The printed manual covered much of the same information as the online one, but the online manual did have the added benefit of being easily translatable on the internet since it was electronic. It would be useful if all student manuals were sent out to students electronically prior to their arrival in Ontario.

Extra academic supports such as an organized tutoring service available to the international students is a key component for ELLs who may require support with language-heavy subjects such as Science, English, and Social Sciences. Specific subjects such as these would benefit from the assistance of a tutor who specialized in that subject. ISPs should deliberately include an organized tutoring service to assist ELLs with academics.

Additionally, the ELLs would benefit by having more access to what Gunderson (2000) and Krashen (1987) called “native English speakers”. As an ESL teacher, I have observed many international students enter our school at the start of a new semester, hoping to make friends and
meet people their own age. Although most students may be interested in joining clubs, sports teams, making friends, and finding social outlets, some of them may not be at a point in their language development to clearly communicate their wishes. It would be worthwhile investigating supports that would enable ELLs to connect to native English speakers who could assist them with their transition into a new school and a new culture.

**Conclusion**

My hope is that this study can be used as a starting point for more dialogue. The economic benefits have proven to be significant enough that more and more school boards are starting ISPs. With such a large number of unaccompanied vulnerable adolescents involved, this phenomenon is complex. The logistics of designing a program that responds to the many needs of unaccompanied adolescents are unwieldy. However, the complexity of the task should be a challenge and not a deterrent for the many boards who strive to create rich learning environments, serve as cultural ambassadors for Ontario, and welcome international students into the homes of Ontario’s families. Many Ontario school boards are offering positive learning environments and cultural exchanges as they continue to strive to support these incoming students academically, emotionally, socially, and culturally. I hope that the confluence of the studies cited in this thesis and my findings can be used by those involved in international education.
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Appendix A

Ontario Association of School Districts International Membership Standards of Practice

OASDI Principles of Membership (Associate and Full Membership)

Membership in OASDI is a commitment by the participating school or district to principles of ethical behaviour articulated below.

There are two levels of membership: associate and full. Associate membership is intended for those schools or districts whose international student program is in the development stage. Full membership is granted to members who have met the following criteria:

1. the existence of a published program of general public education for international students;
2. published tuition fees and any other fees applicable with clear definition of program scope, length and resulting certification;
3. a published refund policy;
4. published description of program rules and expectations for international students;
5. an established homestay placement and supervision program responsible to a designated district or school administrator;
6. district or school personnel authorized to evaluate applicant credentials and to permit admission to the program based on established selection criteria;
7. designation of an international program staff person with sufficient authority to represent the district or school on matters of international education and to exercise appropriate supervision of student education programs and behaviour in the community;
8. student admission and renewal procedures that are in compliance with Canada Immigration and Citizenship policies and procedures; and
9. ethical recruitment and marketing practices.

http://www.oasdi.ca/index.cfm?pagepath=Members/Membership_Standards_of_Practice&id=34802
Dear Participant:
I am writing to provide you with more information about my research project, International Student Programs in Ontario, an unfunded study which has been granted clearance in accordance with Canadian ethical guidelines and Queens University policies. The results of this study will be reported in my Master’s thesis. My anticipated audience includes classroom teachers, researchers, and International Students Program managers.

What is this study about?
The purpose of this research is to determine the range and scope of International Student Programs in Ontario. Specifically, I am interested in how long your school board has had an organized program set up to deal specifically with international students. I am going to examine how various programs in Ontario differ. The study will require one initial interview that should take no more than an hour and a possible follow up. There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with this study.

Is my participation voluntary?
Yes. Although it be would be greatly appreciated if you would answer all material as frankly as possible, you should not feel obliged to answer any material that you find objectionable or that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may also withdraw at any time with no effect. If you withdraw from the study, you may request the removal of all or part of your data.

What will happen to my responses?
We will keep your responses confidential. All raw data will be kept for five years, at which point, it will be destroyed. All personal information, interview recordings, and transcripts will be kept in a secure location, accessible only to me. Only I or my thesis committee members will have access to the raw data. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. I will protect your confidentiality to the extent possible by referring to you or your board by withholding key identifiers and using pseudonyms rather than your name in my final report. Should you be interested, you are entitled to a copy of the findings.
Will I be compensated for my participation?
No. Your participation is voluntary.

What if I have concerns?
Any questions about study participation may be directed to the Lise Lindenberg at llal@queensu.ca or (613) 962-2727. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.

This research is being conducted by Lise Lindenberg under the supervision of Professor Elizabeth Lee, in the Department of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario.

Again, thank you. Your interest in participating in this research study is greatly appreciated.
Appendix C

Consent Form - “International Student Programs in Ontario”

Name (please print clearly): ____________________________________________

1. I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

2. I understand that I will be participating in the study called International Student Programs in Ontario. I understand that this means that I will be asked to respond to questions in an interview.

3. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. Only Lise Lindenberg and her thesis committee members will have access to this area. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will never breach individual confidentiality. (Should you be interested, you are entitled to a copy of the findings.)

4. I am aware that if I have any questions, concerns, or complaints, I may contact Lise Lindenberg (613-962-2727 lal@queensu.ca; project supervisor, Dr. Elizabeth Lee (613-533-6000 X 77409) elizabeth.lee@queensu.ca, or the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (613-533-6081) at Queen’s University.

I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

I (name) ________________________________________ am granting permission for the researcher to digitally record the audio portion of our interview. Initial ______________________

Signature: _________________________________ Date: ______________________

Please provide your E-mail address if you would like to receive a copy of the results of the study:

E-mail: ______________________________________________________________________

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Lise Lindenberg. Retain the second copy for your records.
Appendix D

Phase Two: Telephone Survey Questions

Phase Two: Multi board Telephone Interview Questions

1. How many years has your board offered an International Student Program?
2. How many students were involved in the first year of the program?
3. How many visa students were enrolled in the 2010-2011 school year?
4. What percentage of those visa students came for a) 5 months or less b) one year c) until graduation?
5. How many students are enrolled in high school in your entire board?
6. Do your students get billeted with homestay families?
7. Which of the following supports does your program offer: ESL, after school tutoring, TOEFL tutoring, special Guidance teacher, social events, counsellor, airport pick up, trips, other?
8. What do you see as the biggest challenges facing your International Student Program?
Appendix E

Questions for Homestay Agency

1. How many years has your agency been in business?
2. Where did it start?
3. How many school boards in Ontario does your organization work with?
4. Do you work with elementary education as well as secondary schools? Post-secondary?
5. How do you monitor the well-being of your students?
6. How many secondary school students would your organization provide services for in Ontario?
7. What are the main services your organization provides?
Appendix F

Phase Three: Interview Questions for Three Board Representatives

The Organization

1. What is your position with regard to the ISP?
2. How long have you held your current position?
3. What is the organizational structure of your program?
4. What training or experience did you have to prepare you for this job?
5. When was the ISP started in your board and why?
6. How do you find students?
7. Is the market competitive?
8. How many students, on average, would your board service each semester?
9. What are the ways that students find out about your program?
10. With which countries is your program affiliated? Has this list changed over time? Why?
11. Does your program have a mission statement?
12. What do you see as the benefits of having international students in your board? To your community?
13. Are there any disadvantages?
14. If you could revise one aspect of your program, what would it be?

The Students

15. In your opinion, which students are able to make the most successful transitions into your schools? Prompts: factors such as age, gender, level of English, Country of origin)
16. How do you identify students who are having difficulty adjusting?
17. What are the extra supports your program offers for ISP students? Prompts: ESL classes, Orientation for students, Parties and social events, Tutoring, TOEFL training, Homestay visits, other?
18. Please describe the nature of the above supports.
19. Could you describe the language assessment practices for your new arrivals?
20. What printed materials do the students receive before they arrive? After?
(Ask for copies after the interview)
21. Does your board offer ESL classes for the general student body English Language Learners who are not involved in your ISP? How many non-ISP students access ESL class?
22. Is there a process used in the system to elicit student feedback?
23. Is there anything I should have asked you that I did not?
Appendix G
Letter of Information and Consent to Participate

Letter of Information

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools.

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to provide you with more information about my research project, International Student Programs in Ontario: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools, an unfunded study. This research is being conducted by Lise Lindenberg under the supervision of Professor Elizabeth Lee, in the Department of Education at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario. This study has been granted clearance according to the recommended principles of Canadian ethics guidelines and Queen’s policies.

What is this study about? The purpose of this research is to determine the range and scope of International Student Programs in Ontario. Specifically, I am interested in how long your school board has had an organized program set up to deal specifically with international students. I am going to examine how various programs in Ontario differ. What educational, emotional, and cultural supports are being offered for visa students at different school boards in Ontario?

What are the biggest challenges facing International Student Programs?

The study will require one initial face-to-face interview that should take no more than an hour and a possible follow up. This interview will be audio-recorded. There are no known physical, psychological, economic, or social risks associated with this study.

Is my participation voluntary? Yes. Although it be would be greatly appreciated if you would answer all material as frankly as possible, you should not feel obliged to answer any material that you find objectionable or that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may also withdraw at any time with no consequence. If you withdraw, you may request the removal of all or part of your data.

What will happen to my responses? We will keep your responses confidential. All raw data will be kept for five years, at which point, it will be destroyed. All personal information, interview recordings, and transcripts will be kept in a secure location, accessible only to me. Only my thesis committee members will have access to the raw data. The results of this study will be reported in my
Master’s thesis. My anticipated audience includes classroom teachers, researchers, and International Students Program managers.

The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will not breach individual confidentiality. I will protect your confidentiality to the extent possible by referring to you or your board using pseudonyms rather than your name in my final report. Should you be interested, you are entitled to a copy of the findings.

**Will I be compensated for my participation?** No. There will be no compensation for participation.

**What if I have concerns?** Any questions about study participation may be directed to Lise Lindenberg at llal@queensu.ca or (613) 962-2727 or my supervisor, Dr. Elizabeth Lee at elizabeth.lee@queensu.ca or (613)533-6000 X 77409.

Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board at chair.GREB@queensu.ca or 613-533-6081.
Consent Form

“INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PROGRAMS IN ONTARIO: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools”

Name (please print clearly): __________________________________________

4. I have read the Letter of Information and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

5. I understand that I will be participating in the study called International Student Programs in Ontario: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools. I understand that this means that I will be asked to respond to questions in an hour long face-to-face interview. I understand that the interview will be digitally recorded. I may be contacted again by telephone or E-mail to briefly clarify my answers at a later date.

6. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time without consequence. If I chose to withdraw by contacting the researcher or her advisor, I can request that all or part of my data be removed.

   I understand that every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of the data now and in the future. Only the thesis committee will have access to this data. The data may also be published in professional journals or presented at scientific conferences, but any such presentations will be of general findings and will not breach individual confidentiality.

4. Any questions about study participation may be directed to Lise Lindenberg at llal@queensu.ca or her supervisor, Dr. Elizabeth Lee at (613)533-6000 X 77409 or elizabeth.lee@queensu.ca. Any ethical concerns about the study may be directed to the Chair of the General Research Ethics Board (613-533-6081) or chair.GREB.queensu.ca

I have read the above statements and freely consent to participate in this research:

Signature: _______________________________   Date: ______________________

I would like to receive a copy of the results of the study:

E-mail: ______________________________________________________________

Please sign one copy of this Consent Form and return to Lise Lindenberg in person. Retain the second copy for your records.
Appendix H
GREB Approval

February 28, 2012

Ms. Lise Lindenber, Master’s Student
Faculty of Education, Duncan McArthur Hall
Queen’s University
511 Union Street
Kingston, ON K7M 5R7

GREB Ref #: GEDUC-611 12; Romeo #: 6096649
Title: "GEDUC-611-12 International Student Programs in Ontario: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools"

Dear Ms. Lindenber,

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled "GEDUC-611-12 International Student Programs in Ontario: An Examination of the Educational, Emotional, and Cultural Supports Offered to International Visa Students in Ontario High Schools" for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen’s ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D 1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB, of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (access this form at http://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/ and click Events - GREB Adverse Event Report). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes to the level of risk, applicant characteristics, and implementation of new procedures. To make an amendment, access the application at http://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/ and click Events - GREB Amendment to Approved Study Form. These changes will automatically be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or irvingg@queensu.ca for further review and clearance by the GREB or GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

cc: Dr. Elizabeth Lee, Faculty Supervisor
Dr. Lesly Wade-Woolley, Chair, Unit REB
Erin Wickham, c/o Graduate Studies and Bureau of Research