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## GROWTH

I feel empowered! I was once again able to combine my love of teaching and traveling. As a graduate student I participated in IPDS Italy 2023 and absolutely loved it! Now, as an elementary school teacher, I was excited to learn about programs for active educators. I knew another experience would be beneficial for my personal and professional growth. At Colegio San Ignacio I was moved by the autonomy and responsibility that the students were given and admire their inquiry-based classrooms and the ways each lesson makes connections to real life. It changed my ideas around the amount of freedom that students should have in the classroom. Both IPDS programs deepened my yearning to be open to learning strategies from other teachers, and to implement into my own teaching what I think can be helpful.



## COLLABORATION

A highlight was sitting with the Colegio teachers and discussing similarities and differences in our experiences as educators. We talked about job expectations, the necessity of being flexible, and compared my co-teaching classroom to their special education instruction. The conversation was eye-opening -- we concluded that there are pros and cons to everything and no school is heaven. I also learned so much from my fellow cohort members. They have all been teaching for a lot longer than I have and shared insights and opportunities. I would not have attained this valuable information and guidance if it wasn't for our shared time and experiences abroad. I encourage any educator to consider IPDS, it provides such rich, meaningful, and memorable experiences!

