

Minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board meeting held on 27th August 2019

Present:

G. Bizzaro	GB	Chairman (via Skype)
S. Stapleton	SS	Board Member
E. Moyo	EM	Board Member
M. Nambiar	MN	Board Member
K. Bosscher	KB	Board Member
M. Pickard	MP	Board Member
G. Cornella	GC	Board Member
A. Chitulu	AC	Board Member
A. Mulemba	AM	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
E. Engel	EE	Primary Head
O. Williams	OW	Secondary Head
W. Horea	WH	Business Manager

Time	Agenda Item	Minutes
6.34 (6)	Welcome	<p>NB welcomed all present and asked everyone to introduce themselves. A special welcome went to EE the new Headmistress who joined the school in August. He congratulated OW on the birth of his son a week earlier.</p> <p>NB informed the Board that GB would be joining the meeting via Skype and that he would only stay for the first session.</p>
6.40 (2)	Approval of Agenda	Agenda was presented and adopted unanimously.
6.42 (15)	Election of Board Chair	<p>NB explained that the board has had some online voting in the past and since it could not meet at the end of the last academic year, it was hoped that the process of electing Board Chair before the end of the year could be expedited by voting online. NB said he realised that some nominations for the Board Chair position had been made and there was also some concern that the constitution says that the Chair position should be voted in the first</p>

		<p>meeting of the board. NB apologized for this oversight.</p> <p>NB gave a quick brief on the role the Board Chair plays within the board and also in relationship with the Director of the school. He explained that the Board Chair's function is primarily to try to rally the board to ensure that work gets done as well as acting as the link and liaison through having regular formal and informal meetings with the Director of the school on issues that may need to be raised at the board at its next meeting or by email communication. This is beside the Chair's administrative role of running the board meeting. In terms of voting, the Chair can cast a vote if there is a tie and the Chair's vote would tend to break the tie.</p> <p>GB and AC were proposed for the Board Chair position. Before the voting, GB and AC were asked to say if they accept to be nominated and they both accepted. The nominees were also asked to comment on why they thought they would be an appropriate Chair of the board. Voting was through a show of hands, and GB was elected Board Chair.</p>
6.57 (4)	Approval of Minutes of 30 th April 2019	Minutes of the meeting of the Open Session held on 30 th April 2019 were taken as read.
7.01 (50)	<p>Matters arising from previous meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sub Committee Structure 	<p>SS explained the three Sub-Committees for the benefit of the new board members. In order to accommodate the new members, the Sub Committees were restructured as follows:</p> <p>Policy: Sean Stapleton Mahima Nambiar Alfred Chitulu</p> <p>Finance: Express Moyo Guido Cornella Anita Mulemba</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unrest and Security	<p>Buildings/Development: Gianluca Bizarro Matt Pickard Karen van Buitenen</p> <p>Responding to a question on whether board members are allowed to join two committees, SS explained that while committees should have the ability to rely on three key members to be doing the work, dates and venues for committee meetings will be published and any board member who is interested in attending can do so.</p> <p>NB will send out an email to the three committees to schedule meetings during the following week. He noted that it is important that members should start looking at the issues indicated at the end of the August report. Discussions for the Policy Committee will include, among other things, the Educational Policy; and communication to parents.</p> <p>Action: NB to send out an email to Board Committees</p> <p>NB explained that because there has been so much going on and a lot of information, some true and some less true, it has been difficult for the school to filter out and be very clear about what exactly is going on. He noted that some situations have actually been ugly for people trying to get across town. For this reason the school is very aware that parents may not be forced to make the journey into school when the situation is not safe. He noted that the worry is not so much about bringing the children to school in the morning but whether parents can get them home again at the end of the day. NB thanked the US Embassy for providing useful information to the school regarding the situation during the past couple of months.</p> <p>NB said he had earlier sent out a confirmation email to parents that the school would remain open but that they would need to make the risk assessment whether to bring their child to school or not. An email will be sent out to parents notifying them that the scheduled workshops for the week and the coffee morning will be postponed until the following week. Should the situation worsen and a lot</p>
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<p>7.51 (3)</p>	<p>AISA Board Training</p>	<p>Over the past couple of months there have been efforts to arrange for a trainer to come in to conduct some board training. Unfortunately it has not been possible to find a trainer with free slots in their schedules. NB will continue to look. In the meantime, the board can take advantage of the Board Chair's training in South Africa in November. This training is relevant and specific to Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA) and there is a budget provision for it.</p> <p>Action: NB to check with GB if he will be able to</p>

		attend.
7.54 (4)	Board Self Review	<p>Board Self Review which came up in the May board report is something that the board has previously tried in various formats including end of year surveys. This was tried again this year and the results were already sent out to the board. NB explained that results themselves are not as important as the process. When we have our accreditation, the fact that we have had a process of self-review is very important. He asked those who had taken part in the review to advise on how best it can be done in future. Things that are not well understood can be raised in the board meeting so that they are explained.</p> <p>Action: Each board member should review the results of all the surveys including the Faculty and Parents surveys with an eye to identify those things that they did not understand and send them to GB/Board for discussion at the next meeting.</p>
7.58 (12)	<p>Informational Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of Board Report • Seesaw • Singapore Maths 	<p>Before moving on to the informational reports, NB explained the rationale behind the structure of the board report for the benefit of the new board members. He said the idea is to bring in a connection between potentially what the Director and the Heads were reporting on and what had been identified as of value to the school. It was therefore agreed to try to tie in what the school values with the report so that board members will actually see what progress is being made against those things that were prioritized. The issues that do not fall under those categories come later under the informational reports. Where it is informational, the assumption is that information has been given unless a board member has a question.</p> <p>EE announced that the Seesaw Ambassadors are Lucy Piper and Shaaira Jagot who assumed these positions the week before and had already done their training. The idea of Seesaw came about in order to move forward much better in showing student learning and hence use it as a portfolio. Seesaw Ambassadors will have their first professional development for teachers on Wednesday. One of the coffee mornings may be used for an induction for parents. There are also plans to train parents. More parents have signed up for it and are involved in student learning. Seesaw is GDP compliant</p> <p>Last year it was decided to bring in a trainer to do Singapore Maths, a strong Maths program in a lot of</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Students in Secondary • Empowerment of Teachers 	<p>schools. It is based on conceptual understanding problem solving, however it is not a foundational curriculum. While it is good for a population that does not move, BMIS has a nomadic student population and if one misses out those foundations they do not revisit them. EE explained that the goal is that after the accreditation visit more work will be put into this and once a plan has been put together it will be communicated to parents. There is need to look at how this decision will be communicated to parents.</p> <p>OW reported that the Secondary has seen more students coming in with English needs and more specifically learning support needs so there is need for more support in this area. Despite this situation creating pressure on the timetable, the secondary is doing its best in fitting specific programs to specific individual needs.</p> <p>NB noted that this was an exciting development and the school is moving cautiously. Over the years the school has tried to accommodate children with particular needs with one-on-one support people in primary. In a lot of aspects this is positive benefit not only to that child but to the rest of the children to have children with particular needs within their group. The issue is that of capacity so that the school is not admitting students with learning needs but cannot give them what they actually need. It is very rewarding that we have such kind of kids in the school. The school is mindful of the fact that the other students do not get disadvantaged.</p> <p>Responding to a question as to whether the school is taking full advantage of the education levels and capacity of the Teaching Assistants (TAs), EE explained that in the Teachers Guide there is a whole section about how Teaching Assistants should be used in the classroom. This year one of the goals is to provide TAs with more training to equip them with skills to support learners better in the classroom. Teachers have come up with the idea that there is so much experience between teachers that they are now going to offer workshops to the TAs to give them simple tools of how to guide a reading session, for example. The TAs will have their first professional development session on how they can help students in the classroom with information technology. Plans are underway to come up with ongoing professional development program for them.</p>
8.10 (5)	Director’s Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upcoming Accreditation 	NB provided an update on the upcoming accreditation visit in October. For the understanding of the new board

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • USI Security 	<p>members, he explained that a team of 13 will arrive on the 4th October. They will be in school from Sunday through to Friday. Two will be specifically looking at the PYP, two for MYP and another two for DP. Four are representing the CIS and the remaining three are representing NEASC. NB took the board members through the whole accreditation program. He informed board members that he had slotted in Tuesday 8th October at 7.30 for a meeting with the visitors. He asked board members to pencil in the date and time of the meeting and try to make themselves available. An attachment was sent out with the reports for their reference. A little bit of time at the next board meeting will be spent discussing anything that the board members may have picked up from those reports.</p> <p>Action: Board members to make themselves available to meet with the accrediting team Tuesday 8th October 7.30am</p> <p>In principle the NEASC accreditation is a journey to transforming the schools and they are very much involved in conversations about improving and maximising learning. They will look at all the teaching and learning aspects, the support processes, what is happening in the administration, among other things. On the other hand the CIS structure of the accreditation is more confirming that the school is meeting the standards and that it has the evidence to say that those standards are being met. CIS is recognised internationally as an accrediting body, whereas with NEASC you access the American market which validates the high school diploma which may prove to be very important to those students who are considering the US as a destination for university education. The big question may however be whether we need both accrediting bodies.</p> <p>NB reported that he was generally happy with the improvements so far. The USI officers' attendance, responsiveness and general appearance have improved.</p>
<p>8.15 (3)</p>	<p>Finance Committee Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeals from Parents 	<p>NB informed the board that there were three debtor appeals from last year and asked if he could forward them to the Finance Committee even before the meeting to which the board agreed.</p> <p>He explained that the Finance Committee's role is to sign off and instruct NB and if there is a disagreement they could raise it to the board.</p>

8.18 (5)	Administrative Report	<p>WH informed the board that while it may seem like the figure still outstanding on August fees invoicing was very high, it had since gone down to about 25%. WH noted that this was normal and tends to happen at the beginning of the year when most organisations take a bit longer to pay as they await receipt of funds from abroad.</p> <p>In response to a question regarding what the general understanding is regarding the cafeteria business, whether to make profit or break-even, NB explained that historically the school covers the cost of the materials and goods that are sold, the administration costs (staff costs etc) have not been covered. A few years ago we had fizzy drinks, crisps and other such snacks being sold in the cafeteria and costs were covered and made profit but many parents were not happy that we were selling unhealthy options and the decision was taken to stop. He further said staffing costs represent a considerable portion of the costs. The higher the prices, the less the sales and the less money there is to cover the staffing costs.</p>
8.23 (2)	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising Issues for Board Discussion 	<p>It was agreed that raising issues for discussion at the board meeting should be done by sending a note to GB and NB so that it is included in the agenda. The earlier this is done the better the chances of the item being added on the agenda.</p>
8.27	Date of next meeting	<p>The meeting closed at 8.27 pm. The next meeting will be held on 24th September 2019 at 6.30pm in the School Library.</p>

Signed:.....

Date:.....