

## Minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2019

### Present:

G. Bizzaro	GB	Chairman
S. Stapleton	SS	Board Member
M. Nambiar	MN	Board Member
K. Bosscher	KB	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

### Apologies:

E. Moyo	EM	Board Member
M. Pickard	MP	Board Member

Time	Agenda Item	Minutes
6.39 (1)	Welcome	GB welcomed all present.
6.40 (3)	Approval of Agenda	Agenda was presented and adopted unanimously after it had been noted that the minutes of the Finance Committee had not been included on the agenda.
6.43 (5)	Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the 27 <sup>th</sup> August meeting were approved after noting the absence of GC's name on the list of members present during the previous Executive Session of the Board meeting.  There is need to try and make sure that minutes are finalised and sent out earlier in future.
6.48 (10)	Matters arising from previous meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AGM Minutes</li> </ul>	Minutes of the AGM will be circulated as soon as they have been finalised.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback from board members regarding results of surveys</li> <li>• Meeting with the Accreditation Team</li> </ul>	<p>GB did not receive any feedback from board members regarding results of the surveys.</p> <p>GB, AM, SS and KB confirmed that they will be able to attend the meeting with the accreditation team on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30 am.</p>
<p>6.58 (40)</p>	<p>Finance Update</p>	<p>GB informed the board that at its meeting a few weeks earlier, the Finance Committee had started looking at finding ways of cutting costs and rebuilding the reserves. He said GC had been asked to analyse the financial matters of the school in a bit more detailed manner and find indicators of where things are going wrong in order to help board members to better understand the current financial situation of the school.</p> <p>In his presentation, GC said he was going to provide an overview of the financial accounts for the year 2018/19 which was presented to the Finance Committee at its last meeting. He noted that it was important for board members to understand how the budgeting and the finance process works. He said the board needed to think about what role it can play in supporting the achievement of the school's financial targets, and, how the administration can be held accountable for the achievement of those financial targets.</p> <p>GC made the following observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During each of the financial years 2016/2017, 2017/2018, and 2018/2019 the school made a financial loss</li> <li>• The final (audited) result for each financial year is achieved at in a three stage process („Mgmt. Accounts“, "Draft financials" and „Audited accounts“). The reported loss for a given time period increased for each of those reporting stages (i.e., with each subsequent reporting the financial result become worse)</li> <li>• Budgets were being underachieved in each of those years</li> <li>• Budgets generally were not predictive of actual (audited) results</li> <li>• Over three years the reserves of the school reduced by 69% (USD 1.1m) to ~USD 0.5m in July 2019</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the two last audits EY reported "going concern" issues by stating "We identified events or conditions that lead us to believe there was a substantial doubt about the School's ability to continue as a going concern" (Audit reports, 4/2018, 5/2019)"</li> </ul> <p>In order to remedy the current situation, GC suggested the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make budgeting predictive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand and eliminate differences between "Mgmt. Accounts" and "Audited accounts"</li> <li>- Draft „reasonable“ budgets based on predicted average student numbers and most recent actual expenses</li> <li>- Manage spending (instead of simply recording it)</li> <li>- Achieve approved budgets</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Insightful communication of financial situation to BoT (information vs. data)</li> <li>• Implementing auditor feedback</li> </ul> <p>GC concluded by stating that the future financial success of the school depends on availability of required skills to achieve budgets.</p> <p>GB thanked GC for the insightful presentation.</p> <p><b>Action: GC to send a copy of the presentation to Chikondi for distribution to board members via email.</b></p>
7.38 (37)	Accreditation – preparation and discussion activity	<p>NB took board members through an activity where there were some group discussions about the kind of questions that might come up during the accreditation in order to make sure that members are on the same page. During the activity members not only discussed questions focused on governance but also a range of other questions touching on a range of aspects from CIS, NEASC and IB that might likely prompt discussion.</p> <p>Prior to the activity, NB explained that most of the members of the accreditation team were arriving on Saturday and they will have meetings in the hotel before coming into school on Sunday where they will have meetings with the leadership. The IB team will leave on Wednesday, and the two remaining teams will finish off Thursday and Friday.</p>

		<p>There will be a lot of meetings with the board, all the faculty, staff, students and parents.</p>
<p>8.15 (35)</p>	<p>Informational Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math PD</li>   <li>• Interdisciplinary units (IDU)</li>   <li>• Communication to parents</li>   <li>• Week without walls</li>   <li>• Parents Association</li> </ul>	<p>EE reported that Karim Letwinsky, an educational consultant, will be coming to BMIS for three days in November and a whole week in March to train teachers on how to teach maths, how to assess it, and how to strengthen the curriculum. This has been possible with funding from the US Government's Office of Overseas Schools.</p> <p>Responding to a question regarding the difference between Interdisciplinary units (IDUs) and Transdisciplinary Units (TDUs), OW explained that IDUs involve connecting two or more subject areas to do a project and gave an example of a Maths and Design unit where students were using their Maths skills to design a chocolate box. EE explained that TDUs on the other hand means that all disciplines work together to teach certain skills and concepts. Specialist teachers and Math, languages, which are all connected to teach the same idea. They work together towards one big conceptual understanding.</p> <p>In order to build a strong community and keep parents informed, Primary reviewed its communications strategy. Teachers now send out weekly communications to parents in which they highlight what they do in the classroom and also suggest what could be done at home.</p> <p>Based on initial feedback, this year's Week Without Walls (WWW) was the probably the best the school has ever run. Among other benefits, WWW is important because it helps build relationships between year levels and between students and their teachers. It also helps with team building and it is a service opportunity. However, some students find staying away from home for three nights a challenge.</p> <p>After much discussion on the issue of the Parents Association (PA), there was a general consensus among board members that it was important that parents should feel like there is an avenue for their voice to be heard. It was noted that there is need to have a follow-up discussion. The following goals were agreed upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to identify a functioning PTA that is focused on the social aspects</li> <li>• To try and seek parental input into how they can have a voice that is encompassing the whole PA and not just some sections of the community</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellbeing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to provide more channels for parents to use such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular advertising of the board email</li> <li>Set up at regular meetings issue tables for capturing discussions in the moment</li> <li>Use the coffee mornings as an opportunity for parents to give input</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>NB said he would appreciate any thoughts from board members on the issue. The PA meeting will take place after the half term break.</p> <p>OW reported that Well-Being had been added to the DP timetable. Well-being sessions are being run by Neil Black and Loren Steven the Secondary Councillor. They are looking at both the physical and mental well-being. OW noted that the program is going really well. During the sessions, students get through things like stress management, mindfulness, but also physical well-being which goes into diets and sleep habits among other things. The idea is to start bringing it into MYP. He noted that time may obviously be a challenge.</p> <p>OW said thoughts/feedback/ideas on giving time table to different year groups were welcome.</p>
8.50 (2)	Director's Report	Director's report was taken as read.
8.52 (3)	Finance Committee Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Correction</li> </ul>	The Finance report was taken as read after noting that where mention had been made of a "PTA" meeting should instead have read "PA meeting".
8.55 (15)	Policy committee	<p>NB briefly explained the background of the Designated Schools Board (DSB). He also briefly reported about the proposal discussed at the Policy committee regarding the international schools formerly under DSB to come up with a joint position paper covering issues of mutual interest to present to government. Currently the problems to do with tax regulations, Tevet regulations, Immigration, just to mention a few, that BMIS faces together with the other schools are treated differently by the authorities.</p> <p>NB pointed out that there are possibly two arguments: Leave things as they are now and accept that there are differences of interpretations by the authorities; or try to</p>

		<p>address some of the issues and get clarity and try to get the best deal possible.</p> <p>The issues have been topics of discussion for a long time. They are issues to do with getting tax rebates on projects that the school is working on, understanding the land issue, interpretation of TEVET payments etc. The group of schools have come to a point where they feel it is a good idea to at least rationalise what each of the issues are from the schools and identify where the inequalities are and what things can be addressed.</p> <p>He suggested that before making the presentations to the relevant authorities, the boards of the relevant schools may need to sign off the strategy which would have collated and bullet pointed the issues the schools are facing so that it is all in one summary document. Because this has potentially big ramifications for the school NB emphasized the importance of BMIS to have a voice in every step of the way. Firstly, to collate information, secondly to agree on what information to be presented and thirdly try to have a meeting with the relevant ministries. This is something that was discussed and at the Policy meeting where there was a general consensus to get involved in collating the information.</p> <p>NB suggested that BMIS should proceed on this unless there were objections from the board.</p>
9.10 (3)	Administrative Report	The Administrative Report was taken as read.
9.13	Date of next meeting	The meeting closed at 9.13 pm. The next meeting will be held on 28 <sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 6.30pm in the School Library.

Signed:.....

Date:.....