

## **Open Session**

### **MINUTES OF THE BMIS BOARD MEETING OF THE 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2011 AT 6.30 PM IN THE LIBRARY**

#### **PRESENT**

N. Airey	NA	Chair
V. Beza	VB	Board Member
J. Carstens	JC	Board Member
D. Pinto	DP	Board Member
E. Hausi	EH	Board Member
M. Burdett	MB	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
H. Schievink	HS	PTA Representative
P. Harrison	PH	Secondary Head
J. Johnson	JJ	Primary Head
Y. Garside	YG	Primary Representative
S. O'loughlin	SO	Secondary Representative
J. Bray	JB	IB Coordinator
C. Thompson	CT	PYP Coordinator
W. Horea	WH	Business Manager
Craig Anderson	CA	US Embassy
Chris		US Embassy

#### **APOLOGIES**

A. Dedekind	AD	Board Member
S. Elliott	SE	MYP Coordinator

#### **ABSENT**

H. Banda	HB	Board Member
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The meeting was called to order at 6.50 pm. The Chair welcomed NB and all present and thanked the teachers for the successful parent's evening. A special welcome was extended to Craig and Chris from the US Embassy. A quorum of Board Members was present and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with business.

#### **1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board approved the Agenda by unanimous consent.

#### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June 2011 were agreed as accurate with the following amendments:

- H. Schievink 's name should have appeared under apologies and not on the list of members present

- It was the Chair not the Vice Chair who called the meeting to order.

### **3. COORDINATORS REPORTS**

NB suggested that the Coordinators reports be presented to the Board first before the Board proceeds with business.

#### **3.1 PYP Coordinator's Report**

In her presentation, CT defined the PYP programme, highlighting the relationships and commonalities with the MYP and DP. She also provided an overview of the stage at which the school is in terms of the programme and the plan for 2011-2012 and beyond. The Board learnt that currently the areas that need to be addressed include: Language Policy (EAL admission and exit criteria), pedagogical leadership (organogram and training) and revision of the school Mission Statement. CT observed that developing a good EAL admission and exit criteria document is going to take a semester to a year to complete. CT noted that the organogram had already been done by NB.

**Action: CT**

CT observed that while there was need for certain aspects to be reinforced and teachers to be sent for training, overall she was happy with the progress made so far.

#### **3.2 MYP Coordinator's Report**

The MYP Coordinator's report was presented by PH on behalf of SE.

The meeting learnt that BMIS had been registered as an MYP interested school and that the application was just a few weeks away from completion. In terms of professional development, the report further explained that IB workshops targeting specific areas were being planned, a lot of which can be done in house. PH noted that this had already started happening.

PH explained that SE will need to give a presentation to the Board sometime in the future. Curriculum documentation and relevant information was already being put on the server.

**Action: SE/PH**

#### **3.3 IB Coordinator's Report**

JB suggested that there was need to advertise the Diploma programme and asked the Board for its support. JB explained the importance of improving career guidance from year 9, 10 and 11 in order to create a culture of success. He added that currently, Tokunbo the Counselor is handling guidance on universities.

**Action: JB/PH**

JB noted that due to large class cumbers in some subjects, there was need for holistic training of the teachers. He pointed out how the Librarian's training in France is already proving helpful but that there was need for more resources.

**Action: JB/PH**

JB noted that overall, it had been a really good start to the first term.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE TWO PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

#### **4.1 Director's Report**

##### **4.1.1 Mission Statement**

NB noted that there was need for a collective vision. NA added that during her discussion with NB earlier, it had been felt that this be pushed to next term Jan/Feb after NB would have been with the BMIS for a term. NB then suggested that PH, SE, CT, JB and JJ together look at it from the Board level and see if they tally and then come up with a ten year plan. NA asked if this suited the Board to which all present unanimously agreed.

NB also suggested that a small working group be formed to come up with something for purposes of reviewing the Mission Statement. JB suggested that students be involved in the exercise. NA added that some catchy couple of words that every child can recite would make for a good Mission Statement. She suggested that the working group should be composed of the Board, parents, and children. It was agreed that this should be discussed again at the next Board meeting.

**Action: NB/PH/JJ/JB/SE/CT**

At this point NB thanked the Coordinators and excused them from the meeting.

## **4.2 Business Manager's Report**

### **4.2.1 Nedbank – increased business**

NB wanted to know why Nedbank should be considered for more business as reported in the minutes of the 17<sup>th</sup> May meeting. VB explained that Peter Todd was concerned that at the time, Standard Bank was not as responsive as Nedbank. NB informed the meeting that Standard Bank had now come in with an online banking system which is going to facilitate the school's banking. He proposed that a decision should be deferred until the Standard Bank demonstration the following week. NA suggested that the matter be kept under review.

**Action: NB/WH/Fin. Committee**

### **4.2.2 TAC feedback for administrative appraisal**

There was no proposal yet from JB for discussion by the Board.

**Action: JB**

## **4.3 Board Policy Committee Report**

### **4.3.1 Policy on safety to be finalized**

The meeting agreed that this was a Board Policy Committee issue and therefore should be discussed at that level.

**Board Policy Committee**

### **4.3.2 Numbering to be overhauled**

NB wanted to know what the numbering issue related to. NA noted that this was actually a Board Policy Committed issue.

**Board Policy Committee**

### **4.3.3 TAC Constitution**

YG reported that a TAC meeting had been scheduled for Thursday for purposes of finalizing the document which is expected to be ready by the next meeting.

**TAC/Board Policy Committee**

### **4.3.4 Policies 4.10, 4.40 and 4.401 to be presented**

The Board agreed that the policies 4.10, 4.40 and 4.401 go through the Board Policy Committee.

**Board Policy Committee**

## **4.4 Finance Report**

### **4.2.8 Meeting with MRA**

EH wanted to know if the letter appealing MRA's decision to reject BMI's request to be granted a waiver of fringe benefit tax had been sent. WH replied that the letter was sent to MRA in July but MRA had not yet responded.

**Action: WH**

## **5. SCHOOL HEADS' REPORTS**

## **5.1 Primary Head's Report**

The Board noted and discussed the report by PH.

### **5.1.1 Number on Roll**

The Board learnt that the term had started well and that the enrolment figure of 449 as of 26<sup>th</sup> August was good but that there were waiting lists in some year groups.

JJ also informed the Board that a complete revision of the school's House system was in progress.

**Action: JJ**

### **5.1.2 Staffing**

JJ reported that country orientation for the new staff which took place a few days after their arrival went very well and that the process helped prepare the teachers for the new school year.

Regarding staff changes, JJ informed the Board that Erin MacDonald, Year 6 teacher had resigned and will finish at the end of Term 1. The process of finding a replacement is underway, enquiries have been put out to people and the vacancy will also be posted onto Search. Lauren Fraser has replaced Amy Purser as Year 3 teacher while Emine Dogan has replaced Katie Knight as Head of Mathematics.

**Action: JJ**

JJ further reported that teaching assistants' job description had been updated. Cleaning duties are no longer part of their job description. One assistant has been employed and the remaining vacancy is yet to be filled.

Action: JJ/WH

About Debbie Mayer, the teacher who is pregnant, JJ informed the Board that she had asked her to write to the Board about how long leave she wants to take. JJ explained that both she and Debbie will separately write to parents at least two weeks before leave.

**Action: JJ**

### **5.1.3 Maintenance**

The Board learnt that the work on the reading resource room had been completed during the holiday and is now housing all reading as well as other teacher resource materials.

The tailor has been relocated to the small room at the side of the stage in the Hall. JJ also informed the Board that all primary classrooms now have names relating to geographical features found in Malawi.

### **5.1.4 Procedures**

In terms of the Timing to the School Day, JJ reported that a decision had been made to go back to the previous timing for the end of day and retain the new earlier finish time for Friday. Teachers and parents were happy to go back to old times.

### **5.1.5 School Events and Scheduled Meetings**

JJ reported that the Parent Introductory Evening held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> August was well attended and that apart from the clear outline of the relationship between the PYP programme and the other IB programmes, parents were introduced to the curriculum in each year group as well as routines and procedures.

## **6. SECONDARY HEAD'S REPORT**

The Board noted and discussed the report by PH.

## **6.1 Staffing**

PH presented a list of new staff in the Secondary school and their positions as well as the changes in position for some of the old teachers since last academic year. John Bray is now the IB Diploma Coordinator, Andrew Tomlinson is Head of English, Sangamesh Rajeshwar Head of Arts, and Alec Wilson is now Head of Mathematics.

PH further informed the Board that Alan Shepherd had resigned and would not be returning. Steps had been taken to ensure that students continued to receive lessons and this had been communicated to parents on the first day of term.

**Action: PH**

## **6.2 External Examinations**

Regarding external examinations, PH explained that an analysis of the data comparing IB examination results of the past two years was still going on and that the findings would be known soon. NA wanted to know if there had been any surprises to which PH explained this will only be evident once the analysis is complete.

**Action: PH**

### **6.2.1 IGCSE**

PH informed the Board that an analysis of the IGCSE results for the years 2007 to 2011 were generally consistent although the recent Chemistry results had gone down because the Chemistry teacher never came back from holidays.

### **6.2.2 IB**

The Board learnt that last year's world IB results had taken a significant dip. It was not known how students around the world had performed this year as IB had not yet published the Diploma results for the world.

In terms of BMIS, PH reported that it was quite pleasing that the results were generally back up. Improvements had been particularly noted in the Extended Essay. JC wanted to know what the school was doing about Biology seeing that the results were lowest in this subject. PH explained that ways of encouraging students to put more effort in the subject would be looked at, including change of mindset as Biology tends to be seen as the easier Science.

**Action: PH/JB**

Regarding enrolment, PH informed the Board that adding more IB and IGCSE students would be taxing on the available resources such as classrooms and teachers. He suggested that emphasis be put on marketing the PYP and MYP instead.

**Action: JB/PH**

## **7. BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Board noted and discussed the report by WH.

### **7.1 Finance**

#### **7.1.1 Invoicing and Debtors**

WH reported that invoices for school and other fees amounting to MK389,330,642.00 were issued on the second day of term 1. Out of this figure, an amount of MK9,904,318 representing fees for 17 students had to be reversed as the school learnt very late that these students would not be returning to BMIS. Currently the school does not have a policy regarding imposition of a penalty on late withdrawal notices or even where no notice is given at all. The Board agreed that this issue be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting.

**Action: Fin. Committee**

WH also informed the Board that the school had approached Nedbank again on the possibility of billing in foreign currency those non-residents who are capable of paying in foreign currency. The school is yet to hear from Nedbank.

**Action: WH**

In terms of debtors for last academic year, WH informed the Board that the figure is now standing at K9,786,451.72 and except where alternative payment arrangement has been agreed with the school, the students have since been withdrawn. This will, however, not be allowed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Term. A lawyer had since been engaged to collect the debts on behalf of the school.

**Action: WH**

## **7.2 Human Resources**

WH provided a list of all the members of staff who had retired as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2011. WH explained that some of them were still around as the school while the school was in the process of finding suitable replacements. NB added that when replacing positions, the school will first of all establish whether it would be necessary to do so or to hire temporary workers instead.

**Action: WH/NB**

## **8. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **8.1 Maintenance and Security**

#### **8.1.1 School Maintenance**

NB proposed that the furniture expenditure should come out of the capital development budget and be re-allocated as such. VB and EH, representing the Finance Committee, were in agreement.

Regarding the building of the new storage room, the Board learnt that work had not yet commenced because there was an outstanding issue regarding taking out a bond. WH explained the background to the bond issue including the fact that the contractor had found the procedure to be too involving for a project that he felt was small. However, VB was of the opinion that the project was not small therefore there was need for a bond to be taken. The Board agreed that where there is an advance payment there should always be a bond.

**Action: NB/WH/Fin. Committee**

#### **8.1.2 Security provision**

NB reported that following numerous meetings with the British High Commission, US Embassy and European Union personnel, a radio link has now been established with the European Union and British High Commission, while a link with the US Embassy is in process. NB further explained that in extreme situations, the school may be requested by the British High Commission to be used as a staging point.

**Action: NB**

Regarding the current school security provision, NB suggested that considering the numerous concerns regarding G4S services provided to the school it was better to go for USI although this was going to attract about \$7,000 budget over-run at the end of the year. NB therefore asked the Board to make a decision on whether the school would go with USI or remain with G4S given that Pro Intelligent was too expensive. NB further suggested that amalgamating all housing security services under USI may attract a discount. It was agreed to cancel the G4S contract, give them a month's notice from 1<sup>st</sup> September and switch to USI.

**Action: NB/WH/Fin. Committee**

NB informed the Board that measures (including the introduction of ID badges for registered activities and facilities rentals) are being taken to ensure gate security is improved.

**Action: NB**

CA assured the meeting that the US Embassy is prepared to help in terms of physical security, such as walls etc.

**Action: NB**

## **8.2 Administration**

### **8.2.1 Administrative Structure**

NB reported that several meetings with the administrative team where the school's Mission and Vision were shared had taken place. Minor restructuring and reaffirming of the administrative function included making Chikondi Honde have greater oversight of the administrative processes in the school.

### **8.2.2 Commercial online banking**

The meeting learnt that a demonstration for the proposed Standard Bank online banking solution for BMIS had been scheduled for Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> September at 9am at BMIS.

**Action: NB/WH**

### **8.2.3 Pensions Act**

NB reported that the New Pensions Act would not have any budgetary implications for BMIS as this had already been budgeted for. NB further explained that all local staff would now be engaged on permanent terms. The staff will be issued with new contracts reflecting provisions of the New Pensions Act.

DP wanted to know if teachers were now required to make contributions towards pension. WH explained that they are exempt and that what they are getting is gratuity. VB explained that expatriates may not actually be exempt as it was not known if this had been gazette yet and asked WH to circulate information on Pensions Act the following day via email.

**Action: WH/VB/Fin. Committee**

## **8.3 Student Related Issues**

### **8.3.1 Year 12/13 Dress Code**

JC noted that there was need for wide consultations before making the final decision on Year 12/13 dress code as some parents had raised their concerns. NB acknowledged the concerns raised by parents and has discussed the issue with JB and PH.

**Action: NB/PH/JJ**

## **8.4 Staffing and HR Issues**

### **8.4.1 Secondary Music**

NB informed the Board that Alan Shepherd the Secondary Music Teacher did not return after holiday. Arrangements for temporary cover had already been made and a replacement was actively being sought.

**Action: NB/PH**

### **8.4.2 HRM**

NB reported that all HR issues will now be overseen by Chikondi Honde. NB further reported that most of the new staff arrived on time and are now settled.

## **8.5 Finance and Budgets**

### **8.5.1 Late Notification of Withdrawal**

NB proposed that because some parents were withdrawing their children without giving notice, in order to properly manage the cash flow there was need to look at a refundable deposit. NA suggested that the discussion starts at Finance Committee level. It was agreed that this should be reserved for future discussion.

**Action: NB/Fin. Committee**

### **8.5.2 Kwacha Devaluation**

NB informed the Board that following the announcement of the devaluation of the Kwacha prior to the start of term 1, the revised rate of 165/\$ was used for fee calculations. NB

explained that should there be a further devaluation this rate will be adjusted accordingly for term 2 and 3.

**Action: NB/WH**

**8.5.3 Locally Employed Staff**

NB reported that salaries for locally employed staff will be adjusted at the end of August but will not only be effective end of September. The adjustment will take into consideration consequent inflation and indicative CPI. This is because it is anticipated that at that time these indicators would have stabilized.

**Action: NB/WH**

**8.5.5 US Government Funding**

The Board was informed that the US Embassy will be making an additional \$10,000 grant available to BMIS. NB thanked CA from the US Embassy for facilitating this.

**8.5.6 Land Deeds**

NB suggested that the issue of land ownership by BMIS be revived as the CIS accreditation visits had picked up on it. He highlighted the need to approach the Minister of Lands and emphasize the value of the school in the local community.

**Action: NB**

**9. FINANCE REPORT**

NB informed the Board that he had asked the Accountant to provide a report of cost centres for purposes of identifying areas for cutting costs. He noted that 80% of the costs are staff related. This was not out of proportion but certainly on the upper end. NB asked the Board to look at its strategy in terms of recruitment of students. The Board agreed that the finance committee presents a clear picture for discussion at the next meeting.

**Action: NB/Fin. Committee**

**10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 20.47 pm.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Open Session of the Board meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

Minutes approved and signed by the Chair:.....

Date: .....



**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**  
**MINUTES OF THE BMIS EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON THE**  
**30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2011 AT 6.30 PM IN THE LIBRARY**

**PRESENT**

N. Airey	NA	Chair
V. Beza	VB	Board Member
J. Carstens	JC	Board Member
D. Pinto	DP	Board Member
E. Hausi	EH	Board Member
M. Burdett	MB	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
Craig Anderson	CA	US Embassy
Chris		US Embassy

**APOLOGIES**

A. Dedekind	AD	Board Member
S. Elliott	SE	MYP Coordinator

**ABSENT**

H. Banda	HB	Board Member
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The meeting was called to order at 20.52 pm by Chair, NA.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The Board approved the Agenda by unanimous consent.

**2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES**

The minutes of the Executive Session of the BMIS Board Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2011 were agreed as accurate.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

**3.1 Debtors**

NB reported that three students had been excluded for non-payment of school fees and about 15 parents had made payment arrangements. WH was asked to circulate the debtors list to members.

**Action: NB, WH**

**3.2 TEP (Chris Mercer)**

NB reported that Chris Mercer's temporary employment permit had been rejected by the Department of Immigration. DP offered to take up the matter.

**Action: DP/NB**

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**4.1 Staffing and HR Issues**

**4.1.1 Debbie Mayer**

The Board learnt that Debbie Mayer, the new Year 3 teacher will be taking maternity leave. However, issues regarding maternity leave were not clearly spelt out in her contract. The meeting agreed that the Admin and Policy Committee should take up this issue.

**Action: A & P Committee/NB**

**4.1.2 Alan Shepherd**

A replacement for the Secondary Music teacher is actively being sought. The school has since stopped paying Alan Shepherd and this was duly communicated to him.

**Action: NB/PH**

**4.2 Finance and Budget**

**4.2.1 Request for change of status from NTP to TP**

NB circulated the letter from Mr. and Mrs Smith’s in which they were requesting for a change of status from Non-tax payer to Tax Payer. NA explained that the policy was very clear that if the parent responsible for paying school fees is a non-tax payer then the family should be regarded as non-tax payer. NB was asked to relay the message to the Smiths.

**Action: NB**

DP wanted to know if there was any policy on discounts in the event that a whole year’s fees are paid, or for those who have more children in the school. NB explained that at the moment there was no such policy. The meeting agreed that this be discussed at the Finance Committee level.

**Action: Fin. Committee/NB**

**5. ANY OTHER BUSINES**

**5.1 EID**

NB informed the Board that several people including Reverend Billy Gama the Presidential Advisor on Religious Affairs; and Mr. Ligomeka from the Ministry of Education had called him asking him to keep the school closed for the Eid holiday the following day. NA explained that the school had obtained contact details of a committee that could be contacted for information in future. The Board agreed that the school should be open for business the following day.

**5.2 Board Committees**

JC wanted to understand the subcommittee’s business. NA listed the various subcommittees and offered to send the details to JC by email. She suggested that teachers be co-opted in the various subcommittees. NA said she would soon send an email to members asking them to indicate what committee they would like to join. All core business to be done at committee level.

**Action: NA**

**5.3 Parking Outside the School Gate**

NA informed the meeting that she had noted with concern that parents were still parking and dropping off kids outside the gate thereby posing danger to the children and other motorists. NB promised to put measures in place to ensure this is stopped as soon as possible.

**Action: NB**

**6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

There being no other business, the Executive Session closed at 21.25 pm. Next Executive Session of the Board Meeting will be held on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2011.

Minutes approved and signed by the Chair:.....

Date: .....