

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF THE BMIS BOARD MEETING HELD IN THE LIBRARY ON 31ST JANUARY 2012

PRESENT

N. Airey	NA	Chair
J. Carstens	JC	Board Member
D. Pinto	DP	Board Member
J. Brown	JB	Board Member
E. Hausi	EH	Board Member
K. Pauw	KP	Board Member
S. Donker	SD	Board Member
V. Beza	VB	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
P. Harrison	PH	Head of Secondary
J. Johnson	JJ	Head of Secondary
H. Schievink	HS	PTA Representative
S. Montgomery	SM	Secondary Representative
J. Kotze	JK	Primary Representative

ABSENT

H. Banda	HB	Board Member
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The meeting was called to order at 18.39 pm by the Chair, NA.

1. AGENDA

The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent. It was also agreed that CIS should be appearing on all future agendas for PH to give an update.

NA explained that the Open Session would be shorter in order to give more time for the Closed Session to finish off the Board Retreat business.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board meeting held on 29th November, 2011 were approved as a true and correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Pool Attendant/Life Guard

NB said it had been problematic to find someone to fill this position.

3.2 Storage Building

NA said she had been to see the storage building that morning and it was looking great. Regarding the general maintenance around the school, she said it was evident that a lot of work had been carried out including painting and tidying up of the gardens. NA thanked NB on behalf of the Board for all the work done.

3.3 Maintenance Assistant

NB said that training of staff on the Maintenance Assistant was now fully implemented and they were now beginning to use this transparent system which also allows him to see what has been posted there. He said this exercise had been at no cost to the school.

3.4 Tuck-shop

NB said he had submitted and gone ahead with draft plans for the tuck-shop area. He added that architects had come up with a more detailed design which would be reviewed by SD and DP. He said so far everything was on track for next academic year. Action: **NB/SD/DP**

3.5 Year 6 Classroom

NB asked for the Board's approval to put a second floor to the new Year 6 classroom to house the administration office. He said he would look at the plans and check if the budget would allow it. **Action: NB**

3.6 Staff Accommodation

The Board agreed that this project should be deferred until the tuck-shop and year 6 classroom are built.

3.7 Uniform

NB reported that he had looked at options of bringing in container loads of uniforms. He explained that instead of collar shirts it was better for the school to go for simple but good quality garments so that it is easy to replenish stocks locally when sizes have run out. Information will be put in Tikambe in order to solicit feedback from the wider BMIS community. **Action: NB**

3.8 Next Year's Calendar

The Board learnt that there had been a small mix-up on the next year's calendar dates as such it needed to be revised. The revised calendar would be published again. **Action: NB**

3.9 Moyo's Case

NA enquired about the outcome of the former Librarian's case. WH explained that it had been postponed twice and was yet to be finalized.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

4.1 Maintenance and Security

NB reported that the new storage facility had been completed and that storage shelves would be fitted to the external structure. NB also reported that several minor projects had been completed around the school to improve gardens and enhance the appearance of the surroundings.

4.2 Staffing and HR Issues

NB presented the changes to the staffing occurring in the 2012-2013 academic year. He explained that it was currently quite tough to sell Malawi. He said despite this, he had interviewed and secured some good candidates.

4.3 Events and Activities

The Board learnt that the school had been visited by the US Ambassador, Jeanine Jackson, who was accompanied by the Embassy's Information Management Officer. They toured the school and discussed ways in which channels of communication would be kept open. **Action: NB**

Two other visitors who came to the school were Cyclist Peter Gostelow, and Guest Speaker Mark Levitt. Mr. Gostelow spoke to the children during assemblies as part of a fundraising activity, while Mr. Levitt addressed staff, parents and students during a series of workshops focused around "third culture kids" and bullying/relationships.

NB explained that one of the aspects the school has embarked on now is to develop a strategic profile for the school. He said during the process, the school will be tapping into people's ideas

regarding creating better ways of doing things. NB noted that the school was not necessarily doing a lot of public relations. **Action: NB**

4.4 Finance and Administration

NB reported that invoices had been issued at the start of term despite devaluation fears. He explained that the school has a policy that dictates that invoices be issued at the current exchange rate.

Regarding the school's MIS, Admin Plus from Rediker, NB reported that the annual fee had not been paid. He explained that the software had been problematic as a result it had been put on hold. The school was currently trying a new system offered by ScholarPack and that feedback from PH and JJ was that this software was far more intuitive and user friendly. He said once all the features have been configured, a demonstration could be carried out at the next Board Meeting. **Action: NB**

5.0 PRIMARY HEAD'S REPORT

JJ reported that the number on roll as of 31st January was 460.

5.1 Staffing

JJ reported that offers had been sent out to the candidates interviewed at the Search Recruitment Fair and confirmations were expected before Wednesday 1st February. She said she was still contacting people on the Search database. She further said the quality of candidates was generally good. According to JJ, applications have continued to come in due to the advertisement placed in the TES. **Action: JJ**

Regarding the ISA results, JJ reported that these were now being reviewed by Senior Teachers and Senior Management. She said the results would be available to class teachers, parents and the Board. **Action: JJ**

5.2 School Events and Scheduled Meetings

5.2.1 Reports

JJ said school reports were now nearing completion and would be sent out to parents on the 30th January. **Action: JJ**

5.2.2 Parent/Teacher Conferences

JJ reported that the Parent/Teacher conferences had been scheduled for Wednesday 1st February, 2010 and parents were asked to book appointments through the primary office. JJ thanked all teachers for the work done on report covers.

5.2.3 Visiting Cyclist

JJ reported that a UK cyclist Peter Gostelow had visited the school the previous Wednesday to publicise his campaign to raise funds for the Against Malaria Foundation. JJ explained that over MK150,000 had been collected. Mr. Gostelow distributed some mosquito nets. JJ was thankful to the Primary Student Council as well as all staff who helped coordinate the fundraising activity

5.2.4 Visiting Speaker/Workshop Leader

JJ also reported of a Visiting Speaker/Workshop Leader Mark Levitt who came to BMIS the previous week and held workshops and discussions with staff, students and parents. Mr. Levitt talked about third culture stories, bullying and cultural diversity. She thanked Veronika Mahari for ensuring that the event was successful.

5.2.5 PYP Parent Workshops

Regarding the PYP Parent Workshops, JJ reported that Christelle Thompson the PYP Coordinator was planning a series of mini workshops for parents to take place on 7th March 2012. She said teachers had volunteered to organize and present a series of workshops for parents about the PYP programme. **Action: JJ**

6.0 SECONDARY HEAD'S REPORT

PH reported that the number on roll as of 31st January was 265.

6.1 Middle Years Programme

PH reported that he had received more detailed feedback regarding BMIS application for candidacy approved in November. He explained that IBO had appointed Ms Kathleen Khayatt Farajallah as a consultant to support BMIS through the candidacy phase as the school works towards authorization next year. PH said Ms Farajallah will be working hand in hand with the MYP Coordinator, Sally Elliott and that the school will receive up to 20 hours of consultation per year, as well as a two day consultative visit whose date is yet to be agreed.

PH said IB was doing a big shake up of how the MYP works and that lots of new things had come up in the two days prior to the Board Meeting. He said that together with the MYP Coordinator, he would meet with NB to bring their action plans into place. PH noted that nothing had been lost but that they just needed to get their plans into line.

Action: PH/NB

Regarding Professional Development plans for new and returning teachers, PH reported that these were being updated in order to fulfill the PD requirements of MYP authorization.

Action: PH

6.2 ISA Testing

The Board learnt that Acer had released the test results during the December holiday for the testing carried out in October. Analysis of the results in the Secondary had already started and he would liaise with the Primary about a date when individual results will be sent to parents. He said an overview of the results would be provided at the next Board Meeting. **Action: PH**

Regarding the setting up of the CIS and NISC survey, PH reported that he would be meeting all teachers that are chairing committees for a planning committee meeting. He added that details will be out to the relevant groups in two weeks' time. **Action: PH**

6.3 Reports and Parent Conferences

PH reported that mid-year reports would be sent home on Monday January 30th. He said reports had been re-designed to reflect recent changes in the Secondary programmes. He added that the new reports would provide a greater level of information about a student's progress to-date and help provide individual targets for the future. Individual reports would be out on 10th February. **Action: PH**

PH said that the Parent-Teacher conferences were being organized for Wednesday February 1, through an appointment system. He explained that a whole day had been set aside for the appointments between teachers and parents and that the school would be closed for normal business. Students had been asked to coordinate their own appointments. PH said in about a month's time, the school will be tracking reports on individual students to see how they were doing from last year. NB commended PH for getting all this done. **Action: PH**

6.4 Personnel

PH reported that Mr. Lee Morrison had resigned his position as a teacher at BMIS and had since returned to the UK. PH said before leaving, Mr. Morrison completed all his reports and outstanding duties. Mr. Ben Mayer had since taken over Mr. Morrison's form for the rest of the academic year. Parents were duly notified of this arrangement.

PH reported that two vacancies, one in the English Department and the other in Humanities, had been filled through the Search Associates recruitment fair in London.

6.5 IGCSE & IB Option Evenings

PH reported that the IGCSE and IB option evenings targeted at the Year 9 and 11 had been scheduled for Wednesdays 15th and 22nd February respectively. He explained that all the necessary materials such as programme handbooks would be provided on the night. PH said the Secondary was aiming to offer two additional subjects next year, Combined Science in Year 10 and Environmental Systems and Societies in Year 12. **Action: PH**

6.6. Counsellor News

PH reported that many of the BMIS students attended the University Fair on 21 January and that Ms Fashoyin, the College Counsellor, was organizing a “University and Post-Secondary Planning meeting aimed at Year 12 students and their parents. He explained that some returns from college applications had already started coming in. He thanked the Board for hiring a College Counsellor as she is able to focus on individual needs.

6.7 2012-13 Timetable

PH reported that after considering the proposal from the Primary school to revert to a five-day cycle next academic year, it was felt that this was going to work although there were still a few things that needed to be looked at. PH said he would provide more information at the next Board Meeting. **Action: PH**

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

7.1 Finance

7.1.1 2010/11 Audit

WH reported that auditing of the 2010/2011 school’s financial records had been completed. Auditors, Ernst & Young were yet to produce the draft. He said the clearance meeting had already taken place that morning.

7.1.2 Fringe Benefit Tax

WH reported that having paid the K17,524,403.58, the issue was closed and no penalty was imposed.

7.1.3 Taxation of Income for Schools Formerly Under DSB

Regarding the taxation of income for schools formerly under DSB, WH reported that the school was yet to get a response from MRA. **Action: WH**

7.1.4 Investment on Short-term Excess Funds

WH reported that replenishment of the 7 day call account with Nedbank needed to be given priority as funds had been withdrawn from this account to finance some of the school’s operations. **Action: NB/WH**

7.1.5 Invoicing and Debtors

WH reported that some cases that were identified at the beginning of the school year as capable of paying in hard currency had been contacted again and the response was positive. He said this had helped to boost the FCDA balances.

The Board learnt that certain cases had resurfaced because their cheques had been referred to drawer. He said as of the previous Thursday, the debtors’ figure was standing at K201,583,230.50. Current figures were yet to be captured. **Action: WH**

Regarding the cases that were handed over to the Legal Counsel, WH reported that there had been no changes since December because of the strike at the Judiciary.

7.1.6 Payroll Loan Facility

WH reported that a draft proposal had been circulated to the members of the finance Committee. He said Standard Bank had indicated that they were prepared to inherit OIBM loans owed by BMIS employees which as of January 2012 were standing at K5,508,257.03.

7.1.7 Forex and Gratuities

The Board learnt that all gratuities relating to teachers who have left the school at the end of 2010/2011 academic year had been paid.

7.2 Human Resources

7.2.1 Lifeguard

WH reported that because the person who had been offered the job of Lifeguard did not turn up, the position was re-advertised. He said fresh applications had been received and handed over to Dave Sargent. **Action: WH**

7.2.2 Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman

WH reported that the position of Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman which had been created after it had been observed that Amos Banda was being overloaded with tasks was advertised together with the position of Lifeguard. He said applications had been received and shortlisted and that interviews had been scheduled for the end of the week. **Action WH**

7.2.3 Former Assistant Librarian's Case

The Board learnt that final determination of the case had not yet been presented to the school by the IRC following two hearing postponements. A request to move the case to Lilongwe as it had become costly travelling to Mzimba has not yet been responded to by the IRC.

7.3 Security

WH reported that no major security incidents had been reported in the area. He said the US Embassy were yet to respond to some budgetary support proposals on a CCTV system and access barriers submitted by the school. He explained that there also had not been any feedback on the issue of the radio communication system between the Director's office and the various buildings within the school. **Action: NB/WH/JB**

7.4 Maintenance and Teacher Housing

7.4.1 New Storage Room

The Board learnt that the outer structure of the new storage area had been completed and that the contractor was now working on the flooring and installation of electrical fittings. He explained that the internal demarcations would be done by the school. It was expected that the building will be ready for use by the 16th of February 2012.

7.4.2 Fuel Shortage

WH reported that MERA had asked the school to identify the storage place and inform them so that they can come to inspect it. However, when approached again, MERA advised the school to seek guidance from fuel retailing companies for the required specifications and then go ahead to build after which they would then come for the inspection.

NA asked EH to find out about the fuel storage issue from MERA.

Action: EH/WH

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 19.38 pm.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next open session of the Board of Governors will be held on Tuesday 28 February, 2012 at 18.30 pm.

Signed:.....

Date:.....