

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF THE BMIS BOARD MEETING HELD IN THE LIBRARY ON 28TH FEBRUARY 2012

PRESENT

N. Airey	NA	Chair
J. Carstens	JC	Board Member
E. Hausi	EH	Board Member
V. Beza	VB	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
P. Harrison	PH	Head of Secondary
J. Johnson	JJ	Head of Secondary
S. O'loughlin	SM	Secondary Representative
B. Mutasa	BM	Primary Representative
W. Horea	WH	Business Manager

APOLOGIES

D. Pinto	DP	Board Member
K. Pauw	KP	Board Member
S. Donker	SD	Board Member

ABSENT

H. Banda	HB	Board Member
J. Brown	JB	Board Member
H. Schievink	HS	PTA Representative

The meeting was called to order at 18.43 pm by the Chair, NA.

1. AGENDA

The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent with the following additional items:

- Finance report.
- Policy Board report

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board meeting held on 31st January, 2012 were approved as a true and correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Pool Attendant

NA said as part of the team which organized the Malawi Aquatic Union (MAU) national swimming competition at BMIS the previous weekend, she would like to thank Mosten and Jimmy for doing a great job. She said the pool was looking very good and generally everything else was good.

3.2 Storage Building

NB reported that the storage building was now ready, the contractor handed over the keys to the school earlier that afternoon. NA enquired if there were security bars on the windows. NB explained that burglar bars would be fitted by the school since they were not part of the contract.

3.3 School Uniform

NB gave an update on the school uniform. He said trousers and skirts will be made locally while the polo shirts will be imported. He said he had put this in next year's budget. The

expectation is that it will later be self-generated. NB thanked NA for doing great background work with parents. Information coming in indicates that polo shirts rather than tailored shirts are being favoured.

3.4 New School MIS system from Rediker

NB reported that the system was in and that most of the timetable was running. He said he would demonstrate it at the next Board meeting. **Action:**

NB

3.5 Parent/Teacher Conferences

NA noted that the parent/teacher conferences worked really well and that as a parent she found it more valuable than the previous system. She thanked all the teachers for the time spent. She said she had received good feedback. She asked SO to pass on the Board's appreciation to the teachers. SO said the teachers also felt the same.

3.6 IGCSE & IB Option Evenings

PH said the IGCSE and IB Option Evenings had already taken place. NB thanked PH for successfully organizing these evenings.

3.7 Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman

NA wanted to know if a suitable candidate had been identified for the position of Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman. WH said the school had found someone for the position and it was expected that he would commence duties on 1st of March.

3.8 Fuel Shortage

WH said Puma Malawi advised the school to buy a storage drum worth about K900,000 and offered to give the school details of the supplier.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

4.1 Maintenance and Security

4.1.1 Tuck shop plans

NB reported that he had not yet received the redrafted tuck shop plans. He sought authorization from the Board for the plans to be taken to tender as it was now a case of moving it forward. The Board approved.

Action: NB

4.1.2 Year 6 Building

NB reported that the school was in the process looking at architects who can come up with designs and draft outline plans for the new Year 6 building. He noted that the building will automatically create more space for the library area. He said in a few years' time the school would be looking at an annex to the library to create a resource area. **Action:**

NB

4.1.3 Network

NB noted that the on-going network issues were causing a lot of frustration to staff. He said DP had offered to come in and help by working with Chikondi Lifa, the IT Administrator to try and get rid of the problems.

Action: NB/DP

NB explained that the school had embarked on an IT development for the children with the aim of moving away from desk tops to mobile devices such as iPad. He explained that in order to do that, the school needed to have a robust network system.

4.2 Staffing and HR Issues

4.2.1 Recruitment

NB reported that the process of recruitment was proving difficult owing to the current situation in Malawi. He said even existing teachers were frustrated with the situation in Malawi.

4.2.2 Disciplinary Action

NB reported that a teaching assistant had been suspended to pave way for an investigation into suspected theft of materials found in the store cupboard taken from the art room. He said she would not be coming back.

4.2.3 Tuck-shop Manager

The Board heard that a couple of people had approached NB about whether the school still wanted to have the tuck shop as an outsource. He said that an advertisement for the position of Tuck-shop Manager had been placed in Tikambe and would also be advertised locally.

Action:

NB

4.3 Events and Activities

4.3.1 Visitor (Security)

NB reported that British security personnel came to the school earlier that day. He explained that it was very useful for them to see the site and talk to us. They were looking to make the school an evacuation centre. He said the visit was very routine and it provided a good opportunity to speak to the British security team directly. NB noted that the team did not have information that the school did not already have.

5. CIS ACCREDITATION

PH presented the CIS Accreditation report. He informed the Board that the process of preparing for the CIS Accreditation was in full-swing. Both parents and staff had been sent requests to participate in a general survey. He explained that Standard C of the Survey process directly affects Board members and took them through what they needed to do in order to take part. He said Board members might be requested to volunteer to participate in other working parties which will be meeting in the course of the next few months.

Among other things PH explained the benefits of accreditation, the accreditation timeline, the self-study report sequence as well as guidelines for committee representation.

6. PRIMARY SCHOOL REPORT

6.1 Number on Roll

JJ reported that primary number on roll was currently at 460.

6.2 Staffing

The Board was informed that Primary Music, Primary Art, Reception and Year 4 class teacher positions had been filled. JJ said offers had gone out for a Year 5 class teacher and a part-time Mathematics teacher, and was optimistic that they would be accepted. JJ also said that Primary was still missing two Year 6 teachers. Year 3 class, and PE teacher positions were under offer. Lauren, the current Year 3 teacher, would be moving to Year 5.

Action: JJ

6.3 ISA Results

JJ reported that she had spoken to teachers that morning and that they would be able to do a report together with PH for next Board meeting. She said individual pupil results had been sent to parents early February and some parents had made appointments to discuss the results with class teachers.

She explained that class teachers were going through the ISA results and year groups were concentrating on areas of weakness. The area of Mathematical Literacy seemed to be the area requiring most work.

Action: JJ

6.4 PYP Parent Workshops

The Board learnt that teachers had come together to organize a series of workshops which would hopefully explain a lot about Teaching and Learning in the Primary School. JJ said there were things that needed to be addressed and had already started to do this through Tikambe.

Action:

JJ

6.5 Reception Class Parent Introductory Evening

It was reported that the Information Evening for new Reception class parents scheduled to take place on 22nd March had been quite well planned. She said flyers had already gone out to nursery schools in Lilongwe. She added that she had suggested that they add “how they assess the children before they come in”. JC noted that the flyers were a good opportunity for the school to market itself and it was therefore important that messages sent out to parents were consistent.

Action: JJ

6.6 Reports

Reports were sent to parents on the 30th January. JJ said parents were able to discuss the reports at the parent conferences on the 1st February. Parents liked the new format and that both teachers and parents had given positive feedback. A handful did not turn up.

7. SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT

7.1 Number on Roll

PH reported that the number on roll was 267.

7.2 ISA Testing

PH reported that the analysis of the ISA test results received in December was almost complete. He said the final interactive report from ACER had just been received and a report on the same would be presented to the Board at the next meeting. PH said a lot had been done since the previous Board meeting. He would work together with JJ and report. He explained that they try to focus on any immediate concerns. The learning of a few students had been modified but there was still a few students whom they would work on and talk to parents.

Action: PH

7.3 Personnel

PH reported that the feedback from IB was that there was need to review Mrs. Sally Elliott’s teaching load as being both MYP Coordinator and Senior Teacher for Years 7-9 was too high to allow her perform her other responsibilities effectively. PH said it had been decided that this change be made immediately rather than wait until the new academic year. Mrs Schooley, who already teaches 7KBE in Humanities, will also be teaching 8TDR in Mathematics until the next academic year. A letter explaining these changes was sent out to parents on Monday 27th February.

7.4 IGCSE & IB Diploma Evenings

PH reported that the turnout for both the IGCSE and IB Diploma evenings was good. He said parents and students had the opportunity to meet with teachers, programme coordinators and the Head to discuss individual concerns and strategies for the future. Emphasis was on career planning and Ms Fashoyin was on hand to answer career related questions. He explained that option booklets and application forms were given out at both meetings but can also be downloaded from the internet.

7.5 2012-13 Timetable

PH presented the proposal for a new 5-day learning cycle. He said they had gone as far as suggesting times for the day. He explained that start and ending times throughout the week had been synchronized with the Primary school although lesson and break times will vary a little between Primary and Secondary. He said the day does go a little bit longer because there was need to restructure the current two shorter breaks.

JC enquired if the school tried to find out what the students think about the new cycle. PH said students had not been consulted. NB said part of the change came from the fact that the children did not have time to play. PH said he would go to the Student Council to explain and get their views. He sought the Board's approval to publicise in Tikambe. The Board approved that students be consulted and that it be published in Tikambe.

Action: PH

7.6 Model United Nations (MUN)

PH reported that a BMIS delegation comprising fourteen Year 11,12, and 13 students led by Mr. Jim Wild and Ms Samantha Montgomery, flew to Nairobi on 12th February to participate in the 30th annual East African Model United Nations conference at the UN offices. A total of ten different nations participated. The students excelled all expectations in Economic, Political, Ecological and Human Rights Committees as well as in a special debating committee for world issues and they enjoyed the trip. Details about the trip will be put in Tikambe. PH was hopeful that the MUN experience will be offered to other students next year.

Action: PH

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

8.1 Finance

8.1.1 2010/11 Audit

WH reported that a draft report was presented to Management on 20th February and discussed by the Finance Committee at its meeting held on 21 March 2012. He presented all the areas that had been highlighted by the auditors as being areas the school needed to do something about.

Action:

Finance Committee

8.1.2 Taxation of Income for Schools formerly under DSB

WH reported that there was still no response from MRA.

8.1.3 Investment of Excess Funds

The Board learnt that K50,000,000 had been re-deposited into the 7 day call account at Nedbank and a further K30,000,000 will be deposited at the beginning of March 2012. This will leave a balance of K58,905,544. The Board agreed the need to review the relationship with Nedbank as well check what other banks are offering and put information together in order to get the best interest rate.

Action: WH

8.1.4 Invoicing and Debtors

WH reported that as of 27th February 2012, the debtors figure was at K40,000,000 representing 12.4% of the total. WH said he expected the figure to go down the following day being the deadline. NB added there was need to advise people by Thursday that week and if not paid on Friday, the concerned students should be excluded on Monday. The Board learnt that there had been no movement on the cases that had been referred to the Legal Counsel. During the Finance Committee meeting held on 21st February 2012, it was agreed that cases from 3 – 5 years ago that had been written off but whose debtors were known to be around should be presented to the Legal Counsel for possible recovery.

Action: WH/NB

8.1.5 Payroll Loan Facility

WH reported that at its meeting held on 21st February 2012, Finance Committee discussed the draft proposal from Standard Bank and resolved that it would not negatively impact BMIS. JC noted that Standard Bank was making a lot of money giving out loans and there was need therefore for the school to be careful. He said it was important that staff understand the consequences and that they know what they are getting into.

8.1.6 Forex Payments

WH reported that the school was facing problems remitting large amounts of funds to foreign accounts and that this was affecting payments for school supplies and medical

insurance cover. He said Nedbank promised to effect the payments without RBM authorization but they had not done it yet. The Board agreed that the school should avoid big amounts and try submitting a whole bunch of invoices of small amounts for approval.

Action: WH

8.2 Human Resources

8.2.1 Staff Appraisals

Forms had already been distributed to the concerned employees and WH and the Maintenance Manager would carry out appraisals from 2.30pm each day for the next couple of weeks.

Action:

WH

8.2.2 Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman

WH reported that Allan Nkupira, the candidate to fill this position would come in the following day to familiarize with the workings of BMIS.

8.3 Security

The Board learnt that no major incidents in breach of BMIS's security had been reported during the past month although Safelock Security had circulated a newsletter in which they highlighted an increase in attempted car-jackings within areas 2,3, and 9.

Fresh quotations had been submitted to the US Embassy as requested for the cost of installing CCTV cameras and upgrading the school's radio communication system.

Action: WH/EH/VB

8.4 Maintenance

8.4.1 New Storage Room

WH reported that the building was completed and handed over to BMIS on the day of the Board meeting. JC advised to ensure a double due diligence is done and that invoices are shared with EH and VB.

8.4.2 Fuel Storage

WH reported that Puma Energy Malawi advised that the school procures a 4,500 ltr storage tank costing about K900,000 and that the company would refer the school to their accredited contractors for installation. Puma would provide a pump at no cost but the school would have to meet the construction costs. WH said alternatively the school could enter into an arrangement with Puma to be collecting fuel for immediate use and not storage. The Board agreed the school should probably be looking at storing diesel as it can be stored above ground unlike petrol, however, WH should get as much advice as possible from DP. **Action: WH/DP**

9. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

9.1 Financial Statements

VB reported that Finance Committee had approved the financial statements with amendments and recommended them to the Board for signing. He said this would however have to be postponed because there was no quorum.

10. POLICY BOARD REPORT

10.1 Policy Development Model

The Board learnt that JC would work with NB on the systematic development of various priority policies and present some proposals for consideration at the next Board meeting.

Action:

JC/NB

10.2 BMIS Invoicing Regime

JC reported that the Board's decision to change the invoicing regime had not been implemented due to certain technical issues. He said it was agreed at the Policy Committee meeting that implementation will take place at the beginning of the next academic year. NB

said the timing of producing more regular invoicing and whether there was need to visit the monthly invoicing would be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. VB informed the Board that Deloitte was running a survey on inflation and he would share information with NB.

10.3 Policy Priorities

The following policies are to be finalized are as follows:

i. Language Policy

Working draft of the policy developed and policy to be submitted to the IBO early May, 2012.

ii. Academic Honest Policy

Only minor changes to current policy required.

iii. Assessment Policy

Drafts in place for PYP, MYP and DP and a working party formed to look into IGCSE in order to have a single whole school policy ready by May 2012.

iv. Special Education Needs Policy

Draft in place, ready for final consultations.

Action: Policy

Committee

10.4 Local Hire Staff Contracts

JC reported that the Policy Committee discussed the need to complete revision of the employment contracts and that this would be done in consultation with the Board. Staff representatives would be involved in this process.

Action: Policy

Committee

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1 Annual General Meeting

NB suggested that there was need to start thinking about the date for the Annual General Meeting. NA said only ten people attended the last AGM and proposed that the event be combined with something for the kids in order to encourage parents to attend. The Board agreed that the AGM should take place on the 20th April 2012 at 6.30 pm.

Action:

NB

11.2 Flags

NB proposed that since the school has lots of walls, each section could be painted with a particular flag as a means of getting sponsorship.

Action:

NB

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The meeting closed at 20.57 pm. The next open session of the Board of Governors will be held on 27th March, 2012 at 18.30pm.

Signed:.....

Date:.....