



Bishop Mackenzie
International Schools

BMIS Board Meeting

28th February 2012 in the Library at 6.30pm

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of 31st January 2012
3. Matters Arising from Minutes of 31st January 2012
4. Director's Report
5. CIS Accreditation
6. Head of Primary's report
7. Head of Secondary's report
8. Business Manager's report
9. Finance report 21st February
10. Policy Committee report 2nd February

Director's Report

28th February 2012

Maintenance and Security

- 1.1. **Storage building** – see **Administrative report**
- 1.2. **Tuck Shop plans:** The redrafted plans have been expected from the architects (still waiting at the time of writing!)
- 1.3. **Year 6 building:** As part of the strategic economic plans of the school, it has been proposed that we build a new Y6 classroom which not only put the Y6 classes closer together, but in turn will allow for the library to be extended – essential for getting closer to our vision of providing facilities worthy of an IB World School. The process of contacting architects and drafting outline plans has commenced and more information will be forthcoming.
- 1.4. **Network:** On-going network issues cause a constant frustration to staff and admin alike. Network failure causes technical problems, inefficiency and a loss of confidence in the systems. A big “Thank You” to David Pinto who has offered to assist with an analysis of the infrastructure.

2. Staffing and HR issues

- 2.1. **Recruitment:** Second round of recruitment completed. 24 interviews leading to 8 offers; responses are still pending!
- 2.2. **Disciplinary action:** One of the teaching assistants was suspended pending an enquiry related to the suspected attempted theft of school resources.
- 2.3. **Tuck-shop manager:** An advertisement for the position of Tuck-shop manager was placed in Tikambe and will be advertised locally.

3. Events and activities

- 3.1. **Visitor:** Security personnel from the British High Commission have scheduled a visit to the school on Tuesday 28th February. Feedback may be available for the Board meeting.

CIS Accreditation

The process of preparing for the CIS Accreditation is now in full-swing. Parents have been sent requests to participate in a general survey, which is administered by an organisation affiliated with CIS for this purpose.

The teaching staff have been allocated different working groups related to the different parts of the curriculum. Each teacher contributes to the group's overall analysis of the specific aspects of the curriculum and during a series of meetings will identify supporting evidence and identify shortcomings.

Board members will be required to participate in a similar exercise over the next month or so. Information about the process will be detailed at the Board Meeting.

Board members may also be requested to volunteer to participate in other working parties. These working parties will be meeting over the course of the next few months.

Primary School Report

No on Roll; - 460

Staffing

Offers have now been made and have been accepted for Primary Music, Primary Art and Reception class teacher positions. An offer has also been accepted for a Year 4 class teacher position. An offer has gone out for a Year 5 class teacher position also and I am optimistic about this offer being accepted.

ISA Results

Individual pupil results were sent to parents in early February and some made appointments to discuss results with class teachers.

Class teachers are now going through the results and year groups are concentrating on areas of weakness. Individual questions can be examined using the data provided and teaching can be modified accordingly. At the moment teachers are collecting the information needed to put together diagnostic lessons for individuals and class groups to address the areas of weakness identified. The area of Mathematical Literacy seems to be the area requiring the most work. Once the problem areas are recognised, structured revision can be planned in each year group.

PYP Parent Workshops

Teachers have come together to organise a series of workshops which will hopefully explain a lot about Teaching and Learning in the Primary School.

Teachers have volunteered to put these workshops together and parents will be invited into school on Wednesday 7th March to participate. A wide variety of workshops are on offer as detailed below;-

- **Literacy and Language Development**, by Mrs.Carla Swinehart
- **Role of Maths**, by Miss Emine Dogan
- **PYP Exhibition Mentors**, by Year 6 teachers
- **Play Based Learning** by Reception teachers
- **Science and Social Studies in the PYP**, by Mr.Hanro Van der Merwe
- **What Does Inquiry Look Like in the Classroom?**, by Christelle Thompson
- **Write Dance**, by Ms. Esther Dekker
- **Mother Tongue Development**, by Miss Mary Frances Penton
- **EAL Strategies**, by Miss Karen Ely

Reception Class Parent Introductory Evening

In preparation for a new intake of students into the Reception class in August 2012, Reception class teachers are busy preparing an Information Evening for new parents. This will take place on Thursday 22nd March. Flyers have now gone out to nursery schools in Lilongwe so that prospective new parents can be informed of this event.

Reports

The school reports went out to parents on the 30th January and parents were able to discuss these at the parent conferences on the 1st February. Most parents made appointments for the conference day and generally the timing of appointments was satisfactory. Comments received about the new format for conference appointments were generally positive.

Janette Johnson
Primary Head Teacher

Secondary School Report

No on Roll; 267

ISA Testing

We have almost completed our analysis of the ISA test results received in late December. We have also just received the final interactive report from ACER and will need some additional time to include this in our report to the Board. The report will now be presented at the next Board meeting in March.

Heads of Department, form Tutors and Learning Support were given initial access to the results at the end of January/ beginning of February. Feedback from the form Tutors and Learning Support has initiated some immediate action to target some individual students. We are recommending to individual parents some changes to their child's individual learning plan (ILP) that will allow us to better support them in school. We expect all ILPs to be in place before March, although one or two may take a little longer to implement.

Heads of Department have been asked to look at the results and to take them into account when designing curriculum materials for use in the classroom, and for developing the new MYP curriculum.

Personnel

As a result of the feedback we received from the IBO consultant to our MYP authorization, we have had to review the teaching load of Mrs Sally Elliott, our MYP Coordinator and Senior Teacher (Years 7-9). The teaching load is too high to allow Mrs Elliott to perform her other responsibilities effectively and so we must reduce it to allow her to complete her other essential duties as a leader in the Secondary school. If we did not correct this, it is likely that we would not receive authorization for the MYP next year.

Rather than wait until the new academic year in August, we decided to make this change now since Mrs Schooley is available to take on some further classes. Mrs Schooley has been shadowing Mrs Elliott for a week in an attempt to get to know the classes better, although she already teaches 7KBE in Humanities. From Monday 27th February Mrs Schooley will assume the teaching duties for 7KBE and 8DTR in Mathematics until the end of the school year. This is a temporary position until June. We have taken steps to ensure that the common assessment and learning continues as we had originally planned for these classes. A letter was supposed to have been sent home to parents

describing these arrangements on 24th February, but owing to an administrative oversight, these did not get sent until the following Monday.

IGCSE & IB Diploma Evenings

Both the IB Diploma evening (15th February) and the Cambridge IGCSE evening (22nd March) were well attended. The programme handbooks for 2012-2014 were released at each meeting, together with option choice forms for each programme. Both handbooks and option forms are now available for download from the school website (navigate to MEDIA>HANDBOOKS at www.bmis.mw).

Parents and students had the opportunity on each evening to meet with teachers, programme coordinators and the Head to discuss individual concerns and strategies for the future. This year we placed a greater emphasis on career planning for the future in both events, using Stephen Covey's second habit ("Begin with the end in mind") as a mantra, and Ms Fashoyin was on hand to answer career or college related questions.

The deadline for the return of option choice forms is Friday 9th March for the IB Diploma and Friday 23rd March for the IGCSE. Once forms are received we can begin to establish a likely option pattern for each programme and work on the timetable for 2012-13 can begin in earnest.

2012-13 Timetable

Below is a proposal for a new learning cycle of five days. Start and ending times throughout the week are synchronised with the Primary school, but lesson and break times will vary a little between the two halves of the school. The new structure will allow us to:

- Better support the necessary curriculum development of the MYP.
- Provide the same total amount of teaching time across the school year in a five-day cycle as we do now in a six-day cycle.
- Provide a curriculum with a Secondary focus that does not share teachers with the Primary school.
- Provide a longer break time for students and thus create the opportunity for 'lunch time' clubs.
- Provide lessons of equal length (55 minutes) throughout the week, including on Friday.
- Retain the early finish on Friday.

The initial proposal was developed in Term 1, and extensive discussion between senior leaders in the primary and secondary schools, and with Department Heads in secondary who have led discussion with teachers.

The proposed new weekly teaching structure is as follows:

Monday to Thursday

7:15-7:25	Registration
7:25-8:20	Period 1
8:20-9:15	Period 2
9:15-9:30	Short Break
9:30-10:25	Period 3
10:25-11:20	Period 4
11:20-12:05	Long Break
12:05-13:00	Period 5
13:00-13:55	Period 6

Friday

7:15-7:25	Registration
7:25-8:20	Period 1
8:20-9:15	Period 2
9:15-9:30	Short Break
9:30-10:25	Period 3
10:25-11:20	Period 4
11:20-11:35	Short Break
11:35-12:15	PSHE

Discussion is now turning to look at the curriculum structure that we would like to develop to reflect the changes needed to support the replacement of the Cambridge IGCSE programme in Years 10 and 11 by the MYP. This will impact the curriculum development currently underway and staffing from August 2013 onwards. The outcome of these discussions will be presented to the Board later this calendar year.

I would like the Board's permission to publish the proposal for the new school week to parents in Tikambe and to invite their comments as soon as possible. A final proposal will then be presented for Board approval at the next meeting in March.

MUN

On Sunday February 12th, a BMIS delegation flew to Kenya to participate in the 30th annual East African Model United Nations conference at the UN offices in Nairobi. Fourteen Bishop Mackenzie Year 11, 12 and 13 students, and two members of staff (Mr Jim Wild and Mrs Samantha Montgomery), from a total of ten different nations, spent the week representing the school and Malawi in debates alongside around twelve hundred representatives from the finest schools in Africa.

In UN Economic, Political, Ecological and Human Rights committees, as well as in a special debating committee for world issues, the students exceeded all expectations; lobbying, networking, forming unions, compromising, persuading and arguing with the continent's finest. Under the flags of Samoa, Romania and Jordan, BMIS put forward three resolutions. All three passed. This is a tremendous achievement and a testament to the hard work of all those involved before and during the conference.

It was a tremendous experience for the whole group. The teachers were full of praise for the group of students as a whole, and how they were excellent representatives for the school. They will make a presentation to the Secondary school about their experiences in assembly on March 7th.

We hope to be able to offer the MUN experience to other students again next year.

Administrative Report

Finance

2010/11 Audit: A draft report to Management was presented to the School on 20/02/2012 and was initially discussed by the Finance Committee during its meeting of 21/02/2012. Areas highlighted in the report that need to be addressed were;

- giving specific descriptions to assets appearing in the fixed asset register,
- transactions in FCDA's to be recorded in the currencies that they occur then translate them to Malawi Kwacha at the end of the year rather than vice-versa,
- recipients of goods from school's stocks to always sign for such goods and a space for this function be provided on the requisition forms,
- all issuances of stock be properly recorded on bin cards,
- all journal entries be initially approved before they are effected in the Quickbooks accounting package especially those to do with audit adjustments,
- closing balances in certain accounts needed to be properly reconciled with opening balances for the subsequent year before commencement of the audit,
- pensionable emoluments for employees should include all other monetary benefits whose income is guaranteed,
- the School to do all that is necessary to ensure that it has title to the land that it is on,
- the School to develop stricter policies to deal with outstanding debtors especially at the end of a given academic year and
- a cut-off point be determined whereby unclaimed refundable deposits will have to be treated as the School's income.

Taxation of Income for Schools formerly under DSB: Still no response has come from the MRA to a counter-arguing paper that was presented to the authority on the 21st of November 2011.

Investment of excess funds: K 50 000 000 was re-deposited into the 7 day call account that is being held by Nedbank in relation to family and annual registration fees. A further K 30 000 000 will be deposited at the beginning of March 2012 upon receipts of last School fees instalments for the second term. This will leave a balance of K 58 905 544 to be re-deposited.

Invoicing and Debtors:

Debtors are now standing at K 42 812 084.54 from the K 322 398 427.00 that was invoiced this term representing 13.3 % of the total. This is expected to drop drastically come February 29 since instalment payers were strictly only allowed end January and end February to clear their liabilities.

No movement has occurred in the remaining cases that were referred to the School's Legal Counsel as per the last reporting date due to the on-going strike by employees in the Country's judicial system. During the Finance Committee meeting of 21/02/2012, it was also agreed that certain cases that were previously written-off by the School (from 3 – 5 years ago) and whose debtors were known to be around, should be presented to the Legal Counsel for possible recovery.

Payroll loan Facility: A draft proposal from Standard bank was discussed by the Finance Committee on 21/02/2012 and it was felt that provisions therein would not negatively impact BMIS's standing

with the bank in any way. However, it was felt that there would be need to sensitise employees on technicalities of the products being provided under the facility and how to prudently handle money matters.

Forex payments: Though the School has almost adequate reserves in its FCDA's there are still problems being experienced to have large amounts (i.e. in excess of US\$ 50 000) transferred to foreign accounts. Such has in turn affected our payments for School supplies and medical insurance cover. The concerned banks have constantly been engaged in this area and have since given indication that they may just go ahead to process the transactions even in the absence of the Reserve Bank's written approval.

Human Resources

Staff Appraisals; These have now started and it is expected that the process will span the next couple of weeks or so. Availability of those involved (i.e. Employees being appraised, Maintenance Manager and Business Manager) has been blocked-off as from 2.30 pm on each working day.

Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman; Following interviews held earlier in the month, Allan Nkupira was selected to fill this post. He is presently working for the Malawi National Assembly in a similar position having previously been under the Ministries of Works and Labour. Cumulatively, he has 21years experience in both technical and supervisory roles and is expected to report for duties on the 1st of March 2012.

Security

Safelock Security recently circulated a newsletter in which they highlighted an increase in attempted car-jackings within areas 2, 3 and 9. This information together with recommended precautionary measures was circulated to all staff members. No major incidents were reported in breach of the School's security.

Fresh quotations have been re-submitted to the US Embassy as requested with regard to possible budgetary support in the areas of installing CCTV cameras in the main entrance/exit gates and also upgrading the School's radio communication system.

Maintenance

New Storage Room: The building has now been completed ready for a final inspection by the School and subsequent hand-over. The contractor has submitted a price fluctuation claim of K 1 687 083.60 citing Clause 47 of the contract document which stipulates such an adjustment on the basis of changing prices. However, coefficients to be used for adjustment of prices were not specified but the contractor used comparative building material prices at the time of drawing the contract and at the time of purchasing them to come up with the figure.

Fuel Storage: After approaching Puma Energy Malawi as directed by the MERA, they advised that the School needs to procure a storage tank with a 4 500 litre capacity at about K 900 000. Puma can then refer the School to their accredited contractors for installation. A pump would be provided at no cost but construction works would have to be paid for by the School.

Alternatively, the School can go into a special arrangement with them whereby fuel can be collected in drums after a 24 hour notice period, the way it is done with hospitals and other equally important institutions. Such fuel would be for immediate use and not storage and its availability after giving such a notice cannot be guaranteed.