



Bishop Mackenzie
International Schools

BMIS Board Meeting

27th March 2012 in the Library at 6.30pm

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of Minutes of 28th February 2012
3. Matters Arising from Minutes of 28th February 2012
4. Director's Report
5. Head of Primary's report
6. Head of Secondary's report
7. Business Manager's report
8. Finance report 13th March
9. Policy Committee report 1st March
10. CIS Accreditation – Step 2 of the process – agreeing the results!

Director's Report

22th March 2012

Maintenance and Security

- **Storage building** – Completed, except for price fluctuation – See Admin Report
- **Tuck Shop plans:** Project has been put out to tender – See Admin Report. Applications have been received for the position of Tuck-Shop Manager and an advert for the same has been placed in the local press.
- **Year 6 building:** Architects have been approached for design – See Admin Report

Staffing and HR issues

- **Recruitment:** Primary and Secondary staffing for next year is almost complete.

Primary	Secondary
Cheryl Thom - Reception	Magda Krohn – English
Sandra Lissaman - Y1	Maeve Stevenson – English (HoD)
Georgina Ham - Y3	Kim Schooley - Drama
Jane English - Y4	Bruce Stevenson – Humanities
Tracy Elliott - Y5	Romien Benson – Mathematics
Tim Castle - Y6	Noemie Pochat - Science
Tania Drower - Y6	Ed Support (under offer)
Ciara O'Donoghue –EAL	PE (vacant)
Julia Back – Ed Support	
Brian Thom – Music	
Niru - Art	
PE (vacant)	

- **Morale:** The prevailing socio-economic climate has a significant impact on staff morale. Whilst all businesses throughout Malawi face the same issues, teaching is dependent upon the character of the teacher in the classroom. Whilst being professionals in the classrooms, inevitably the on-going economic problems have a negative impact on the school.
- **Flights:** Flight availability and spiralling costs will negatively impact on the budget. We are facing issues of booking flights for teachers for end/mid contract as well as attending training etc., where flights are not available, cannot be paid in Kwacha and have almost doubled in price.

Primary School Report

No on Roll; - 456

Staffing

All vacant positions are now filled in the primary school except for the position of PE teacher. A number of applications for this post have been received and a short list will soon be compiled.

Reception Class Parent Introductory Evening

The planned Parent Introductory Evening on Thursday 22nd March was postponed because of the recent civil unrest. The event has been postponed until Thursday 12th April.

The 5 Day Cycle

The proposed 5 Day Cycle for the 2012-13 academic year was presented to parents in a recent issue of Tikambe! I have received eight responses from parents. Six parents were concerned about the later finishing time (1.55pm) and the longer lunch hour. The later finishing time was a concern because parents felt that the younger children would be very tired. Some were also concerned that their children would be late for Islamic school. The longer lunch hour was a concern for some parents because they again felt children would get over- tired, playing for so long. There were two positive responses from parents. They were very pleased that the 5 Day Cycle had returned and liked the timing of the day.

Homework Procedures and Guidelines

A draft document has now been prepared revising the guidelines and procedures for homework in the primary school. This will have a final review by a small committee of teachers over the next week and will go out to parents after the holiday. It will be an addition to the parent handbook next year, but will be sent out to parents as a revised guidelines document for parents during term 3.

PYP News

A recent account from Year 2S about resolving the problem of achieving world peace was recently featured in Tikambe! The account, by Elles Sneider is now being submitted to the IB Organisation for possible publication in their journal for schools

Parent Workshops

The workshops held on Wednesday 7th March were quite well attended and very well prepared by the teaching staff. Discussions were lively in some workshops and many parents were keen to get more information, particularly about the schools approach to the teaching of mathematics.

International Day

This proved to be a thought provoking and interesting day for students, staff and visitors. The day was well planned and I would like to thank the organising committee and particularly, John Bray for the ideas and energy which helped to make the day special for so many of us.

Environmental Day

This was a day organised as a CAS activity by some Year 13 students for years 3 & 4 in the primary school. The organisation was done well; teachers were given full details, before the day, of all the activities planned. A lot of learning took place and the day was also full of fun.

World Water Day

We celebrated this day by organising activities throughout the day which developed an awareness of the importance of water in our lives. T- shirts with the World Water Day logo are on sale to the primary students and the money raised will be used to help to buy water pumps in some Malawian villages.

Janette Johnson
Primary Head Teacher

Secondary School Report

No on Roll; 267

Administrative Report

Finance

2010/11 Audit: Responses have now been given to the auditors with regard to their letter to management on the 2010/11 audit. Of the 10 areas of concern raised, Management has agreed to 8 of them leaving out one on having title to the land and another one on prior approval to journal voucher entries. With the former, it is felt that the issue will prove to be costly if pursued further while the latter is a result of the same audit's requirement that demanded certain vouchers to be posted prior to authorisation so as to speed up the process.

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: No further funds were deposited in the 7 day call account as indicated in the March report. That is so because there would be a need to pay a substantial amount of house rentals at the end of March and also Fringe Benefit taxes in early April while school fees income for the third term can only be expected from mid-April. These 2 items were overlooked when it was suggested that K 30 000 000 more can be invested. The amount to be re-deposited in relation to annual and family registration fees therefore still remains at K 58 905 544.00.

Debtors: They are now at K 6 697 087.32 from the K 322 398 427.00 that was invoiced this term representing 2.08 % of the total. This includes K 2 337 014.00 for 3 families who demanded that they be invoiced for the whole year i.e. it is 3rd term fees. Such will only apply to families who pay in hard currencies in the forthcoming year.

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.

Payroll loan Facility: Standard bank is yet to submit a final version of such an agreement between it and BMIS for signing. Since the last day of reporting, the bank asked for copies of the school's; -most recent audited financial statements, -most recent payroll and -its profile.

On the need to sensitise staff members prudent financial management before accessing the loans, an organisation by the name of Greenroot Finance has submitted a proposal to conduct such an exercise but whose charges are yet to be known (at the time of reporting). Initially, the organisation had come in to offer its own product for short term advances to employees and such was put on hold until the Standard Bank facility is in place.

Forex payments: As per a recommendation from the Board, foreign suppliers are now being encouraged to split their invoices into amounts that are less than \$ 50 000, since they are quicker processed by the Reserve Bank's authorisation committee.

A medical insurance cover payment for \$ 51 466.44 (applied for in November 2011) recently went through with one more for February – April 2012 still to go. Fortunately, BUPA has been very lenient to us in maintaining the cover regardless of such delays.

Presently, the school is pushing for payment of fragmented invoices for educational supplies (totalling £ 72 597.41) due to Mallory International. These were re-submitted to Standard Bank about a fortnight ago and they are yet to be processed.

Human Resources

Maintenance Supervisor/Handyman; Allan Nkupira who was initially selected for the position and presently working for the National Assembly, turned down the offer and he has since been replaced by Mathews Changwa who was ranked second during interviews. Mathews was previously working for the Malawi Catering Services and he reported for duties on the 19th of March 2011.

Staff Appraisals; This is on-going albeit at a very slow pace because concerned personnel are involved in other activities that cannot be suspended at any given time by blocking-off certain hours. The pace is expected to pick up during the 2nd to 3rd term recess.

Security

No major incidents during the month have been reported in this area as far as the school campus is concerned. Similarly, no major changes have been made or implemented as well.

Buildings & Maintenance

New Storage Room: With the building handed over to the School, the Finance Committee needs more time to analyse the price fluctuation claim of K 1 687 083.60 from the contractor as per Clause

47 of the contract. The 6 month defects liability period whereby the school retained K 504 884.00, started on the 1st of March 2012. No defects have been reported so far.

Tuckshop: Tenders have been invited from various contractors on construction of the same using a bill of quantities that was produced by a certified Quantity Surveyor.

Year 6 Class & Administration Block: 2 Architects have been approached (in their personal capacities and not as companies they work for) to give quotations on designing and producing structural drawings of the proposed building i.e. Messrs Tione Mughogho (of Zingano & Associates) and Asawitswani Chalamanda (of Samsai Designs). They have since submitted quotes of K 215 000.00 and K 250 000.00 respectively, exclusive of scrutiny fees to the Lilongwe City Assembly.

Fuel Storage: Mr David Pinto delivered a 3 000 litre tank to the school on 20/03/12 which has a pump/filter mechanism already attached. It will be securely mounted on the slab that was built for the same purpose and will be used for storage of diesel.