



Bishop Mackenzie
International Schools

BMIS Board Meeting

29th May 2012 in the Library at 6.30pm

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Confirmation of post-election Board membership. Election of Chair
3. Approval of Minutes of 24th April 2012
4. Matters Arising from Minutes of 24th April 2012
5. CIS Accreditation
6. Director's Report
 - a. Cafeteria building project
 - b. Timing of the school day
 - c. Use of facilities
 - d. School fees 2012-13
7. Head of Primary's report
8. Head of Secondary's report
9. Business Manager's report
10. Policy Committee report 17th May
 - a. Presentation of Policy Manual
11. Finance Committee report 15th May

Director's Report

29th May 2012

Buildings, Maintenance and Security

Tuck Shop/Cafeteria

The building of the new cafeteria was put out to tender and 27 sealed bids were received by the school. The Finance Committee reviewed the bids and selected three candidates for the shortlist. These three companies were invited to re-bid given the impact of devaluation.
(please see the Administrative report for more detail on this item)

Contractor	Original bid	Revised bid	% increase
Kokoliko Construction	14,671,069.85	17,300,000.00	17.9%
Intercity Building Contractors	15,483,269.40	18,247,272.68	17.8%
Mwayini Building Constructions	15,152,409.40	20,354,819.42	34%

The PTA have contributed MKW 3,000,000 towards the building project. The sale of school photographs has raised over MKW 200,000 which will go towards equipment. Next year's budget allocation (subject to verification of school fees) has allocated \$60,000 towards this project. A "Plan B" is in place should the building project not be completed by the start of term, which will require the store (next to the tuck shop) to be converted into a temporary kitchen.

Proposal

Agree on Kokoliko based on the lowest original and revised bids.

Decision required.

Maintenance Works

Primary, Secondary and whole school maintenance works are in the planning process. In addition to the usual painting and cleaning, the Hall and reception areas will receive attention.

US Embassy Crisis Management Meeting

NB attended the US Embassy organised Crisis Management Meeting, facilitated by the Ambassador and attended by all the key Embassy personnel, CDC as well as Malawian police and emergency services. A scaled down version of this exercise is being conducted at BMIS on 29th May involving the school's key people. This exercise is meant to thoroughly test our procedures as well as identify areas that require improvement.

Finance and Budget

School Fees 2012-13

Previous Board Meetings and Finance Committee Meetings have looked extensively at the fee increases for next academic year. The Board has expressed a desire to "close the gap" between Tax-Payer and Non-Tax-Payer categories and for the Tax-Payer fees to cover the minimum cost of education at BMIS.

Discussions about fee increases for next year were based on pre-devaluation figures. The impact of devaluation on Kwacha based fees for Tax-Payers is significant:

	2011-12	MKW @ 165/\$	2012-13 @15%	MKW @ 270/\$
Primary	\$6,195	1,022,175	\$7,124	1,923,480
Secondary	\$8,950	1,476,750	\$10,293	2,779,110
Diploma	\$9,660	1,593,900	\$11,109	2,999,430

The full impact of devaluation is yet to be seen and the debtors' situation will undoubtedly unravel if fees are to increase to this level.

Decision required about fee increases for next year.

Grants

The school has been awarded \$40,000 for 2012-13 academic year from the US Embassy. The application for this specifies the disbursement of these funds which will include a CCTV system around the school and a PA system for internal communications in cases of emergency.

The school has also received confirmation a grant of \$7,500 from the IBO as a credit to be used against training for next year.

Store – Price Fluctuation

The claim for additional payment for the building of the store due to price fluctuations was discussed at Finance. Mr Hausi has subsequently reviewed the documentation and is working with Willy Horea to resolve the claims.

Uniform

Uniform prices have been sourced from China, Thailand, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Imports from other African countries will not incur the same high taxes and would therefore be more cost effective as well as supporting regional trade. NB/NA still waiting on final samples to be received before final decision can be made. Zimbabwean suppliers can turn around the order in one month. Budget provision already made in next year's figures distributed to Board members previously.

Proposal

Once the samples are received, NB and NA review the quotations by balancing cost and quality, and orders placed with the "best" supplier. Order will need to be placed by 15th June for stock to be in BMIS by end July.

Staffing and HR issues

Recruitment and Retention

The Primary and Secondary staffing for next academic year was completed. Subsequently Ms Diane Davis, Head of Science, resigned effective end of this year. This position has, fortunately, already been filled with a Local Hire teacher who has already done a lot of cover and supply work at the school. Daniel Ludgate will take over from Diane and he has already been into school for handover discussions.

Staff morale has been particularly affected over the past few weeks. The devaluation issues have been discussed at length by the Board.

Gratuity payments (75%) have been processed by BMIS although these are still with Standard Bank awaiting forex.

The TAC has requested that further reflection and action is taken at Board level to ensure that policies and mechanisms can be put in place to protect staff from further significant devaluations.

School Day 2012-13

Following feedback from parents, students, staff and the Board, the following structure is proposed for Primary and Secondary school.

Monday to Thursday

	0715	0725	0820	0915	0930	1025	1120	1200	1255	1350	
Secondary	R	1	2	B	3	4	B	5	6		
	10	55	55	15	55	55	40	55	55		
Primary	R	1	2	3	B	4	5	6	B	7	8
	15	40	40	40	30	40	40	40	40	40	30
	0715	0730	0810	0850	0930	1000	1040	1120	1200	1240	1320
											1350

Friday

	0715	0725	0820	0915	0930	1025	1120	1215	
Secondary	R	1	2	B	3	4	5		
	10	55	55	15	55	55	55		
Primary	R	1	2	3	B	4	5	6	Assembly
	15	40	40	40	30	40	40	15	40
	0715	0730	0810	0850	0930	1000	1040	1120	1135
									1215

KEY
 R = Registration
 B = Break time

Main features of the structure:

1. Common start and finish time for Primary and Secondary. This will better support families with children in both sections of the school, and potentially reduce the number of journeys they would need to make to the school. (There is a small change to the departure time for Secondary students, allowing them to leave school 5 minutes earlier than allowed for in the proposal presented to the Board in April 2012.)
2. Provision of sufficient curriculum contact time to enable IB Diploma and IB MYP classes meet the standard required from the IBO. (Contact time is almost identical to the provision of 912 hours in the current academic year, with an increase in Secondary of approximately 20 minutes per week.)
3. Separate break times in Primary and in Secondary, allowing for easier access to the tuck shop and other shared facilities. (In the previous proposal there was an overlap between Primary and secondary breaks which would have presented difficulties for the 'clean' management of students in each section.)
4. Longer break times that will provide time for play, social development, house activities, school clubs, teacher meetings, student council activities, etc. This will relieve pressure on after-school activity time and allow BMIS to develop a broader range of extra-curricular activities for students.

Use of School Facilities

Tied to the issue above, Timing of the School Day, there has been a request by a representative of the Muslim community, that two classrooms be identified that could be used as prayer rooms after school, for those students who may find it difficult to get to the Mosque in time for daily prayers.

The school identifies itself as being secular; that it is not a religious school. As an international school, much is done to embrace all cultures and religions. On the one hand, offering rooms for prayer after school does not interfere with the nature of the school in any way. However, previous requests for using the Hall as a church have been declined.

Other international schools commonly grant this request, on condition that the room is not decorated in any way, but it is largely dictated by the school's constitution.

Decision required

Graduation Ceremony

The Graduating Class of 2012 attended their official leavers' ceremony on 22nd May. The Guest of Honour was Mrs Jeanine Jackson, the Ambassador of the United States of America.

CIS/NEASC Accreditation

All levels of stakeholder have been involved in the CIS Accreditation process over the past few months. Thank you to Board members who attended on 17th May to complete the process for Committee C which looked at Governance and Leadership of the school.

The process of self-review, involving teachers, parents, governors and students has been conducted in the following areas:

- A – School Guiding Statements
- B – Teaching and Learning
- C – Governance and Leadership
- D – Faculty and Support Staff
- E – Access to Teaching and Learning
- F – School Culture and Partnerships for Learning
- G – Operating Systems

This area of the CIS Accreditation process is drawing to a close, although much still needs to be done to draw together the relevant documentation and evidence.

Praise and thanks to the teachers who have put in extraordinary time and effort in completing this task, and particular acknowledgement of Paul Harrison's determination and energy.

The CIS/NEASC visiting team will consist of 7 experienced individuals who will be led by Christine McGrath. They will aim to arrive in Lilongwe on Saturday 10th November and leave on Friday 16th November.

Primary School Report

No on Roll; - 458

Staffing

Many teachers are now in contact with newly recruited teachers and are sharing planning documents and other school related information. Locally recruited teachers are visiting school regularly and are getting to know other staff and school routines.

End of Year Reports

All teachers are hard at work completing reports and these will go out to parents on Wednesday 13th June.

Homework Guidelines

Work on these guidelines has now been completed and they will be included in the new Parent Handbook along with revised information about enrolment, admissions and assessment.

Student Led Conferences

Students from Reception to Year 5 are now completing their portfolios for Student Led Conferences which will take place on Wednesday 6th June. Only Year 6 students will be attending school on this day. All other students will accompany their parents to their individual conferences. Conference appointments are now being organised.

Year 6 held their Student Led Conferences on the 16th and 17th May. The conferences were very successful and parent feedback was pleasing. These conferences were scheduled early because of the preparation time needed for the Year 6 Exhibition. This will take place on Thursday 8th June.

Class Lists for the 2012/13 Academic Year

This year, all year groups will be mixed and divided into three new classes for the new school year. Teachers use a number of different criteria including friendship groups and gender to create three well balanced classes. These new class lists will be on display to parents on our Transition Day, Tuesday 12th June. On this day children from Reception to Year 5 will visit their new classrooms and in many cases, meet their new teachers. Children who are leaving the school will also meet as a group and will be engaged in activities and discussions aimed at helping them to transition from BMIS to their new schools.

Year 6 students will have a Transition Day on Wednesday 13th June. This will be an Induction Day to help them to understand routines and give them some subject specific information before their entry into the senior school.

Primary Awards Assembly

Nominations are now being gathered for the Head Teacher's Award which will be presented at our Award's Assembly on Monday 11th June. Sporting awards and special awards to members of our school community will also be awarded at this assembly.

Celebration Day

Wednesday 13th June will be the day when each year group celebrates the completion of another year at school. All children will receive their end of year certificate and each year group will be arranging activities to entertain parents and friends.

Farewell Assembly

This will start at about 7.30am on Friday 15th June. We will be saying farewell to students and teachers who are leaving our school and we will then be saying goodbye to our Year 6 students as they leave the primary school and go on to study in the senior school.

Janette Johnson
Primary Head Teacher

Secondary School Report

No on Roll; 267

Admissions & Exit

In the Secondary school we have revised our admissions procedures to allow a more prominent role for the educational support and EAL teachers. The new procedures were implemented following a recommendation from the CIS/NEASC visit in January 2011 and a review of the procedures that have been in place for many years without change. We have trialled the procedures for the last two months and they have worked well.

We have revised the admissions tests that we use for new admissions and these are now more in line with IB assessment philosophy and better suited to the needs of an IB World School. The tests will be administered for the first time in June, when we process the first applications for the new school year. Tests will take place on June 13th and 14th, and again just before the start of the new school year on August 15th and 16th. The tests are also available electronically, allowing us to send them by email to a student's old school to administer and return them to us before the student arrives in Malawi, and so (we hope) speeding up our evaluation of the student's placement at BMIS.

In addition to revising the admissions procedure we have also updated the application form that families complete. This was done in consultation with the Primary school so that both sections of the school are using the same form. We have added a confidential reference from the previous school Head teacher to the list of supporting documents that must be provided with the application.

The admissions page of the BMIS web site has been updated accordingly, and copies of the application form and a blank reference form are available to download from the site.

We have also reviewed our exit procedures for families who are leaving BMIS, details of which have been provided in Tikambe in the past two weeks. The aim is to try and help make the transition from BMIS to another school a smoother experience. We will provide each family with a child leaving the Secondary school with a pack of information containing supporting documents for the move to a new school. We aim to provide this pack of information within three weeks of receiving the request to provide it, provided that certain conditions are met by the family (e.g. there are no outstanding school fees, all books are returned, etc).

Forms for requesting the information pack are available from the Secondary school office on request or can be downloaded from the BMIS website. Up to three copies of the information pack are provided free of charge. We are also hoping to provide the packs by email or to a local fax number if families request it. Charges are levied in advance for additional copies of the information pack (BMIS

administration fee of US\$20), or the use of other methods of delivery (e.g. international fax, courier, etc).

Intentions

Updated (provisional) figures for next year (as of 23rd May) are as follows:

Year Group (2012-13)	Confirmed returning	Confirmed not returning	Not confirmed	Applications received	Potential total
YEAR 7	45	0	0	0	45
YEAR 8	53	6	0	1	54
YEAR 9	42	7	1	2	45
YEAR 10	31	10	1	0	32
YEAR 11	40	3	0	0	40
YEAR 12	28	7	4	0	32
YEAR 13	33	3	0	0	33
TOTALS	272	36	6	3	281

Personnel update

Ruth Reid has been appointed as Educational Support teacher and James Cross has been recruited as Physical Education teacher. This completed our known recruiting needs at the end of last month.

Two positions of responsibility have been assigned: Richard Ellis will take on the new role of Community and Service Coordinator for the MYP and Bruce Stevenson (new teacher – Humanities & Economics) will take over the role of IGCSE Coordinator from Jim Wild.

Daniel Ludgate has been appointed as a Biology and Science teacher. Daniel will also be Head of Department for Science and is school for a few days to work with Diane Davies on the handover of responsibility. Diane Davies resigned unexpectedly on May 16th.

MYP Curriculum

We are expecting a consultancy visit sometime in September. Sally Elliott (MYP Coordinator) has sent a number of documents to the consultant as required under our current status as a candidate school.

Secondary teachers at BMIS have now completed a large portion of curriculum development required to produce a coherent curriculum for Years 7-9. This comprises a number of documents for each year group. A Curriculum Overview describes the aims, objective, assessment criteria and sequence of units that will be undertaken by each year group. Each unit is then describes in detail what the main learning outcome is, and the sequence of lessons and activities and the assessment protocols that the students and the teacher will use while studying the unit.

An electronic copy of the Year 7 Curriculum Overview has been included with the mailing of this report. A hard copy of the Curriculum Overview will be available for all Year 7-9 parents at the beginning of the new school year, probably by early September.

Administrative Report

Finance

Taxation of Income for Schools formerly under DSB

The MRA has still not yet given any response to the re-submission for conclusion of the case that was made by Eagle tax consultants on behalf of all schools concerned. The re-submission was done on 28th March 2012.

From the previously reported invoices bill of K 367 792 115.32, there is now a balance of K 35 383 162.73 yet to be collected 9 (minus BMIS staff), representing 9.6% of the total invoiced. It is expected that over 98% of this will be collected by the 31st of May from parents paying through instalments.

No movement has occurred during the month for the remaining cases that were referred to the School's Legal Counsel.

Payroll loan Facility

The facility is now operational after the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Standard Bank and BMIS last week. The next step will be to finalise the staff sensitisation process on prudent financial management practices to which Greenroot Finance Company had already expressed a desire to handle.

Forex payments

Payments for £ 113 625.06 (Mallory International –School supplies), \$ 66 832.96 (BUPA – medical insurance cover) and \$ 226 461.37 (Teacher gratuities) are still outstanding with Standard bank which had earlier on promised that most would be cleared by end of May 2012 following the floatation of the Kwacha since forex supplies were going to improve.

Human Resources

Staff Appraisals

This has not been completed yet as indicated in last month's report because of pressure of work during working days to those involved. Weekends are ideal to conduct the appraisals but they would attract more overtime payments.

Security

No major incidents during the month have been reported in this area as far as the school campus is concerned. (Refer to the Director's report).

Buildings & Maintenance

New Storage Room

During a meeting with Mr E. Hausi, taking on the grey areas that had already been identified by Mr V. Beza, it was decided that the contractor be offered a settlement of 5% of the cost on the basis of what is considered to be the maximum normal percentage deviation on the cost of construction. Such is so because the price of certain inputs cannot be properly ascertained in the absence of payment receipts and that they are also dependent on location from where they are sourced i.e. river sand, quarry stones and bricks. Similarly, the recent devaluation claim will also not be considered since the items in question were procured at a time long before the devaluation and such was also indicated as 'not applicable' in the contract between the school and the contractor. Mr Hausi will scrutinise the claim documents further, in the event that the contractor is not satisfied the school's initial determination.

The price increase claim was for K 1 687 083.60 and the 5% on cost would translate to K 504 884.00. No defects have been reported on the building so far and the school also retained a similar amount which is payable at the end of July 2012.

Tuckshop

Of the 27 bids submitted, a shortlisting of top 9 contractors was made on the basis of cost and this was further trimmed to 3 on the basis of; -cost, -period of completion, -financial stability, -reputation, -contracts history, -completeness of bid information and -legal/professional compliance/membership. The final 3 bids were from Kokoliko Construction Company (K 14 671 069.85), Mwanyi Building Contractors (K 15 152 409.40) and Intercity Building Contractors (K 15 483 269.40).

During its meeting of 15/05/2012, the Finance Committee recommended that the final 3 bidders be asked what sort of price adjustments they were going to make in the face of the recent floatation of the Malawi Kwacha which occurred after the bids had already been submitted but before selection of a winning bid. The contractors have since revised their bids to K 17 300 000.00, K 20 354 819.42 and K 18 247 272.68, respectively (refer to extract of the bid analysis inserted).

Year 6 Class & Administration Block

The selected architect (Mr Tione Mughogho) has submitted his design to the School (Separate plans to be circulated at the Board Meeting)

Fuel Storage

MERA officials inspected the tank earlier in the month and highlighted certain safety concerns that need to be rectified before they finally give BMIS the authorisation to store fuel. The areas mentioned were; -perimeter fencing, -labelling & signage, -fire control gadgets, -training of operators, -stationery ladders and spillage containment. The school has approached Eversafe (one of the companies suggested by Mr D. Pinto) to assist in some of these areas. However, the tank fabricators (Premier Steel & Engineering Works) are to come in first to seal certain connection areas that have been observed to leak whenever diesel is being drawn from the tank.