



Bishop Mackenzie
International Schools

BMIS Board Meeting

27th August 2013 in the Library at 6.30pm

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Board Members – Introductions and update
3. Key BMIS academic staff
 - a. Paul Johnson – DP Coordinator
 - b. Jodie Runge – Pastoral Coordinator
 - c. Christelle Thompson – PYP Coordinator
4. Approval of Minutes of 11th June 2013
5. Matters Arising from Minutes of 11th June 2013
6. Director's Report
7. Head of Secondary's Report
8. Head of Primary's Report
9. Business Manager's Report

Board Members 2013-

| Malawian | Non-Malawian Tax | Non-Tax-Payers |
|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Gertrude Hiwa | David Pinto | Max Cameron |
| Makwemba Malonje | Sander Donker | Sarah Oddo |
| | Gianluca Bizzaro | Villi Wium |

Director's Report

27th August 2013

Buildings, Maintenance and Security

CIS Priorities

The CIS/NEASC priorities need to be kept in mind as priorities for our immediate school development. A special report needs to be submitted to the respective accrediting bodies by October which describes the measures the school has already taken to address these issues.

| | |
|--|--|
| Special Issue One: Bandwidth | Changed provider Wireless network Skyband increased bandwidth |
| Special Issue Two: Library | Phase 1 extension building works completed, waiting on furniture Phase 2 building planned – need Board approval to continue |
| Special Issue Three: Recruitment and retention | “Monthly Billing” translates to salaries Improved medical insurance options Need to improve water and electricity in homes |
| Special Issue Four: Health and Safety/dismissal | Health and Safety Committees Walkways for dismissal areas Increased staffing Still a priority... |

Holiday Maintenance

Library

This was one of the major holiday projects. The internal walls have been removed and the area completely renovated, with carpets fitted. The carpenters are now working on custom shelving and furniture for the library space to be completed.

Roof: Art/Music

This work was not anticipated. Minor roof repairs revealed structural deficiencies in the roof timbers and associated ceilings, all of which needed to be replaced.

Cables

Underground cable trunking has been laid around the campus and all the fibre optic and telephone cabling redone. The hanging cables around the school, which were causing network outages as well as being an eyesore, have been removed.

Drains and walkways

Additional walkways have been constructed down across the field to the primary dismissal area. Open rainwater drains have been replaced with covered drains that also act as walkways.

Reception garden wall

Mrs Thom's Reception classroom has seen a new wall replacing the old fence which was falling down.

Swimming Pool

The brick pool surrounds have all been lifted, levelled and re-laid. The pools have been repainted and we are currently waiting on handrails to be delivered for the 18m pool.

Store Room

The old storeroom was an unsightly area with an open area full of junk. The main storeroom has now been better arranged and the storekeeper moved to this area. The vacated storeroom has been renovated to create additional office space. The photocopy room is now in this area (relocated when the library extension was knocked through).

Classroom shuffle

In order to accommodate the library extension, the primary classrooms had to be reorganised. The Reading Room has been merged with the computer room and additional shelves fitted for the resources.

Classroom and accommodation

As usual, classrooms and teacher accommodation is renovated and painted during the long vacation.

Staff and HR

Teaching Staff

The new teachers arrived safely during the first weekend in August and enjoyed a full induction programme, which included both academic issues and opportunities to find their feet in Lilongwe. Janine Grassby did a super job in pulling together information and events to help bring them together.

There are 8 new Primary class teachers 14 new Secondary specialists, plus the Teacher Librarian.

Dr Harding Jones informed me on 1st July that he would not return to school for August. This was obviously a breach of contract and was unprofessional. Last minute recruitment for a physics teacher was therefore conducted in July leading to the appointment of Joe Beamer, who has been teaching recently in Moscow. Staff organograms have already been distributed to parents at the start of term.

Budgets and Finance

Monthly Billing

The initial indicators for the “monthly” billing are good. There have been some initial concerns over the wording on the invoice template (reference to \$ based fluctuations and monthly billing was removed), but this has now been clarified. Several organisations have come forward to request termly or annual billing payable in dollars. Very few parents have come forward wishing to advance pay in Kwacha.

Student Numbers

Whilst we are still waiting for confirmation on a few returning students and new applications, the student numbers look promising.

| | TP | NTP | BMIS |
|----------|----|-----|------|
| R | 39 | 13 | 4 |
| 1 | 33 | 21 | 5 |
| 2 | 43 | 24 | 6 |

| | | | |
|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| 3 | 49 | 17 | 1 |
| 4 | 44 | 20 | 1 |
| 5 | 40 | 17 | 4 |
| 6 | 52 | 16 | 2 |
| 7 | 27 | 10 | 1 |
| 8 | 33 | 14 | 7 |
| 9 | 36 | 9 | 2 |
| 10 | 24 | 9 | 1 |
| 11 | 24 | 10 | 1 |
| 12 | 22 | 4 | 1 |
| 13 | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| | | | |
| Totals | 483 | 187 | 36 |
| | | | 706 |

The earlier budget projections (last term) worked on the assumption that student numbers would drop. Fortunately we have seen new applications coming in, and pleasingly many of these are Non Tax Payers leading to a healthier economic outlook for the coming year. Student numbers, therefore, are around the same as last year. Tuition fee income was initially budgeted as \$6.7m but is likely to be just over \$7m.

Staff Salaries

Over the past couple of years the school has taken several steps to protect staff salaries against the rising inflation and exchange rate fluctuations. Historically teaching staff contracts were on a Kwacha salary based on a \$ amount, reviewed each term. Locally employed staff were on a fixed Kwacha salary with annual review and increments based on NSO inflation figures. With the issues over the past two years, and in an effort to be equitable for all staff, \$ based movements which affected local inflation, was applied to local staff at the same time as expatriate teachers. This has been well received by local staff as they have seen their salaries increase. However the recent appreciation of the dollar against the Kwacha has meant that August salaries are 21% lower, which has left many of them over-committed financially and therefore angry that their salaries have gone down.

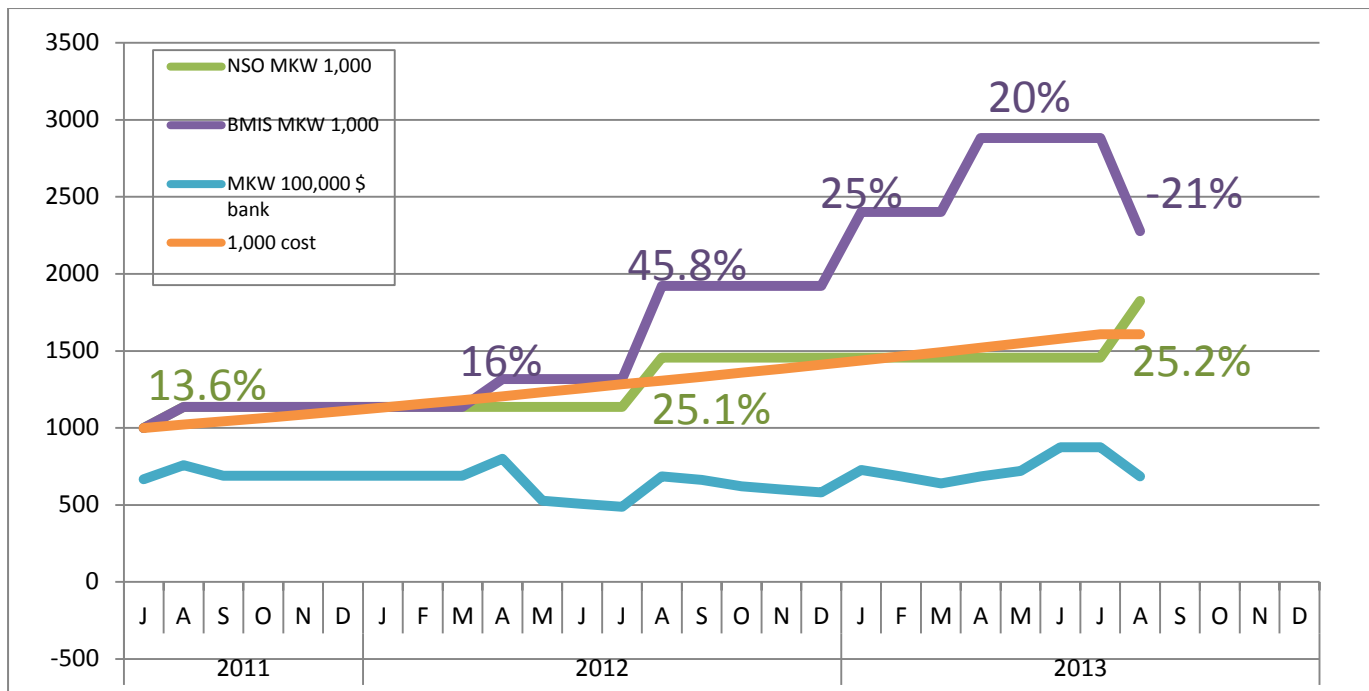
The following graph was presented which illustrates the data over the last couple of years.

Orange line (1,000 cost) represents inflation. This is based on NSO annual urban reported figures, which have been averaged monthly (in reality there would be some variances month to month but this data was not available at the time). There may be some debate about how realistic these figures are.

Green line (NSO MKW 1,000) shows how a July salary, per MKW1,000, would have been adjusted based on annual revisions in line with NSO inflation figures.

Purple line (BMIS MKW 1,000) shows how the school salaries were adjusted in line with \$ variations throughout the year, which was more in line with the visible inflation in the community.

Turquoise line (MKW 100,000 \$) shows how the \$ value of salaries has been maintained (a unit of 100,000 used as a scaling factor so that it fits on the same axis – the percentage variation remains the same).



Clearly from the figures above, staff have been well cared for by the school, although the recent drop has caused understandable consternation, confusion and anger. When salaries were going up everyone was happy but in hindsight perhaps insufficient information was relayed to all staff preparing them for the current situation. Some employees are concerned by the threat of artificial exchange rates with the impending elections next year. When Finance discussed the salary concerns and solutions, the Kwacha appreciation was perhaps not fully taken into account and the impact it may have on locally employed staff. If staff were to revert to the previous mechanism of reflecting annual NSO inflation, then it begs the question of how to peg their starting salary. More discussion on this is required.

Looking Forwards

Library Phase 2

The second phase of the development of the library now needs to be considered. Decisions about the building project were put on hold since there was uncertainty about the student numbers and therefore the budgetary impact of this. The school has received an anonymous donation of MWK 7 million towards the library extension. A further donation of building materials has been promised and allocations have been made within the existing budget to cover the building costs. There has already been board discussion about whether this project should be put out to tender and the associated problems and costs, and this is a decision that the board must now make.

Proposal: Phase 2 building of the library to commence as an in-house construction project.

Staff Accommodation

One of the key issues, as I see it, for securing the school’s long-term financial outlook is to invest in teacher accommodation. This has been discussed at the board for at least fifteen years! If the commitment were made back then, the school’s position now would be far stronger. Investing in teacher accommodation will not provide a short term saving, but it is anticipated that money saved on rentals can be diverted into repaying mortgages on the properties within a short space of time. National Bank has already expressed an interest in helping to finance such a project. There has been ongoing discussion about developing the land near the workshop, but the alternative would be to

simply purchase land/buildings since this would provide, arguably, a clearer position regarding collateral.

Proposal: Form an ad-hoc working party to explore properties, financing and options with a goal to report back by December.