



Bishop Mackenzie
International Schools

BMIS Board Meeting

26th November 2013 in the Library at 6.30pm

OPEN SESSION

Agenda

1. Approval of Minutes and Matters Arising from Board Meeting on 29th October 2013
2. **Board Decisions, Strategic Aims and Priorities**
 - a. Board Membership and implications for the Constitution – *discussion and decision*
 - b. Building Project Priorities – *discussion and guidance*
 - c. Elections 2014 and implications for school - *discussion*
3. **Informational Reports**
 - a. Director's Report
 - b. Head of Secondary's Report
 - c. Head of Primary's Report
 - d. Business Manager's Report
 - e. Policy Committee Report
 - f. Library: Building Project Update
 - g. Sports and Physical Education at BMIS – information (possibly for discussion with an ad-hoc committee)

Director's Report

26th November 2013

Structure of Board Meetings and Reporting

Following on from the groundwork laid down in the "Ritter Retreat" and subsequent meetings, the Board has decided to restructure the meeting and reporting format.

The main part of the meeting will be for key Board discussions and decisions that are of a strategic nature. These may be linked to identified development priorities, achieving the school Mission, meeting accreditation or IB criteria or issues that have broad and far reaching effects.

The other aspects of the meeting and report are informational items. These reports will be distributed prior to the meeting and any questions will be expected to have been directed to the report's author before the meeting. The only discussion required, therefore, during the meeting would be if there are general issues unresolved after taking the opportunity to seek clarification from the author.

Strategic Issues and Board Decisions

Board Membership and the Constitution – Discussion and Agreement

The issue of the Constitution was raised in the "Ritter Retreat," specifically the Board composition, which is currently comprised of three elected members of the Parents' Association (i.e. parents) in each of the three categories (Tax-Payer, Non-Tax-Payer, Malawian).

The Constitution states:

Article 13

The following resolutions shall be passed by a three quarters majority vote of all the Trustees:

- *proposal to Parents Association to amend this Constitution*

Further, in *Article 23 AMMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION*

In order to effect a change or amendment of the Constitution a written request for the change has to be submitted to all members of the Parent's Association. Notice of a meeting to discuss the change must be given at least 7 days ahead of the proposed meeting. Voting may take place at the meeting and for 11 school days following the meeting. A minimum of 50% + 1 of all registered members of the Parent's Association must have voted in order to amend the Constitution. Two thirds of such a minimum number is required in order to effect approval of the change of any article of the Constitution. Voting will take from 7.00 am to 5.00 pm. Counting of the papers will take place on the first school day after the final vote and the result published in the Tikambe (school newsletter).

This means, that assuming we have 431 families in school, or approximately 850 parents (not all children have two parents), at least 431 parents must actively cast a vote and 288 of these must vote in favour of the change.

According to the Ritter Retreat, the following was proposed at that time:

Board Composition		
What (steps)	Who	When
Policy or ad-hoc committee (Governance) to prepare action plan and consider all implications for a change. Makes proposal to the Board	Policy or ad-hoc committee	Dec '13 Feb '14
Open parent meeting to explain and or describe proposed changes	Board	

Review the feedback from the meeting	Board	March '14
EGM to be convened for the parents' association to vote on the proposed changes	Policy or Governance committee	May '14
Update and promulgate the new constitutional changes	Director	May '14

The Policy Committee reviewed this issue where there were two notable remarks. First was that any proposals to constitutional change must be restricted to the single issue of Board membership (not opening the debate to other changes to the Constitution). Second was that the prevailing politics need to be considered and it was argued that the timing for Constitutional change needs to be considered carefully.

Building and Development Priorities – Discussion and guidance

Over the past couple of years we have been able to make headway on developing the school campus. The buildings and grounds have been tidied up and smaller projects have had a positive impact on the look and feel of the school. We have also managed to complete several larger building projects which includes:

- Construction of a new large store room
- Construction of the Secondary staffroom/admin area
- Construction of the Cafeteria
- Renovation and construction of the non-teaching staff room
- Swimming pool store rooms
- Library Phase 1 extension (and ready for Phase 2!)

The strategic discussions and plans have also included the various building projects below. We need to identify and prioritise these opportunities so that we may start to make tangible plans for them.

- Teacher accommodation
- Covered hard-court (basketball courts)
- Complete renovation of the sports pavilion to include a gym and teaching room
- Additional PE changing facilities near the pool area
- Technology – workshop facilities
- Multipurpose hall (for assemblies, activities, examinations, exhibitions)
- Specialist drama studio
- Specialist dance studio

The issue of teacher accommodation is an important one and is linked to the long-term financial position of the school.

Many of the buildings are old and in the long-term we need to plan to potentially renovate or rebuild sections of the school.

These issues all need to be thoroughly discussed and presented to the Board and to be integrated into the strategic plans. Whilst the Building Committee may be involved, it impacts on far more than construction aspects and it may be more applicable to an ad-hoc Strategic Planning Committee comprising board, staff and parents.

Informational Report

Headscarves and other cultural or religious interpretations

This was discussed at the Policy Meeting and it was agreed that the school uniform policy should stand as it is. Students in years Reception to Y11 will be expected to adhere to the uniform as currently described in the Parent Handbooks. Students in Y12/13 follow a dress code which may allow for the Head of Secondary to act with some discretion in terms of students wishing to wear a head scarf.

Staffing Update

Susan Zimowska has chosen to use the probationary clause in the contract to discontinue as a full time teacher, on the grounds that her health does not allow her to take such a full and active role as she would have liked. She will remain in Lilongwe as her partner, Eric Beckett is employed as Head of English. She may look to help out with supply work or other projects to keep her busy. A suitable replacement, George Maguire (who you may have seen doing supply work already or coaching the football teams) will take over her class from January.

According to the contracts teachers in their final year of contract need to give their intent for seeking a contract renewal by the end of the first week of term 2. There are already some early indicators of teacher's intentions – some wishing to seek a new contract, others seeking greener pastures elsewhere.

NB to attend the Johannesburg Search Fair in December and with Paul Harrison, the London Search Fair 16-20 in London.

Buildings, Maintenance and Security

Security

There appears to have been an increase in the number of attempted break-ins at staff housing. The school has started a systematic survey of properties and is installing new locks and bolts and checking burglar bars. Currently the school provides Safelock emergency response. Some houses have guard services provided by their tenancy agreement, but the majority hire night guards. Security worries erode staff morale and this issue can be discussed by Finance.

Primary School Report

Professional Development

Sandra Gentili, Molly Unterseiher and Lauren Fraser recently attended Category 2 PYP workshops in Lusaka- "Inquiry." All three are now implementing much of what they learnt.

James Whiston has recently completed an online PYP workshop about "International Mindedness" Janine Grassby has recently completed an online PYP workshop about "Assessment" Both teachers are now preparing to share their learning with staff within the next few weeks.

Julia Bach recently attended a PYP workshop in Dubai. This was a Category 3 course which focussed on creating inclusive classrooms: access for all students in the PYP/MYP. She recently presented a workshop at a staff meeting to share much of the work she had done in Dubai.

Dani MaCallion is registered for an online workshop- "Transdisciplinary Learning." This will start in January.

Recent Field Trips

Year 4- Unit of Inquiry- Communities- Overnight Community Camp on the school playing field

Year 2 – Unit of Inquiry- How We Organise Ourselves- Community Helpers- visits to dentist, doctor, fire station etc.

Reception- Unit of Inquiry – Let’s Explore Materials- Visited Kumbali Village to do some craft work.

Cultural Events

The Japanese Embassy recently arranged for a group of Japanese drummers to visit BMIS. The musicians played to an audience of students from Year 6 and Year 9. They were a talented group of musicians and we are grateful to the Japanese Embassy for sharing this cultural event with our students.

Report Writing

This is now well underway. Proof-reading and printing will be completed during the next few weeks and reports will be ready to go out to parents on the last day of this term.

Teaching Staff and Recruitment

Teachers who are nearing the end of their contracts are now being encouraged to inform me if they have already decided about applying for renewals or extensions of contracts. With the information coming in I have started to compile preliminary lists of possible teaching vacancies for the 2014-15 academic year. I have also started to receive applications for general primary teaching posts. Definite vacancies will be advertised through Search Associates during the next few weeks.

Secondary School Report

Students leaving BMIS (2012-13)

We have managed to compile a list of reasons students left BMIS last year, using available data.

Row Labels	A Level	Boarding School	Emigration	Finances	Gap year	Relocation in MW	Repeating	University	Unknown	Grand Total
6		15	5	1		1	1		5	28
7		2	6						1	9
8		2	4							6
9		1	3							4
10		1	2							3
11	2		6				2	1	7	18
12									1	1
13					8			18	2	28
Grand Total	2	21	26	1	8	1	3	19	16	97

We are now tracking departures this year as part of our exit procedures in secondary.

So far for 2013-14 we have lost ten (10) students:

Row Labels	Boarding School	Emigration	Finances	Relocation in MW	Grand Total
7	1	2	1		4
8			1	1	2
9		2			2

10		1			1
11		1			1
Grand Total	1	6	2	1	10

MYP Visit

The visit from the authorization team went ahead as planned on November 4th/5th. The team met with many different groups of people within the community, examined documentation and visited classrooms.

The team were quite complimentary about how open and candid meetings had been and the desire shown by all members of the community to move forward with the MYP. They were very complimentary about our students in particular, and how friendly and supportive other staff had been during their visit. I passed on their message to the students in assembly the day after the visit was completed.

The conclusion meeting went well at the end of the second day, and the verbal feedback we received from the team was positive. The team will now make a report to the IBAEM regional office and we will be informed of their decision within the next 2 months.

From the counsellor

The 2013-2014 university application process has been progressing as outlined below.

1. This first term Year 13 Students have had a number of sessions with the counsellor to inform and motivate them about the university application process. This has involved the development of an information handbook, presentations, writing requirements for personal statements, essays, teacher recommendation processes and a range of personal interviews and discussion sessions.
2. A timeline was set early in the term culminating in 4 December for all university applications to UCAS (UK) and Common App (USA) as well as all other universities. This early deadline requirement is necessary because the Christmas break is 4 weeks long and the university application deadline for UCAS is 15 January, just as students return to school after the break to take their mock examinations.
3. A memo with a signed return slip was sent out to all Year 13 students and their parents reminding students and informing parents about the school deadlines and requirements.
4. Recently we had a presentation to our Years 11-13 students from the Monash University in Melbourne, Johannesburg Campus representative and a number of students have become interested in looking there too. This university has two intakes so deadlines are more flexible. Even more recently a presentation from The Swiss Education Group South African representative explaining the many pathways available in Hospitality.
5. There are 20 students in Year 13 this academic year.
 - Approximately 6 students are planning at this stage to take a Gap Year.
 - One student has applied to Edinburgh University for Medicine in the UK and if successful may well take delayed acceptance to complete more work experience in this field.
 - One student has gone for Early Decision to a range of Universities in the USA some of which due to his high level of performance in the PSAT test last year have offered him application fee waivers. This same student gained a much sort after place in Michigan University's Summer School in June 2013 after a rigorous application process.
 - There are three students who are looking at applying to universities in Holland to study Law, International Relations and Aeronautics.
 - The rest of the students are applying to a combination of universities in USA, UK, Canada, South Africa and Australia at this stage.

Staffing 2014

Heads of Department are drafting out class allocation for next academic year, the main purpose of this at this stage of the year will be to inform the recruiting drive for new teachers. Eight (8) secondary teachers have contracts that expire at the end of July 2014.

ESL in the Mainstream

Twelve teachers have been identified as the first cohort for professional development in the ESL in the Mainstream course next term.

- The course will consist of 8 x 2-hour courses running on a Thursday after school.
- Teachers must attend all of them to earn certification.
- Teachers must also complete 5 'between module' assignments and 5 reading assignments.
- The total time commitment for each teacher is 18-21 hours in class, with a similar amount of time needed individually between modules.
- The course starts on January 23rd, running to March 20th (or April 3rd if there is a clash with the MUN trip).
- Course materials have been ordered and should arrive in school in the next few weeks.

There is not enough time to run a second session in term 3 this year, and it is a busy term anyway. The next session will therefore be in term 1 next year (any remaining returning teachers who did not have their training this year), with a final session for new teachers in term 2.

From 2015-16 onwards, we would then only need to run one annual session in term 1 for new teachers.

Administrative Report

Finance

2012/13 External Audit

- Slated to start from 16/12/2013 and to be completed within the same month.
- Ernst & Young to carry out the exercise. Review of auditors overdue.

Invoicing and debtors:

- Balance of fees brought forward from previous month(s); K 17 295 165.52
- Total invoiced for the month of November; K 294 740 417.25
- Amount paid so far; K 169 002 000.00
- Debtors still outstanding as of 22/11/2013; K 143 033 582.77 (45.8%).

(Exchange rate used; K 402 = \$ 1, Due date; 26/11/2013, Reminders; 19/11/2013 and Exclusions; 03/11/2013)

Liquidity:

Bank balances as of 22/11/2013;

- Malawi Kwacha accounts (STD, Nedbank & NatBank); K 31 700 878.90
- US Dollar accounts (STD, Nedbank & NatBank); \$ 586 648.88
- Euro account (STD bank); € 127 321.27
- Pound Sterling account (STD bank); £ 13 009.64

There is no anticipated pressure in the short term as far as the FCDA balances are concerned. The O/D in the Kwacha account will likely rise to about K 90m by the start of the 2nd term because of payments towards salaries, taxes, rentals and holiday maintenance items, whilst the next invoices will be issued on 16/01/2014.

TEVET levy

- SAINTS teachers' remuneration is not excluded from the calculation of their levy. SAINTS still has an obligation to include it together with penalties thus imposed since it was an ongoing case and the high court ruled in TEVETA's favour.
- Levy to be paid by BMIS for the 2013/13 financial year; K 11 581 382.36.

School Credit cards

No fresh progress information from both banks (i.e. NB & STD) since the last reporting date of 29/10/2013.

Tuck-shop / Cafeteria Operations

For the period between 01/08/2013 to 22/11/2013;

- Sales; K 10 266 755.00
- Cost of goods sold; K 6 690 964.70
- Gross profit; K 3 575 790.30 (34.8% margin, i.e. within normal industry range)
- Administrative expenses; K 2 602 176.58 (utility bills and transport costs are estimated while the rest are actual)
- Net profit; K 973 613.42 (9.5% margin, operations on basis of sales volumes just broke-even in October)

Human Resources

- Support staff salaries; employees to be issued with letters on choice of NSO or School's Dollar-value-based increments on 25/11/2013. So far, no feedback from the workers' committee.
- Mzuzu IRC case # 16 of 2011 (W. Moyo Vs BMIS); Ruling granted on 07/11/2013 i.e. all former DSB employees still with BMIS to be granted their severance pay as of the salary and date of leaving DSB cumulated at 5% interest per annum.
- New staff; -Usizi Chirwa (Handyman/Driver) as from 01/10/2013 and -Ramsey Chokani (Security Officer) as from 01/12/2013

Security

- A \$ 15 000 grant for installation of a CCTV system and revamping the P/A system now approved by the US Government department of state.
- No major incident was reported during the month of November 2013 as far as the school campus is concerned.
- New position of Security Officer as from 01/12/2013 and holder already identified.