



Minutes of the Open Session of the BMIS Board Meeting

Held on 28th April 2020 at 6.30pm
Lower Hall

Present

G. Bizzaro	GB	Chairman
S. Stapleton	SS	V. Chair
G. Cornella	GC	Board Member
M. Nambiar	MN	Board Member (via Google Meet)
M. Pickard	MP	Board Member
A. Chitulu	AC	Board Member
N. Bishop	NB	Director
E. Engel	EE	Primary Head
O. Williams	OW	Secondary Head
W. Horea	WH	Business Manager
A. Herselman	AH	PTA
C. Almeida	CA	PTA

Apologies

E. Moyo	EM	Board Member
A. Mulemba	AM	Board Member
K. Bosscher	KB	Board Member

Time	Agenda Item	Minutes
6.37 (1)	Welcome	GB welcomed all present.
6.38 (3)	Approval of Agenda	The following Agenda was presented and adopted: 1. Response to the petition letter and broader issue of discounting fees 2. Deciding when to decide about the school being physically open this year (or not)

		<p>3. Scenario planning – this term, next year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cash flow and expenditure • Student number projections • Staffing levels
6.41 (2)	Approval of the Minutes of the previous meeting	The minutes of the 25 th February meeting, 13 th and 16 th March extra-ordinary meetings were accepted as the true and correct record.
6.43 (103)	Cashflow and Expenditure	<p>The Board decided that before discussing anything, it was necessary to look at the cash projections to see where the school stands because that would influence decisions for the rest of the term and start of next academic year.</p> <p>GC reported that in trying to identify what drivers we have that influence the cash inflow and cash outflow and which ultimately influence the overall cash additional or cash gap, he separated them into two time frames, May to July and then August going forward.</p> <p>On the outflow side, there are staff salaries, gratuity payments, repayment of refundable deposits and other expenses. As of March 30th the cash gap was calculated to be \$411,000 based on an overall projected fee payment rate of 58% for April and May. He noted that there is need to find a way to close this gap and this may include delaying gratuity payments. It was also noted that there was need to have an understanding as to why we are at the lower paying rate compared to other billing cycles and whether there is an understanding of how this will fare come Monday deadline.</p> <p>Looking at the longer term (August going forward), it was noted that there are certain decisions that the Board could make that would influence future student numbers negatively and that tuition fee levels for next academic year would have to be considered at some point. On the out flow there is need to look at staff numbers for teachers and admin given the possibility of having fewer students. It was agreed that there was need to try and put together data pertaining to how many students are coming back next year and how many are not in order to make an informed decision.</p> <p>WH was asked to go back and work on the figures again and provide more specific and accurate perspective for Tuesday's Board meeting.</p>

8.23 (40)	<p>Scenario Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student number projections • Staffing levels 	<p>The Board agreed that it was necessary to come up with scenarios to inform Board decisions. NB reported that he had worked on a scenario planning for August which looked at reductions in student numbers and how many teachers we would need to lose as a result.</p> <p>In order to get a general indication of how many students would be returning to school in August, a survey will be sent out to parents for them to say what their plans are for next year. If we are going to collapse classes then we may have to give priority to fee paying parents and take out admin staff children.</p> <p>Another survey will go out to teachers for them to provide their intentions for next year and if they would choose to be released from their contract, especially considering the likelihood of student numbers actually decreasing and therefore affecting staffing levels. It was noted that there may be some staff that are here, that may not want to come back due to some medical conditions that they may have.</p> <p>Sacrifices may also have to be made by prioritising essential services where a PE teacher, for example, may have to become a classroom teacher. A decision may also have to be made whether to cancel the contracts for new teachers scheduled to arrive in August.</p>
9.03 (21)	Petition Letter from parents	<p>NB had earlier circulated to Board members a petition for fair charging of school fees in light of Covid-19 and closure of on-site school and the introduction of distance learning. It was noted that out of the 198 petitioners on the list that accompanied the petition, only 76 were confirmed parents of the school representing 58 families, while 54 were anonymous.</p> <p>The Board took time to discuss the financial impact of the Covid-19 on local businesses, families, and the school. It was resolved that a response to the petition be sent out as soon as possible stating, among other things, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the school leadership and the Board recognise that this is an incredibly challenging time not only for the school community but globally.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board and leadership recognise both the challenges and successes of the online learning and that the challenges for parents and students are not insignificant. • The Board also recognises that teachers have been working very hard to continually adapt, revise and improve in order to adapt traditional teaching style to distance learning and are working to fulfil their duties and responsibilities. • Since the fee levels are set to cover the annual expense, no discount shall be considered given that the children’s education is continuing. However, the Board does recognise the particular hardship faced by some families in our community and agreed that those families that are finding themselves in a dire financial situation and wish to be considered for Hardship Assistance will be considered on a case by case basis. In order to be considered, they would have to send a letter of appeal clearly stating the nature of the financial hardship along with relevant supporting documentation to board@bmis.mw. <p>NB to draft the letter, send it to Board members to comment on it before 10 am on Wednesday 29th April.</p>
9.24 (5)	Decision about physical opening of school for next year	As a way of giving an update to parents, NB will inform parents that the Board has reviewed the current situation and that nothing has changed for the foreseeable future.
9.29 (11)	Any Other Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGM and Board Elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback on Online learning 	<p>GC noted that generally around this time we have the AGM and Board elections. It was noted that given the current situation, it is very unlikely that these two events can take place. He suggested that the Board briefly discuss decisions about elections. NB noted that there is nothing in the constitution that allows for online voting or anything like that.</p> <p>Four Board members will be leaving the Board but will serve until elections or the end of the school year, whichever comes first.</p> <p>It was noted that there was need to resolve some of the inconsistencies across classes. The Board recognises the hard work being put in by the teachers and encouraged them to continue finding creative ways of improving the learning experience for the students.</p>

9.40	Date of next meeting	There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.40 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 5 th May 2020.
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Signed:.....

Date:.....