

MEETING MINUTES
ISB BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR SESSION
MPB 3
Tuesday, 16 September 2014

Present: Mr. Ira Blumenthal
Dr. Sumiter Singh Broca
Mr. Gurdist Chansrichawla
Mr. Nimit Damrongrat
Ms. Joy Davy
Mr. Marc de Vries (by video link)
Mr. Brent Gros
Mr. John Heinecke
Mr. Janewit Kraprayoon
Ms. Kristina Kvien
Mr. Kevin Sypolt

Absent: Dr. Prathip Chiaravanond
Mr. William Harvey
Mr. Eric Ma

Administration: Dr. Andy Davies, Head of School
Mr. Graeme Scott, Deputy Head of School for Learning
Dr. Ugo Costessi, Deputy Head of School/Chief Financial Officer

I. OPENING

Mr. Kraprayoon opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the 22 April 2014 meeting were approved 7-0 with three abstentions as presented.

II. PTA UPDATE

The PTA President, Ms. Charlotte Hallengren, provided an update on the PTA's current activities, initiatives and plans. The procedure for inviting new parents to welcoming events has been improved by sending individual emails to new parents and asking for an RSVP. There has been a marked increase in the number of new parents attending these events as a result. She also reported that the 2014-15 budget for 2.6 million Thai Baht had been approved, of which about 0.5 million would be for grants. The PTA ES, MS and HS coordinators have had their first PTA meetings with parents. The adult education program has also started, and classes will begin on 5 October 2014.

She also reported that, following on the exceptional success of the HS Principal Forum, this would be

extended to the Middle School as well. The PTA will also focus on building partnerships with, among others, the Booster Club and the Community Activities Office (CAO). Parent workshops and seminars, which were started last year will be continued this year, with the first event planned for 13 October 2014, and another in mid-November. The PTA plans aggressive grant support to ISB programs, especially in cases where there is a clear need, but funding was not requested in time. Finally, there are plans to expand the Touchstone magazine by increasing its length and coverage.

Among planned events for this year, the PTA will hold the ES international day, monthly welcome *wai* coffees will be organized once a month. The PTA has started planning for the international family fair which will be held in February 2015, the MS Social, and two graduation ceremonies, one in mid-year to be run by the Japanese community and another at the end of the year.

III. IB DIPLOMA RESULTS

Mr. Phil Rogers spoke about the IB diploma results and highlighted the following facts. One hundred and three IB diplomas had been awarded this year, up 70 percent from last year, with a 98 percent pass rate. The average diploma score was 35, but the top 20 percent of students scored over 40, which placed them in the top 3 percent in the world. This is consistent with the five year average.

As regards the college applications process, Mr. Rogers explained that under the new procedures in force from last year, students have to submit their college applications in the presence of a counselor. This, coupled with the fact that predicted IB scores track actual scores very well, resulted in a large proportion of students receiving offers from universities by February 2014 and some even earlier. Teachers give three predicted grades in Grade 12 on the basis of student scores in Grade 11 and the early weeks of Grade 12, and predicted grades for this year should be ready very soon. An encouraging development is that more IB examiners are joining the ISB faculty.

With regard to the IB results for the class of 2014, the average IB course score is 5.5 (out of a maximum of 7), with 79 percent of scores at 5 or above. No IB course (with at least 5 students) was below the world average.

Looking forward, Mr Rogers stated that there would be more emphasis on Approaches to Learning (ATL), which covers thinking skills, social, research, self-management and communication skills.

Mr de Vries (attending by video link) remarked that the extension of the deadline for the extended essay to 1st October did not seem to have made any difference to the grades.

The Agenda item concluded with a discussion on publicity. Mr Sypolt wondered why ISB was not publicizing the achievements of its students, unlike other international schools in Bangkok, which take out advertisements in the local newspapers. In reply, Dr. Ugo Costessi expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of local advertising, which costs about 300,000 Thai baht for one full page newspaper advertisement. He wondered whether it would not be more cost effective to advertise college acceptances as that kind of information is likely to be more useful to parents. No decision was taken regarding this matter.

IV. HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The current HS graduation requirements were last reviewed in the year 2000. Mr. Rogers made a

presentation on High School graduation requirements, organized around four questions. Do the High School graduation requirements align well with the school vision; are they flexible; do they help students get into their desired universities and do they equip graduating students with the skills they require? Two important questions left unanswered are, a) what should be done about the compulsory requirements for which students do not get credit, but arguably should such as the GCW; and b) should there be a language requirement, bearing in mind that most ISB students are proficient in at least 2 languages?

As regards the number of credits required for graduation, ISB currently requires 25, but in reality students take 29 on average. Comparisons with other international schools show that their students generally graduate with a smaller number of credits, e.g. Jakarta International School students graduate with an average of 23 credits.

Accordingly, a proposal was presented under which the number of required credits would remain unchanged at 25, but the number of electives would be increased to 9 and 2 language credits would be required, as would a minimum level of physical activity throughout high school. Students would have to take a minimum of 7 courses per semester in grades 9 and 10, and 6 per semester in grades 11 and 12. The proposal would allow students more voice and choice, introduce a requirement for languages, while increasing flexibility and allowing students who miss only one course to graduate. These changes would impact students from next August onwards. However, there will be consultations with HS teachers, the leadership team and the Board of Trustees, before a final decision is made. BOT approval is required and the HS will seek this at the November BOT meeting after careful consultation.

From the feedback provided by some universities it seems that not much importance is given to course requirements as ISB is an accredited institution. Rigor in the curriculum appears to be a more important consideration.

Some issues that will require further considerations over the next 3 months are, how best to implement these changes, how the physical activity requirement will work, how the language requirement will work, and how to include students who take HS courses in MS.

V. FINANCIAL RESULTS 2013-14

Presenting the financial results for 2013-14, Dr. Ugo Costessi stated that the audit reports would be placed before the Board in November. He explained that there was a surplus of THB 120 million, partly because the reinvested surplus from previous years had grown and partly because of growth in student enrollments - this year's enrollment is about 1950 students against a maximum of 2000. However, turnover is less because students are staying about one year longer on average and this tends to lower income from registration fees.

The major reasons for maintaining a surplus are to a) keep a substantial cash balance to enable the school to ride out a temporary decline in student enrollments and b) pay for new buildings such as the cultural center and the sports center. Plans for capital expenditure are generally made three years ahead.

As regards financial performance, this is monitored through a small number of indicators, and these are all within the target range.

VI. SPECIAL PRESENTATION ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (NOT AGENDA ITEM)

Mr Chad Bates explained that a new initiative had been implemented in the Elementary School to allow laptops, ipads etc to be connected to smartboards through an Apple TV projector. This allows teachers to project information directly from student iPads to whiteboards without a need to connect them physically. There had been some problems with internet connections earlier in the school year, but these had all been resolved with help from True Move. However, this experience had demonstrated a clear need to reassess the push for an all cloud storage policy.

VII. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

A member of the public asked a question about potential sites for a wilderness campus. Dr Davies explained that while a site was being considered, a final decision was not likely any time soon.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 14 October 2014.

Verified as approved by the Board
at its meeting October 14, 2014



Sumiter Singh Broca
Secretary, ISB BOT