

## Minutes of the 2010–2011 HIS Executive Board Meeting #7

March 31, 2011, (Thursday) at HIS at 18:00

**Members present:** Branson, Ikeda, Johnson, Katayama, Lyons, Viljoen, Yonesaka

**Members absent:** Kaufman

**Guests present:** Barry Ratzliff (Deputy Headmaster); Dr. Toma (HIS Auditor)

### 1. Call meeting to order

Viljoen called the meeting to order at 18:00.

### 2. Approve agenda (2011.03.31\_1\_agenda.pdf)

The agenda was approved.

### 3. Approve and sign minutes of January 31 meeting (2011.3.31\_2\_minutes\_Jan\_31.pdf)

Minutes were approved and signed. No matters or discussion arising out of the minutes.

### 4. Discussion item – How can we use the current disaster situation in Japan for the good and growth of HIS?

Branson reported that the JCIS schools in the Tokyo and Yokohama area will be back to near full enrollment by next week, and Tohoku on April 11. The schools are aware of our offer to help. HIS has had two student withdrawals from K1 because of families leaving the area, but the families plan to be back in fall or winter.

Ratzliff reported that for Niseko the tourist season has ended abruptly. Temporary staff have been let go but already reservations for next year have begun to come in. Overall the attitude is positive for next year. Foreign investment and building commitments have not changed: the general feeling is business as usual.

Lyons reported that the US State Department does not list Hokkaido as a region where US citizens should defer non-essential travel but rather defines Hokkaido explicitly as an area of Japan outside those regions of concern.

### 5. Chairperson's report (2011.03.31\_3\_Chair.pdf)

We are very appreciative of Rick, Barry, and Shimako Abe's efforts to alleviate the fears and concerns of HIS families during and in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor crises. HIS will certainly be affected by all of these events, and it is important to determine how we might help others and use the current disaster situation for the good and growth of HIS.

The registration and start of the HIS Niseko campus continues to need discussion and direction. We must do all that we can to stand behind Barry, Rick, and Shimako during these exciting and busy months. A Niseko town meeting was held on March 4 to inform the local community of the progress of this new HIS campus. Members of the Hokkaido government came to HIS on March 28 to inspect the school.

### 6. Headmaster's report (2011.03.31\_4\_Head.pdf) & (2011.03.31\_4a\_demographics.pdf)

- **Enrollment:** HIS currently has an enrollment of 176 through April. Nakagawa-san noted that despite the decline in overall student numbers, the budget continued to look sound as HIS had increased the number of high school students who pay a higher tuition. We have had a number of inquiries since the earthquake and its aftermath. The heads of JCIS schools have been contacted with the offer for displaced students to come to HIS, with the promise of applying normal tuition rates to avoid the poaching of students from their current schools. The JCIS heads have been in daily contact with one another. All schools know of our offer to assist in any way.

- **Finances:** Three emails from Mike Mangan of Harris Associates outlined the effects of a drawdown from the Capital Fund to fund a new teacher apartment building (see item 8). They also expressed a positive assessment for the future of Japanese companies and stock. The current 2010–2011 budget turned out positive for this fiscal year; although there has been a decrease in elementary numbers, there has been an increase in secondary enrollment to offset the loss, and operating costs have been carefully kept down. However, a salary increase for teacher's will have to be considered for the coming school year.
- **Personnel:** All teachers are expected to finish the year at HIS. We welcome Eliya Roe to the HIS community and our best wishes to mother Megan Roe who is on maternity leave. Barry has been in communication with new faculty throughout the earthquake and the aftereffects. Dan Reynolds is busy with the situation in Yokohama and has postponed his visit. We thank Mr. Nathan Robinson (Megan Roe) and Mrs. Kyoko Sendai (Tom Ruhm) for their extended substitute work. Our prayers are with Doreen Deelstra who will enter the hospital for surgery this Friday.
- **Curriculum:** Teachers are concluding their work on the language arts curriculum and will now turn their attention to the math curriculum for the remainder of the year. The Learning Team has concluded its work, and the faculty representing both the control and experimental groups have completed their surveys. The 2011–2012 calendar is posted on the website. Thanks to David Piazza for his work.
- **School Improvement:** HIS will be working on its self-study during 2010–2011 in preparation for its accreditation visit in April 2012. Critical in this work is continued curriculum revision. HIS welcomes Marilyn George to campus on April 4 to lead a school-wide accreditation workshop.
- **Building and Grounds:** The representative of the land for the teacher apartment building is asking for a decision on the purchase of the land from HIS. Many thanks to Ogawa-san for his work on this project. (See item 10)
- **Marketing:** HIS has received some media coverage due to the new campus in Niseko. While this has prompted concern from the Hokkaido Education Department, it has raised the school's profile.
- **Technology:** Yuya Hisada installed a new router to the HIS system that drastically improved overall function. Byron Hardwick has joined the effort to get better use out of the PowerSchool software. Hisada requested and received a grant from the PTA to upgrade computers in the third floor lab to better run larger software applications. Branson and Ratzliff consistently updated the front page of the website as the events after the earthquake unfolded and received positive responses for the continuous information.
- **School Safety and Health:** The earthquake and its after effects have had some effect on HIS operations, and we continue to track any potential student withdrawals because of families leaving the area. Branson is exceedingly proud of the students and teachers for their behavior during the emergency and thanks the teachers for providing an overall stabilizing culture after the incident.
- **Student Issues:** HIS suspended four students due to drinking on the Takino overnight trip. Parents were notified, letters were sent home, students were spoken to before and after the suspension. One boy was not allowed to attend Takino and the ninth grade trip due to severe harassment of a female student via electronic media. Procedures were followed. The ninth grade class had a successful trip to Kyoto, many thanks to chaperons Owain Phillips and Sophie Brown. David Piazza and the 12th grade students have struggled to schedule the 12th grade trip. An alternative to Habitat has been found, but with Griot (Spring Concert) and other factors, the date of graduation needed to be changed. David has confirmed this change with senior parents and faculty. Graduation will be moved to June 6 right after Griot (June 4) to accommodate travelers. Students are beginning to receive and post college admission information.

**7. Principal's report** (2011.03.31\_5\_Principal.pdf) & (2011.03.31\_5a\_Niseko.pdf) & (2011.03.31\_5b\_SIC Notes.pdf)

- **MAP Training, February 25** -- Ratzliff and Shibuya attended a second level of training in interpreting MAP results at Hong Kong Christian Academy, extending their working knowledge of online results pages.

- **Niseko Visit, March 3** -- Ratzliff and Shibuya's visit confirmed the high interest of many individuals and entities in HIS' presence in the resort area (see item 11).
- **Visit to Private Schools Division of the Hokkaido Government, March 18** -- Ratzliff, Abe, and Nakagawa-san, along with three representatives from Niseko Town, visited the offices of the Private School Division at the request of Niseko Town to reconfirm paperwork details ahead of final submission of documents for accreditation. One major support document was submitted. It was stated that the department was moving forward to accept our application, although we would not be owning our own building, which had been a major obstacle in previous conversations. We have Nakagawa-san to thank for his detailed search through legal documents that revealed recent changes in the law that allow for this. Nakagawa-san has been a pillar of encouragement, wisdom, and support for this project. Thanks also go to Shibuya and Abe who have put in many hours on this project, working to complete the details of the application and prepare documents.
- **Private School Division Visit to HIS Campus, March 28** -- Three members of the *Gakujika* visited to check on financial and governance aspects of HIS. The visit appeared to have gone well. Kashiwabara reported that the head of the team had noted that, "Everything was in order [in finances]." Kashiwabara attributes the smooth visit to our practice of being audited externally every year. Kashiwabara, Abe, and Nakagawa-san are to be thanked for their efforts in preparing for the visit and ensuring it went smoothly.
- **Niseko and the Current Situation** -- see item 11.
- **WASC Accreditation visit to the American School of UlaanBaatar** -- A great learning experience, co-chaired with Frank Cranley, which will now likely lead to future opportunities to chair visits in this region.
- **WASC Accreditation visit to Tokyo YMCA International School** -- Begun just two days after the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami of March 11; with flight, train, and food supply disruptions in the background and constant aftershocks, the visit was confirmation that WASC can carry on under any circumstances. Ratzliff, with co-chair Dr. George Bronson, retired director of WASC's Southern California office, was able to complete the visit on a shortened schedule, meeting with teachers until schools in the area were closed as a result of rolling blackouts, the threat of a major aftershock, and transport disruptions.
- **School Improvement Committee Meeting, February 28 & WASC 2012 at HIS** -- Teachers have been assigned to WASC focus groups and home groups in preparation for the 2012 WASC visit. Ratzliff's next and final job as site coordinator, ahead of handing it off to Daniel Reynolds, is to reedit chapter 1 of the WASC Self-Study and then write chapters 2 and 3 of the report. Chapter 4 is written by focus group chairs and the WASC site coordinator during the year of the visit.
- **Dormitory** -- Four dormitory families registered concerns about the nuclear situation in Fukushima. Three of those students were flown home early for the spring break. With the supportive information of John Ries at the consulate and through various information sources, Ratzliff kept parents informed and up to date on the situation and assured them of our safe location and the normalcy of life here in Hokkaido. As of Sunday, only one student had not yet returned, and it seems likely that the parents will be letting their child return to us sometime during this first week of school.
- **Elementary and Secondary Schools** -- MAP test results are complete and accessible to teachers online. The Curriculum Committee will now need to condense the results for future decision-making and reporting. Both schools will now plan for a second spring testing period.
- **Disaster Response** -- The Service Club is to be thanked for coordinating HIS' first response to the disaster by collecting some ¥180,000, which was sent to the Japan Red Cross. Sophie Brown also collected winter clothing from teachers and sent them to the disaster area through the MontBell sports equipment company, which was providing relief to the Tohoku region.

- **TE 846 Coursework: Accommodating Differences in Literacy Learning** -- Ratzliff has completed approximately 2/3 of the coursework in order to re-certify through Michigan State University. The course will be completed by early May. The course is providing valuable reading material that Ratzliff can pass on to the Curriculum Team and interested teachers.

**8. Treasurer's report** (2011.03.31\_6\_Harris Performance.pdf) & (2011.03.31\_6a\_Harris.pdf) & (2011.03.31\_Financial\_1-6.pdf)

Branson reported the evaluation from Harris Associates is that if we were to withdraw 2.5 million from the Capital Improvement Fund, with a 10% annual return, it would take about 3.5 years to recoup; with an 8% annual return, the period is about 5 years; with a 6% annual return this would extend to 7.5 years.

**9. Auditor's report**

Dr. Toma explained that the positive gain in Capital Improvement Fund has continued. Dr. Toma noted a possible conflict in the rules governing the use of the Capital Improvement Fund. According to the Capital Improvement Fund document (Feb. 2004): item 1-C Purpose: "The fund can be used to provide funds for the purchase of buildings used to house the staff of the school"; item 2-B Restrictions: "The fund must not be used to replace any facilities other than the main school buildings or dormitory."

Discussion followed that the wording "main school buildings" might be interpreted to include the Teacherage. The money withdrawn from the fund to supplement the money in the Teacherage fund to build a new Teacherage will regenerate in approximately five years according to the assessment by Harris Associates (see item 8). It will be a fixed asset, not money used for running costs, i.e., "replacing any facilities," as Yonesaka pointed out. Viljoen believes the use of the CIF in this way follows the original spirit and purpose for establishing the Capital Improvement Fund. Because the original intent of the wording cannot be emphatically determined as there is no longer a standing Capital Improvement Fund Committee (item 4-A), the board has a right to interpret it as follows: "The CIF Committee shall have the Executive Board review this document periodically to ensure its continued relevance and to make changes as new conditions dictate" (item 4-B). With the Niseko campus becoming part of HIS, the wording of the CIF document and the policy of the Reserve Funds need to be revised for better clarification of intent. Johnson recommends that the first page of the document be dedicated to definitions of terms.

**10. Land Purchase – Report from Teacherage Building Committee (2011.03.31\_7\_Property.pdf)**

Branson reported that the desired piece of land is for sale, and a decision needs to be made as soon as possible. However the Board of Councilors needs to approve the use of the Capital Improvement Fund to build the Teacherage. Branson proposed calling an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Councilors to vote on just this item, since we cannot wait for the next meeting in May and risk losing the opportunity to purchase the land. By the rules of the fund, the board can withdraw 10% without the approval of the Board of Councilors, which would cover the cost to purchase the land, but not to cover the cost of building the Teacherage.

❖ *Lyons moved that the Board approve the purchase of the land for the new Teacherage building and inform the Board of Councilors at the next scheduled meeting, May 30.* Johnson seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

❖ *Lyons moved to amend the motion that the Board approve the purchase of the land for the new Teacherage building and inform the Board of Councilors at an extraordinary meeting of the Board of Councilors on April 6.* The motion was seconded by Johnson. Discussion followed: Branson suggested that before purchasing the land, the Board should first seek approval from the Board of Councilors at the extraordinary meeting on April 6 for the purchase of the land and withdrawal from the Capital Improvement Fund to build the Teacherage.

- Dr. Toma would like the minutes to reflect his position: his understanding, as the auditor, is that the Capital Improvement Fund cannot be used to replace the Teacherage.

- The Chair wishes the minutes to show that the Capital Improvement Fund Document states under item 1-C Purpose: “The fund can be used to provide funds for the purchase of buildings used to house the staff of the school.”
- ❖The motion was not approved.
- The Executive Board decided to call an extraordinary meeting on April 6 at 18:00 of the Board of Councilors.
- ❖*Lyons moved that, contingent upon the Board of Councilors approval, the Executive Board approve the purchase of the land and the withdrawal of 3 million US dollars from the CIF to be used for the construction of a new Teacherage.* Branson seconded the motion.
- ❖The motion was unanimously approved.

### **11. HIS' Niseko campus**

Given the possible economic fallout from the nuclear situation in Fukushima, Ratzliff suggested that the Board discuss Niseko School in order to move forward with the project practically and in confidence. Ratzliff does not want to see HIS overextend itself financially and the reserve fund put under too much strain. One consideration may be not to open the campus in January 2012 but to wait for some months. HIS is still committed to opening the school in 2012. This would have to be coordinated with Niseko Town. Ratzliff would be happy initiate these discussion points with Niseko in two weeks with a personal visit.

### **12. Report from the Board Nomination Committee (2011.03.31\_8\_NomCom.pdf)**

Two new members to serve on the Executive Board need to be decided on by May 30, so that they may be approved by the Board of Councilors. Perhaps up to five new members of the Board of Councilors need to be decided on, leaving two seats open for representative members from Niseko-ko. The need for a slate of potential candidates to be drawn up as soon as possible will be communicated to the Nomination Committee by Viljoen.

### **13. 2011–2012 Budget**

Branson will prepare a budget for the Sapporo campus and a proposed budget for Niseko. He recommends that the September Executive Board meeting approve the guidelines for one school, two campuses, that is, a confirmation of consistency; for example, one tuition policy for both campuses, etc. Branson does not anticipate any budgetary problems for the next year. The new budget will come to the Executive Board by the end of April to be approved by the Board of Councilors at its meeting on May 2.

### **14. Report from May Fundraising Committee**

Because of the Tohoku tragedy, Branson proposes that we cancel the dinner and auction but continue with the golf tournament as we have already committed to the golf course. The Board was in agreement, and Ikeda will rewrite the invitation to reflect this change

### **15. John Ritter's visit to HIS – April 6 Board Training (2011.03.31\_9\_April 4-8.pdf)**

This was discussed.

**16. Board policy review** -- Lyons and Yonesaka believe it will be ready for the board's consideration next month.

**17. Communication – Parent Survey**

Branson reported that of the 126 families, 60 completed and returned surveys for a response rate of 47.6 percent. Concerning the demographics of respondents, Table 1, the largest group was “Mothers” at 33 of 60 reporting. Concerning the grade in school for children of respondents, Table 2, the largest group was “Elementary: grades 1–6” at 28 responses; the second largest was “Junior high: grades 7–9 at 20 responses. Concerning the number of years respondents had a child at HIS, Table 3, the largest group was “1–2 years” at 20 responses. Concerning the number of years respondents had a child at HIS, Table 3, the second largest group was “3–5 years” at 16 responses. Concerning the highest rated statements, Table 4, “Teachers are available to meet with parents” at a mean of 4.47. Concerning the lowest rated statements, Table 5, “Tuition increases are reasonable to support the school” at a mean of 3.23. Concerning all survey statements, Table 6, “Overall, I am satisfied with Hokkaido International School” had a mean of 3.92, expressing strong agreement with the statement. Concerning items receiving the most responses for “Areas HIS does a good job,” Table 7, cultural sensitivity had 40 responses. Concerning items receiving the most responses for “Areas HIS needs to improve,” Table 8, academics had 25 responses and after-school sports and activities had 21 responses.

Results will go to the School Improvement Committee and will be reported back to the public. The parent survey will be done every year.

#### **18. Farewells – Staff (Tom Ruhm and Kay Shalfeieff) and the Bransons (Sara and Rick)**

Exit interviews will be conducted by Lyons and Yonesaka. Branson suggests using the Leadership Profile Index for the head of school evaluation.

#### **19. Review of meeting**

The meeting was productive.

#### **20. Time and Place of next meetings**

May 2 (Monday) at 18:00

May 30 (Monday) at 17:00; followed by Board of Councilors at 19:00

June 20 (Monday) at 18:00; followed by a farewell dinner for Rick and Sara

July – no meeting

August 29 (Monday) 16:30 meeting; followed by supper (Johnson and Viljoen to conduct training with new board members prior to the board meeting that afternoon)

#### **21. Adjourn meeting**

Viljoen moved to adjourn the meeting at 21:10. The motion was approved.

Addendum to March 31 minutes: The emergency Board of Councilors meeting for April 6 was cancelled as the property in question had been sold. A letter from Branson and Viljoen communicated the news to the Board of Councilors on April 5. (B of C letter April 5.doc)

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Item for HEx:

At the March 2011 meeting, the Executive Board expressed its appreciation of all HIS staff in alleviating the fears of HIS families in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear reactor crises. The Board thanked the Service Club for collecting some ¥180,000, which was sent to the Japan Red Cross. The Board also thanked the

60 families who responded to the parent surveys (a response rate of 47.6%). Their responses provide much valued guidance to the Board, and we hope even more families will participate in the next annual parent survey.

On April 6, the Board was very fortunate to have John Ritter lead our annual board training. We worked on identifying Board Goals for 2011–2012, streamlining committees, and organizing a calendar. It looks to be a very busy and exciting year for HIS.

Minutes by Katayama (2011/04/02)

Proofread by Viljoen (2011/04/02)