

Minutes of the 2010–2011 HIS Executive Board Meeting #10

June 20, 2011, (Monday) at 18:00

at Hotel Monterey Edelhof, 12th floor

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

Members absent: Johnson, Kaufman

Guests present: Barry Ratzliff (Principal)

1. Call meeting to order

Viljoen called the meeting to order at 18:01.

2. Approve agenda (2011.06.20_1_agenda.pdf)

The agenda was approved.

3. Approve and sign minutes of May 30 meeting (2011.6.20_2_Minutes_May_30.pdf)

Minutes were approved and signed.

4. Matters/discussion arising out of the minutes

- Head evaluation response was received. Together with the Head's report for this meeting, Branson gives the Board a direction and things to keep in mind for next year.

- In Head's Response Branson strongly encourages the Board to maintain the development of its own professional practice and require the same of the faculty and staff. He also further encourages the Board to thoughtfully and intentionally develop a funding strategy for the future of HIS and to further prepare to be competitive in a marketplace that will only get more so. The greatest challenges for the Niseko campus and new teacherage lie ahead.

5. Chairperson's Report (2011.06.20_3_Chair.pdf)

Big thanks for Suzanne for her long service and tireless work on the Executive Board. We will miss her as a board member, but look forward to her ongoing input as she will continue to serve on the BofC.

Although their four years has probably been different from what they initially expected, Rick and Sarah have wholeheartedly given themselves to HIS – and made a difference. Rick has surpassed our expectations with all that he has accomplished. Thank you! We wish you well at your new assignment as Head of Indian Creek School, Annapolis, Maryland.

A plaque was given to Dr. Toma at the Sheraton Party in recognition of his 20 years of service on behalf of HIS and he was very pleased to receive it.

Barry is on track to take over as Head of HIS from July. Enjoy your studies over the summer break, Barry.

Even over the summer HIS will continue to move forward on important issues – Niseko Campus registration, WASC accreditation, planning for a new Teacherage Building, and, most importantly, accepting and processing new students for the next school year. The office staff work hard even in the heat of summer.

6. Head Report (2011.6.20_4_Head.pdf)

Enrollment:

- Many families are leaving at the end of a three-year cycle (Korean Air, Korean Consulate), however there has been a surprising rise in enrollment for first grade and an increase in the number of Russian students.

- Kyoto International provides a cautionary tale, as it struggles to survive with the emergence of a university run international school. HIS must also consider what would happen if another international school is started in Sapporo. Branson urges that it is important for HIS to connections and strong partnership with a university. In his report he offered the following detailed considerations:

- (1) Be sure that beyond offering an education in English, an alternative to Japanese schools, a supportive school climate, an international faculty in a western-style building, that we are also offering a reason for families to choose HIS in programming. This comes to a strong curriculum that supports the core classes. Having the best arts curriculum and instruction in Sapporo would give many families reason enough to send their children to HIS to prepare them for education in North America.

- (2) Form a partnership with a strong college or university so that both organizations mutually benefit and thus capture the university-offering-an-international-school market before there is another player.

(3) Maximize the potential of Niseko to build a strong international school with two campuses that is clearly the expert on international education on Hokkaido.

- The Sherry and Peggy's work towards multi-aged classrooms in Elementary has gone very well

- Finally, Rick, Barry, Peggy had a very positive meeting with three representatives from the Aomori Prefecture who are running an international school for children of the science community they are bringing to that area. They have partnered with Kyoto and asked if they could visit HIS. The visit was productive and has the potential to increase our visibility and opens doors for the future.

Finances:

- This year the end of the year concert (Griot) cost ¥2,072,113 which includes its tuition assistance of ¥274,500. The show had income of ¥2,201,500 which includes ¥300,000 from the HIS budget to support the performance. The show had a total attendance for both shows of 549 adults and 81 students.

- Branson may have eliminated the possibility of adding to the reserve funds for the 2011-2012 school year, for even if the projections for enrollment remain constant, he increased expenditures by hiring Mokoto and Kris Kosada. Mokoto is replacing Sophie Brown who decided late in the year to not return. Kris was additionally hired which is not reflected in the budget. We hired both Mokoto and Kris as they are an excellent teaching couple for the long range plans for the school. Kris fills the need for a middle school English teacher that we will need beginning in 2012-2013 as we move to a 6-8 junior high and a 9-12 high school. Rick has given Barry a plan for this move including staffing, curriculum, electives. Barry will adjust and alter the plan as realities come into focus. By hiring Kris, we are overstaffed in secondary for 2011-2012 but ahead of our plans for 2012-2013. Together they bring real strength to the secondary. Given their experience and recommendations, Branson believes we made the right move for 2011-2012 and for the future.

- Branson strongly encourages the Executive Board to develop, support and maintain an annual fundraiser for the Endowment Fund. As partners for the DWS have begun to end their generous support, the Endowment Fund provides HIS a way to educate students in the future. This has the potential to provide even greater security for HIS than the Capital Fund as the Endowment Fund can fund scholarships and that equates to student enrollment.

Personnel:

Branson recommends to the Board that part of the work of the finance committee in the coming years should be to look at raising the base teacher salary. That combined with improved housing would be an asset for attracting and retaining teachers.

Curriculum:

- HIS teachers must put into practice the teaching and assessment components that have been agreed upon and written into the curriculum. The next step is to go from a written curriculum to one in practice. That requires more public practice such as collaborative teaching partnerships through multi-age elementary classrooms.

- HIS is on track to complete a four-year class/grade re-alignment. This has an impact on curriculum, which should emerge stronger as we end teachers working in isolation. This also holds the promise of better alignment from elementary to secondary.

- HIS needs to look to the future and see how it can continue to grow beyond the limitations that the large end of the year concert presents. We are looking to see how we can increase the arts programming, provide a strong curriculum, strong classroom teaching, and more varied performance opportunities for students. This does not mean "getting rid" of the end of the year performance but helping it evolve and grow as well as allowing for increasing the arts programming to involve all arts and giving each a chance to develop to maximize the benefits for students. As we diversify, the allotment of resources becomes critical but the arts curriculum has the potential to best benefit student learning and development and provide the right niche to attract the right students.

- The curriculum work needs vigilant oversight through public teaching practices, common assessments, and an articulated school curriculum. This fits in well with Barry's plans for a new teacher growth and evaluation program.

School Improvement:

With Barry's leadership, we are further ahead in the WASC process than ever before. Also through his leadership the process is not only authentic, but also sustainable for continuous school improvement. In addition, with the involvement of the entire faculty, the WASC process has the opportunity to improve the entire organization through self-study. This will affect not just the accreditation, but also teacher involvement and their actual practice.

Building and Grounds:

- I thank the building committee for its work thus far on addressing teacher housing. While we do not yet have a solution, we do have an involved committee that is making progress. With the knowledge that the Executive Board can access money when timely, the committee should be able to make substantial progress next year.

- The Building Committee is currently investigating an option that is close to school, lower in stature and versatility. Mr. Takagashi is drawing plans that Ogawa-san will take to Sapporo City to see if we can get permission to change the restrictions on the land.

Marketing:

The Spring fundraising event (golf/dinner/auction) should return next year in full scale to support the HIS endowment fund and support future student scholarships. I think the opportunity to connect with people outside the HIS community is important, but we also need to find a way to involve more school community members.

Niseko:

•With the first round of approvals coming from the Private School Division on June 10, Niseko seems like a glowing “green light.” This is an exciting and challenging move for the school. This will also require the Executive Board to do even more to communicate and reach out to the Sapporo community and now the Niseko community. We are all too well aware of what can happen when a group of people feel as if the governance system is too far removed and too distant from their own concerns. We must be mindful of the fissures that can develop with two campuses and that the bridge must be consistently crossed and structurally maintained.

• Niseko Township is advancing its work on refurbishing the building with the recent approval. For HIS key steps are securing a replacement for Peggy and looking for future teachers.

School Safety and Health:

Sarah Branson, R.N., C.N.M., has been fulfilling the duties of school nurse. With her leaving, the duties will generally fall to the office staff. This will cause greater stress on the office and thus on the faculty. Important in this process will be tighter control of student health records at admission, which is necessary but not in practice.

Executive Board:

•I strongly encourage the board to strengthen its board committee structure/system so they carry more of the work load to free up the Head for other duties. The jobs that lie ahead are too big to fall onto the head of school and the rest of the administration. Long term planning and execution through the finance committee for a budget with tuition increases to support compensation and programming is necessary; long term planning and execution for new housing for teachers is critical; long term commitment to school accreditation through the School Improvement Committee must be sustained. The more work the committees can do outside the board meeting, the more they will directly benefit school progress.

•Towards this, Dale commented that we need to remember to support the Board in their work and publicly applaud their work, Branson commented that we need to make Board more visible.

School Leadership:

•Barry Ratzliff will do an excellent job as head of school, and I am thankful that he will be head of school beginning 2011-2012. I strongly encourage the Board to be supportive of Barry and be ready to step in, and then step in and publicly voice support. The small skirmishes, the conflicts, the major collusions take an emotional toll. I believe each of us only has an “emotional battery” that can only be re-charged a finite amount of times throughout the year. Barry will need to pick his battles and the Board will need to be on the battlefield with him. Barry will need the Board to pro- active in contacting Barry and lending strong support.

•Branson recommends that the board generate a statement of the school, where we are and the possible challenges we are to face next year.

Thanks:

I thank the Executive Board for its support and leadership at HIS. I thank the members of the board for their commitment to the school and its future. I thank the Board for its support as the school faced change and the challenges and uncertainties that change brings. I wish HIS the very best as it looks forward to a future that perhaps seems unimaginable, but is not imagined.

7. Principal's Report (none)**8. Treasurer's Report (2011.6.20_5_Motion.pdf)**

❖Branson moved, Viljoen seconded, Motion 1: That the Executive Board approves the use of money from the Vehicle Reserve Account not to exceed ¥400,000 to replace bus seats in the larger capacity HIS school bus.

❖Branson moved, Viljoen seconded, Motion 2: That the Executive Board approves a temporary transfer of money from the HIS Reserve Account to the General Operations Account of ¥10, 000, 000 to be returned to the reserve account after September 1 when 2011-2012 tuition payments have been made.

❖Motions 1 and 2 were unanimously approved.

❖Branson moved, Ikeda seconded Motion 3: ExB approves to use money from the Maintenance account not to exceed ¥600,000 yen for air conditioning with the caveat that Barry will find the most economical solution.

❖Motion 3 was unanimously approved.

9. Auditor's Report

The possibility of a new auditor to replace Dr. Toma was discussed.

10. Report from Teacherage Building Committee

Another piece of land is being investigated (See item 6, Building and Grounds).

11. Funding for Teacherage Building

The feasibility of transferring all the money or doing a loan with a Japanese bank will depend on if the yen dollar rate is still poor at the time. Whether or not we take a bank loan will be discussed at the meeting in August.

12. Niseko Campus

- Next approval from Hokkaido Government will be on September 15. The government will need a list of teachers and acceptance letter from those teachers who will be at the Niseko campus.
- Construction officially starts on Friday, June 24.
- We can begin to advertise the school's opening.

13. Report of Exit Interviews

Tom Lyons gave a verbal report on the exit interviews.

14. PR and Scholarships and Future Development: Will be discussed next time.

15. Head Transition: Head transition will take place from tomorrow.

16. WASC Preparation: The draft report for first section has been completed ahead of schedule.

17. Review of meeting: The meeting was productive and an efficient use of the limited time.

18. Time and Place of upcoming meetings

Opening Ceremony August 17 at 10:00; Viljoen will be introducing Johnson as the Vice Chair and talking about ExB and Head goals.

August 29 (Monday) supper with faculty from 17:00-18:00; followed by Board meeting.

(Afternoon new board members orientation led by Viljoen and Johnson.)

19. Adjourn meeting

Viljoen moved to adjourn the meeting at 18:51. The motion was approved.

Minutes by Katayama (2011/06/27)

Proofread by Viljoen (2011/06/27)