

Minutes of the 2010-2011 HIS Executive Board Meeting #6
January 31, 2011, (Monday) at HIS at 18:00

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

Members absent: (none)

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 (2011.01.31_1.agenda.pdf)

The agenda was approved.

3. Approve and sign minutes of December 20 meeting (2011.1.31_2.December_Minutes.pdf)

Minutes were approved and signed.

4. Matters/discussion arising out of the minutes

None.

5. Chairperson's report (2011.01.31_3.Chair.pdf)

Congratulations to Rick Branson, who has accepted the position as head of school for Indian Creek School in Annapolis, Maryland. He and Sarah will be leaving HIS soon after school closes on June 22 but will be available for consultation until his contract ends at the end of July.

HIS welcomed the Niseko deputy mayor and the members of the Niseko Town Council, along with the main people involved with the start of HIS' second campus in Niseko, Mr. Michitaka Kato (director, Executive Division of the Niseko Town Office), Mr. Ken Suzuki (General Affairs Division), and Mr. Paul Haggart (Industry and Tourism Division).

6. Headmaster's report (2011.01.31_4.Head.pdf)

Enrollment: HIS currently has an enrollment of 176. The number of students is a cause for concern, and we will continue to monitor the decline. According to a JCIS demographic survey, an average of 47% of students at international schools in Japan have one or two Japanese parents; HIS has an average of 65%. While HIS has experienced the normal number of transfers, we are not seeing any new international applicants. We will continue to turn down students that we cannot adequately serve and will not simply enroll students who are not appropriate for HIS.

Finances: Without the expected number of new applicants, and an expectation of expenses for substitute teachers, the 2010–2011 budget requires careful monitoring. To further control expenses, some expenditures will be frozen. With no personnel left to cut, the bigger concern is the budget for the 2011–2012 school year.

Personnel: Branson explained the teachers' health insurance policy, and the fact that this cost will increase. HIS is one of the few schools in Asia that also offers optical and dental coverage.

Curriculum: The response to the professional development work with Susan Zimmermann was very positive, and the faculty and curriculum committee will work to develop the next step for school-wide professional development.

School Improvement: The Parent Discussion Group is continuing its discussions. (See Item 17 below.)

Building and Grounds: The building committee met on December 14 and January 25 to discuss new teacher housing. (See Item 14 below.)

7. Deputy Headmaster's report (2011.01.31_5.Principal.pdf)

Accreditation/WASC

- Ratzliff presented teachers with an overview of the WASC Self-Study Process that HIS is following for the accreditation visit in the late spring of 2012. HIS is currently on schedule with its report.
- Robert Johnson is now editing the draft of the Annual Report.
- WASC recommends walking all new staff through the school profile each year, and Barry has already done that with Daniel Reynolds, the newly hired principal for the 2010–11 school year.

- On April 4, Marilyn George will provide WASC training for all HIS teachers, giving them the right to join WASC accreditation teams.

Curriculum Committee

- The committee met after Susan Zimmerman's very powerful two-day session of PD to map out plans for implementing her *7 Keys to Comprehension*.
- The elementary school will soon be finishing up testing with MAP (Measure of Academic Progress), HIS' external assessment test.
- MAP testing for all secondary students will begin from the start of the second semester.
- Barry Ratzliff has been accepted to the Principal's Training Center for course work in London from July 3 to 19.

8. Treasurer's report (2011.01.31_6.Financial_page1.pdf – 2011.01.31_6.Financial_page6.pdf)

- The treasurers are busy watching and managing finances. There were no questions regarding the treasurer's report.
- Ikeda is currently investigating a possible requirement to register our mortgage with the Ministry of Justice which, at a 0.4% rate, could cost ¥800,000.

9. Auditor's report

Dr. Toma explained that there was a good gain in the CIF in terms of US dollars but that the problem is the strong yen rate. HIS is still in a good position as our well-balanced portfolio includes government bonds as well as stocks.

10. Niseko campus

Branson moved that the Board approve establishing a campus in Niseko township. Viljoen seconded the motion. Discussion centered on the need for a proposal that shows that the Niseko campus is clearly an extension of HIS and not a separate school.

Branson moved to revise his motion to "that the Board approve establishing the "Hokkaido International School, Niseko-ko" in Niseko township." Viljoen seconded the motion to approve the revision. The revised motion was unanimously approved.

Along with this motion, the Board reiterated that the finances, tuition, and governance of these two campuses will be the same. At the February Board meeting, we will adopt an internal document that outlines for future Board members the principles of the school and will also start to examine the Articles of Incorporation for needed changes.

Branson explained that Hokkaido Shinbun has printed an article about the Niseko campus, information that was gleaned at a public town meeting, even though HIS asked Hokkaido Shinbun not to make the information public as the Hokkaido government has not yet registered this as a school.

The Hokkaido government is presently insisting that HIS possess the building. However, HIS cannot expose itself to the financial liability of owning the school building or land. Niseko will need to invest about 20 million yen into the building, and the Niseko Group is looking at the building plans now.

In March, there will be a Niseko township meeting, but official approval will not be announced until June. HIS will soon submit the application to the Hokkaido Government. HIS will hire in August/September for a projected opening in January 2012, hopefully to have 24 students by March.

The mayor and his staff have been very supportive and have invested much time and effort into establishing the HIS second campus. Niseko is also a dominant issue for Shimako Abe in terms of time and effort.

11. Approval for 2011–2012 Calendar and change in 2010–2011 Calendar (WASC)

Branson first presented a school calendar with an earlier start, finishing first semester before winter break and providing more days of instruction before AP exams. This calendar could be considered in the future.

Branson presented the proposed 2011–2012 HIS calendar, which is very similar to the present calendar and which has been generally approved by teachers.

Lyons moved that the Board approve the proposed 2011–2012 HIS calendar. Yonesaka seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Branson presented an amendment to the present 2011 calendar to make Monday, April 4th, a Professional Development day with no classes so that faculty can have a full day with Marilyn George. Viljoen moved that the Board approve the amendment. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

12. Approval of TADS change (Mission with TADS & Dispositions.pdf)

Barry Ratzliff presented changes to the TADS.

Yonesaka moved that the Board approve the changes. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

13. Staff and Board Development

April 4 to 8 involves three development-related events: John Ritter's visit to HIS on April 4 and 5 for Board training, Marilyn George's visit for WASC training, and the annual JCIS meeting.

April 4: Marilyn George provides WASC training (PD day, with all Faculty involved.) Board members should be present if possible.

April 5: John Ritter meets with Rick Branson, Barry Ratzliff, Dale Viljoen, and Robert Johnson.

April 6: John Ritter meets with all Board members and possibly the Board of Councilors. Details are to be worked out later.

April 7: JCIS Board & Chair seminar with John Ritter.

April 8: JCIS meeting for Heads of Schools with John Ritter.

14. Teacherage housing – report from Teacherage Building Committee

As discussed at previous Board meetings, the architect's plans for teacher housing involve family apartments on the 1st and 2nd floors, with singles apartments on the 3rd to 10th floors. The architect estimates costs at 1.5 million dollars, but the costs would likely be closer to 2.5 million dollars. There would also be a basement area for storage with industrial washers and dryers. This is enough room for all teachers who would be required to live there.

Branson noted that the process of building a new Teacherage building is contingent on buying a certain parcel of land, so the Board needs to decide on whether to buy the land. HIS now has 20 million yen in the Teacherage account.

Lyons moved that the Board enter into negotiations to purchase the proposed site for a new 10-story Teacherage apartment. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

15. Report from Board Nomination Committee

Kathleen Riggins, Shimako Abe, and Viljoen met to confirm how long members have served on the board. The Board confirmed that the new limit on Board terms started in October 2010 and is not retroactive. Thus, Viljoen would be able to serve for three more years, and Kaufman could serve four more years. Viljoen said he would be happy to serve for one more year.

The Board Nominating Committee put out a "very healthy" list of nominees who have been involved with HIS.

16. Report from May Fundraising activity

Ikeda presented and received feedback on the Japanese letter of invitation to the golf tournament and auction starting at 12:00 on May 14th, Saturday. The golf tournament will start at 12:00 and the auction at 19:00.

17. Communication

There was a productive meeting on January 26 with the Parent Discussion Group who developed their vision statement. A parent survey has also gone out with report cards; to increase participation and anonymity they were given self-addressed envelopes. Because this is going out, the Executive Board will not do another parent survey connected with the head evaluation.

18. Vision planning

Vision planning is finished for parents and faculty will be tapped next.

19. Head transition

Barry Ratzliff continues to work on head transition by interacting with Dan Reynolds in Yokohama and by enrolling in training coursework this summer.

20. Board policy

Lyons and Yonesaka will present policy documents in February or March.

21. Curriculum development, implementation, and assessment

Reading and math will be the next focus now that Susan Zimmerman has visited, and we can expect this alignment to proceed fairly quickly. Branson talked about how a learning team develops and answers specific questions. The team asked whether there is a better way to do multi-age teaching, and are now trying out multi-age teaching with grades 6, 7, & 8.

22. Review of meeting

The meeting was productive.

23. Time and Place of next meetings

February 28 (Monday) at 18:00 (Kaufman & Ikeda will be absent)

March 28 (Monday) at 18:00 (Kaufman & Yonesaka will be absent)

24. Adjourn meeting

Viljoen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50. Motion was seconded by Branson. The motion was approved.

Minutes by Yonesaka (2/4/2011)

Proofread by Viljoen (2/4/2011)