

Vientiane International School
Annual General Meeting September 21, 2016

The meeting was called to order at 18:15. The start was delayed due to a power outage. 25 people were in attendance, including Board members.

Board Chair opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

- Explanation of Election Process
- Introduction of Candidates: Rachel Dechaineux, Dan Friendly, Orathai Hofmann, and Melannie Pook
- Recognition of Board members completing their term: Felicite Doudou-Hagen, Orathai Hofmann and in absenteeism, Meagen Baldwin

Minutes were approved (AGM September 2015)
Secretary confirmed that quorum has been established

Director's Report
Four Focus Areas

1. Transition

- 133 new students joined VIS last year
- 30 staff members joined VIS last year
- wait pools existed in EY, Gr. 1 (at full capacity) and Gr. 2 – 10 (English Language Learners)
- Enrollment forecast was 494 for the year (minimum students = 459; maximum students = 469)

2. Learning: Significant internal data is collected daily on student learning and this is triangulated with standardized test to determine individual growth and trends over time and cohorts of areas of strength and areas for growth within our program.

2.1 DP Results

- DP results remain above the world average with a highlight for VIS the large percentage of bilingual diplomas awarded
- 31 students graduated which is the largest graduating class historically
- average length of tenure at VIS was 4.8 years
- students will be attending universities around the world with the largest number going pursuing post-secondary education in Australia

2.2 Standardized Test

- ISA data showed significant improvement over the prior year with all cohorts equal to or above the world average in Math, Reading, Narrative writing and Expository writing
- MAP data showed that VIS students in grades 2 underperformed their peers and this is currently being analyzed.
- The two tests show both similarities and difference across achievement

2.3 Professional Learning

- Faculty attended workshops, led workshops and presented at international conferences. Professional learning aligns with school goals, divisional goals and the requirements of IB.

3. Changing Climate

Revenue fell short of forecast due to a decline in enrollment. Expenses fell below original forecast. The leadership team analyzed expenditures during the year and reduced expenses while maintaining programs to offset the decrease in revenue.

4. Planning for the Future

4.1 Capital Projects

- Key focus areas were program improvement (furniture for science labs, upgrading the primary design room, fans in the MPH, additional technological hardware – i-pads in the primary and i-mac lab in the secondary), strategic plan (language building and ramps), and the enhancement and replacement of equipment and resources (new furniture in the secondary, IT infrastructure)

4.2 Board Goals

- The board focused on finances throughout the year including the capital fee structure, setting tuition for the 2016 – 2017 school year and the development of a reserve fund policy.

4.3 Strategic Plan

- Feasibility studies were completed and decisions moving forward will continue to be guided by the mission and continuing to strengthen programs while balancing revenue and expenses.

Q1: What is our current nationality break down? Is there a policy?

Yes, the diversity policy allows for our student population of Lao Nationals to be up to 25% of our total student population

Q1: Do you know why there was a dip in enrollment last year and what has changed this year? How is enrollment and are we financially stable?

For the 2015 – 2016 school year, the enrollment forecast was based on a 5% increase in enrollment. This was based on past trends. The year marked the beginning of what we expected to be a period of stagnation with no increase in enrollment. Forecast for 2016 – 2017 was no growth. By June, 2016, we were back to an expected decline and we returned in August to a surplus of 25 students.

Q2: Thank you for sharing the data on the annual report and for the comments. What does the school do and how do they use the data when there are such significant differences between the two tests?

When there are significant differences, it indicates that we need to drill down deeper into the data to better understand the results. What we have found is that the data is actually fairly well aligned for individual students and cohorts. It could simply be that the tests are normed differently.

We also look at triangulating the data with internal assessments to determine if the results are aligned or if there are significant differences and try to determine why. We also look for trends over time as this could indicate that we need to shift our approach to teaching.

Q3: Digging into the data as you have mentioned would require significant time on the part of a teacher. How is the school supporting the teachers to do this or is someone doing this for them?

We are considering the best ways to do this and are beginning our work in this area. Two of the primary goals for the year are language and mathematics. The data will come into play through the work in this area. Secondary has analyzed the data with a focus on growth across cohorts of students and individual students.

Q4: Do we follow the same process with the IB results?

The IB data is summative and is analyzed for possible curricular implications, changes to a program or further professional development for faculty. It can be challenging to make inferences based on yearly data due to the small cohort so we also analyze trends over time to determine next steps.

Q5: When I arrived and saw the agenda for the first board meeting, I thought that the meetings were open. I learned that they were closed? What is the structure of the board? The board has 8 elected members and 1 appointed member. At the first meeting, the board will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

Q6 Does the board have committees?

Yes, we have a finance, policy and development committee. All committees include staff members. We have included the community on ad hoc board committees when the topic lends itself to increased participation, knowledge and expertise. An example of this was the capital fee working group last year.

Q7 How does the board communicate with parents?

There are three board forums a year according to our by-laws. Each of these three meetings are focused on finance: staffing, tuition and budget. The board hopes to review the ways in which they communicate with parents this year and more to a more transparent model.

Q8 Do the parents play a role in the accreditation process?

Yes, the parents will be surveyed regarding perceptions as a part of the accreditation process and the visiting teams will meet with parents during their visit in March.

A dialogue centering on the relationship between the board and the parents took place. Key points from the conversation are outlined below:

- Parents are not always sure what is a board issue or a leadership team issue. Perhaps the board could communicate this to parents.
- The board may want to consider sharing “What the board does” with the parent community, and sending out direct communications to the stakeholders.
- It is important for the board to manage expectations to prevent confusion of roles between the board and leadership team

The Board Chair responded that the board would be considering a range of ways to improve outreach and communication. Some possibilities that were mentioned include: a board email account, changing the structure of the board parent forums, including non-board members on committees of the board, forums with a combination of board members and the leadership team.

Q9: Coffee mornings are a great way to make contact with administration. Could some of the coffee mornings be more open?

Yes, the intent of the coffee mornings was to improve communication and provide a forum for feedback loops. There will be opportunities for this throughout the year.

Q10: How many associate members do we have?

We currently have 4 associate members.

Board Election Results:

131 ballots were cast

The three elected board members are: Rachel Dechaineux, Dan Friendly, and Orathai Hofmann.

The meeting was concluded at 7:30 pm