

The International School of Macao Parents' Association (TISPA)
General Meeting
Tuesday, 16th January 2018, 1:30pm
TIS – Conference Room
Agenda

Present

Howard Stribbell	Mary-Anne Jasinski	Chris Coates	Amanda Kait
Nick Chignall	Nicole Hammer	Connie Johnson	Abby Barrett
Laura Clarke	Sarah Luvisutto	Louise Kewley	Ana Paniagua
Liz Chio			

Apologies: None

Minutes of last meeting (5th December 2017)

Distributed on-line. No corrections noted. Accepted as correct.

Welcome

Ms Nicole Hammer thanked Ms Louise Kewley for the last 10 years for everything Ms Kewley has done for the school and TISPA. With volunteering her time and baking hundreds of cupcakes, selling hundreds of tickets Ms Kewley has done a lot. A big thank you in wishing Ms Kewley all the best moving back to Australia.

Ms Kewley replied that she really loved being part of TIS and seeing it grow. Equally sad to leave and happy about the next chapter. Ms Kewley also wished Mr Coates and Mr Stribbell all the best moving on with their next adventures. Ms Kewley thanked everyone and really appreciated it.

Treasurer's Report (Connie Johnson)

Winter Wonderland:

Raised a total of \$32,200.00 MOP

After expenses \$21,040.00 MOP

Christmas Giving Tree:

TISPA spent \$2000.00 MOP to buy additional presents needed for the orphanages.

Pop-corn:

This was on the last day of the school year before Christmas Break.

Raised a total of \$2,720.00 MOP

After expenses \$1,864.50

Head of Schools' Report (Howard Stribbell) – See attached

- Mr Stribbell advised we have a new Security Guard and his name is Gerard. Then Security Guard Mark starts at 9pm.
- There was a plan to add CCTV on the new fence. CCTV deters crime and more importantly helpful if something does go wrong. Especially if it is an accident, we can check to see what happened.

- Mr Stribbell advised tuition and salary go hand in hand. The biggest impact is the North Wing which has doubled our square footage. The operational costs of that have been significant as in air-conditioning, heating and staffing. Mr Stribbell advised that school fees do not go towards any Capital Projects. By Macau Law school fees do not go towards any school building projects. We have to find other ways of fundraising. The North Wing is a two hundred million dollar project that has been financed by the Education Department, Macua Foundation, MUST Foundation and our business partners The Venetian, Wynn, MELCO, Galaxy and MGM. They have all contributed to our business support education over the years.
- Mr Stribbell wanted feedback because historically school fees have always been lower in kindergarten, then move up for Grade 1-3, then move up for Grade 4-6, Grade 7-9, then Grade 12 being the most expensive. Part of that is because there are additional costs as you get to highschool you have specialist teachers and specialists classrooms. Part is also tradition. We are use to paying less for smaller students and paying more as they get older. With all the tuition that comes in we put that into operating the school. When we look at the kindergarten in particular, school fees are 20% lower than G1-G3 tuition. They also have 20% less students. The kindergarten program is one of the most expensive programs for us to run because there are only 20 students and there are at least 2 teachers in the classroom all the time. A full time teacher and full time teaching assistant.
- Mr Stribbell explained we would like to still keep the step approach and have the kindergarten level come up to the same as G1-G3. Which more accurately reflects the cost. We also have a tendency for parents to come into kindergarten and once they get to G1 they leave to get into Macau Anglican College or somewhere where it is free. Our goal is to try and level that out so we do not see such a decrease in SK. We want the families who come into PK to stay with us all the way through.
- Ms Jasinski advised last year TIS had to turn away four hundred kindergarten children and this year close to three hundred turned away. Maybe that will reduce people who are applying just for kindergarten and then moving on.
- Mr. Stribbell explained if they have such a large list waiting to get into kindergarten we should be offering at a discount as oppose where it costs us providing a lower tuition than what the cost is. It should cover its own costs. We don't go through and go how much does PK cost us? How much does Grade 12 cost us? We do it in a general sense. Pretty clear kindergarten is going to be one of the more expensive programs with less students.

- Mr. Stribbell asked for thoughts or what other parents might think.
- General feedback was it sounds fair. You need to charge to cover the costs to operate. There is a year on year fee of 6% increase, 7 % increase then a 15% increase which is substantial and for families paying fees not the company. Appreciate costs increase and school growth with a wonderful new building. Would be beneficial to have an understanding on the operational costs. Especially with the 6 % increase last year and now a 7% increase.
- Mr Stribbell expressed he is concerned about the impact on our existing families. One of the only reasons we are doing PK, JK then SK is it is only people coming into kindergarten ahead of time and they are going to know what the costs will be so it is not a surprise. You still have siblings, students that will be joining the school that would be a cost for those families.
- Mr Stribbell explained that historically they have increased fees every year. The biggest proportion of tuition increase is the staff salary increase. If we want to give staff salaries an increase then we increase tuition. We use a number of 70% so whatever we increase tuition by we have 70% we can increase staff packages by. Then the remaining 30% is used for operational increases or additional staff. We currently operate at about 80% of our school fees are spent of staff salaries. Which is actually quite hire. Systematically that has been intentional trying to get our salary packages up to a spot where we can compete with other schools. We just came back from 10 days of recruiting in Hong Kong and Bangkok. We are competing against all the other big International Schools for the same teachers. We have a good teacher package overall. The low Macau tax rate helps. With slightly lower housing prices compared to Bangkok or Hong Kong. We do have to pay the teachers a certain amount in order to get them here. We have been increasing that steadily so this year it is a lower increase than ever before. We see a more of a stabilising of that over time. It has been systematic to get there. That is hard with our tuition levels. If you look at what schools in Hong Kong, Beijing and Shanghai charge. Our biggest expense is teachers and we have to offer them the same salary but with less actual tuition to do it with.
- Mr Stribbell acknowledge all thoughts and feedback. Tuition levels go up every year and parents get concerned about that and they want to know what is the extra value they are getting out of that and what can I expect in the future. That is one of the reasons we are looking at the kindergarten one and to hear from people and see what we do there.
- Ms Jasinki did not think that most families know either that the kindergarten program doesn't pay for itself. That is actually extremely common in education in all the kindergartens. In the systems Ms. Jasinki has worked in the goal is always and direction is you have to cover your costs.
- Ms Jasinki further explained that it is not unusual for the kindergarten program to not cover costs. Parents would not know as there is no reason why for anyone to have information. So they wouldn't necessarily understand that. Now we are trying to catch this up.
- Mr. Coates wanted to re emphasis what Mr. Stribbell had said about which market we are actually in. We may think that we are competing with the School of Nations and Macau Anglican College. But when you go away on these recruiting trips and you see we are in a much larger community. We are competing against the Canadian schools, Chinese International they are all there and those same teachers that come up to our table to

- enquire about jobs with us and then right after going up to their table too. They are then lining up the packages that are available and making choices. Where can I live the best life? Where can I be compensated the most favourably? When you do look at our tuition costs when you compare TIS to my former school in Hong Kong we are half of what that tuition is. Mr Coates explained that it is not a balance playing field and we have to be so resourceful where we generate revenue in this school and what we provide for staff that maybe non financial to make them attracted to come here. It is very, very challenging.
- Ms Barrett commented that across the board many industries face this issue of recruitment, remuneration and retention. The current recruitment and salary is separate from the kindergarten increase.
- Mr Stribbell will take what has been said and pass onto the Board so they can hear the comments.

- With the six new classes there will be between a 120 - 150 additional students. We then need more Music, Mandarin PE and ELL teachers in supporting positions
- Ms Hammer asked why there was no new classes created for G4 and G5?
- Mr Stribbell explained we are going to 5 G1, G2 and G3 classes. Then we will have 4 G4, G5 and Grade 6 classes. At the moment Grade 6 only has 3 classes. So they will catch up to what G4 and G5 have. There will be 6 classes in each kindergarten. Then in the following year we would anticipate there would be fifth G4 class, and the fifth G5 class and the fifth G6 class.
- This year there were three vacancies in secondary and the remaining vacancies are from elementary.

- Mr Stribbell advised he is very excited about the new leadership. Mark Lockwood (New Head of School) comes from primarily Alberta where he works with a large group of schools in central Alberta on professional development and curriculum.
- Lorne Schmidt (New Secondary School Principal) is also from Alberta. Mr Schmidt taught in Alberta for 15 years. Then has been overseas for 17 years in China and then most of the time in Singapore with an overseas family school. The high school has a thousand students. Mr Schmidt has been the IB person and will bring his experience into the secondary school.
- Mr Coates will be moving on and we are sorry to see him go. Mr Coates will be going to Victoria Shanghai.
- Ms. Jasinki, Ms Kait and Mr Chignall will remain with Elementary School.
- Mr Martin Brown is staying as the High School Vice Principal.
- Mr Ian Jefferson will be stepping down from the Middle School Vice Principal position. Mr Jefferson will still be staying at the school. Mr Dom Masters will be stepping up into the role of Middle School Vice Principal.

Two things are looking at for next year:

1. Moving the Uniform shop most likely into one of the classrooms on the first floor in the North Wing.
2. Funding received for the North Wing included landscaping and funds for the front field. Looking at changing this to artificial turf. At the moment it is so hard to maintain the turf. We spend a lot of money on the maintenance of it. If it gets too cold in January it actually

turns to mush. With artificial we will get more use out of it from corner to corner and be able to use it for longer terms. Will be an exciting progress.

Principal's Reports

Elementary (Mary-Anne Jasinski)

- Recruitment has had lots of really good candidates and people interested. There are 6 new contracts signed, 2 more pending and 10 in progress at the moment. Dave in Alberta is going to go to the Toronto Fair and he will look for a couple of kindergarten positions there.
- Ms Jasinski noticed this year there were more experienced people applying as opposed to more brand new people.
- Mr Coates commented there were more with International experience too.
- Ms Rovanna Bawden is running her own Zone Workshop session for parents coming up soon. This is a model of behavioural self regulation that we use in the school right from kindergarten and up. It is to give kids a framework and vocabulary for learning how to monitor their emotions and their state of engagement and to recognise how to adjust it as well. These will be run separate for Division One and Division Two parents because the language and the strategies vary a little bit depending on the developmental stage for the children.
- Division One there are two sessions running Tuesday 30th January Tuesday February 6th from 1:45pm to 3pm.
- Division Two there are two sessions running on Wednesday January 31st and Wednesday February 7th from 1:45pm to 3pm.
- Ms Bawden advised Ms Jasinski that there are already 65 parents registered and there are still registrations coming in. No one will be turned away. If they cannot accommodate everybody they will run some more sessions and adjust the times so the groups are not too big. It will be great for having common language used between the home and the school.
- Division 1 Assembly on Wednesday, January 17; Division 2 Assembly on Thursday, January 18.
- Way to Go Lunch is on Wednesday January 24.
- CNY dress down day.
- Open House is Saturday February 10.
- Walkathon February 14.
- School Holidays commence February 16.

Secondary (Chris Coates)

- Recruitment has two offers for a secondary English position and secondary Chemistry and General Science.
- The first semester in secondary is ending in the end of January. The second semester will commence shortly thereafter. That doesn't have as big an impact as before because most of our courses are not longer semester. We are now on a full year, day one, day two schedule. There are a few courses that will be impacted. In middle school it might mean they go from having visual arts to music.

- Teachers are now starting to write the next round of progress reports. This is a 3 week process. They will be going out on February 9.
- Looking at the courses we are going to offer for next year and for students to begin the process of registering for courses for next year. We did a mock registration in December to get an idea of the interest level in the different courses we might be dropping. Then maybe offering some new courses based on that feedback from the mock registration from students. We like to involve parents in the course registration process. We have parent information night and could use the support of TISPA to encourage more parents to attend. On January 25 during the day time there is a course fair we are offering to secondary students in G9, G10 and G11 only. The G12 students are moving on and G8 do not really have a choice in which courses they take. Students will have the opportunity to take a look at what courses are going to be offered next year, they can ask questions to the teachers offering those courses. There will be students there who have already taken the course and new students can ask them also about the course from a student perspective. That evening there will also be two parent information sessions at 6:30pm for G9-G10 parents including the IB program. 7:30pm session for G11 parents. Mr Coates would even encourage elementary school parents if they want to know more about what secondary programs that are available to attend.

Kindergarten Coordinator (Nick Chignall)

- Ms Barbara Campbell the Curriculum Coordinator in kindergarten has been working with divisions in kindergarten on bigger art projects. Based on different inspirations and working with each grade. Now looking at locations to hang them up. Most likely on the second floor lobby area to brighten up the walls.
- Second floor lobby we have different centres that students and parents can play with. The centres will rotate. The goal is to expose parents to what our program is. If students are having a rough day we can bring them out there and a quieter area to engage in and after school it is incredibly popular for the students to play with.

Events Report

Events since last meeting:

- **Winter Wonderland - December 7**
- **Giving Tree - December 8**
- **Dress Down Day - December 19**

Upcoming events:

- **Dress Down Day - January 26**
- **Dress Down Day - February 7
CNY Theme**
- **Walkathon - February 14**
- **Open House Day - February 10**
- **Other upcoming Events**

General Business

- Ms Hammer thanked the G1 teachers for the Thrass Workshop held on Friday January 12. It was really well attended by a lot of parents. It was really good and helpful.
- Ms Jasinski thanked Ms. Hammer and will pass that on. Ms Jasinski explained that it is a complex system. As of last year all kindergarten and elementary teachers are taking that certification and have to be level one certified. This year in the interviews Ms Jasinski has been talking to the new teachers about THRASS and if you come to the school will need to participate in this training. It is consistent from kindergarten up and everybody is using the same system and everybody knows the language.
- Ms Hammer proposed to change the next TISPA General Meeting date as the Zone Workshop was on at the same date and time. It was agreed to change the meeting date to February 13th.
- Ms Hammer mentioned that Greens and Blissful Carrot are at the school on Thursdays and Fridays and do really good food. There has been feedback though that they are selling organic lollipops and that lollipops are not the best for the students.
- Ms Jasinski advised they will follow up on the selling of organic lollipops at school.

Confirm date for next meeting Next General Meeting date confirmed for Tuesday, February 13th at 1:30 pm in the Conference Room.