



THE ENGLISH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

REPORT TO THE BOARD

FOR THE MEETING ON 1 MARCH 2011

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

1. Election of a Chairman for ESF

- 1.1 The Search Committee is in the process of approaching a possible candidate. A member of the Committee will report on progress at the meeting.

2. Review of the ESF Subvention

- 2.1 A paper was received from EDB while the agenda for the Board was in preparation. It is attached as Appendix A. There has been no meeting at management level since the letter setting out the terms of the review was received.
- 2.2 The papers include a list of issues to be covered by the review, most of which are to be expected.
- 2.3 I would appreciate the Board's guidance as to whether to post this document on the ESF website.

3. Communications from Parents

- 3.1 The press reports following the meeting of the Committee of Parents on 20 January encouraged parents to make known their views about a prospective fee increase, which the reporter guessed would be 4%. At the Committee of Parents' meeting, Parent Teacher Associations were also encouraged to seek the views of parents.
- 3.2 Since then I have received and responded to 31 email messages from parents. Some were just a general appeal against a fee increase. Those which contained any detail tended to focus on the money spent on the Private Independent Schools and the level of fee increases already made since 2005/06. The few who specifically mentioned teachers' pay were generally supportive of teachers being appropriately rewarded.
- 3.3 Not all of the parents who wrote indicated which school their child attended. Those who did mentioned the following schools (some have children in both primary and secondary schools) :

Bradbury	(13)
Clearwater Bay	(2)
Island School	(1)
Glenealy	(1)

KGV	(3)
West Island	(2)
South Island	(1)

- 3.4 A few parents supported a necessary fee increase. The Chairman of the PTA of South Island School wrote to all parents to this effect.
- 3.5 A number of parents copied their messages to anonymised email addresses such as affordable.esf@gmail.com; transparent.esf@gmail.com; esf.fee.rise.concern@gmail.com as well as copying them to the Committee of Parents and the Concerned Parents. It will be difficult, therefore, to make sense of overall numbers.
- 3.6 The main points raised will be familiar to members of the Board, and the following summary makes no attempt to give an indication of volume :
- protest about the possibility of a further fee increase, together with a complaint about the cumulative effect of fee increases in recent years;
 - questions about what the money is spent on;
 - concern about the overall cost of ESF education when subvention is added to fees;
 - questions about the Refundable Capital Levy and concern about the combination of this with a possible fee increase;
 - questions about why the subvention has not been increased, suggestion that ESF should be part of the DSS scheme;
 - concern that the differential between ESF and international school fees or ESF and Private Independent School fees is so small;
 - need for ESF to review its costs.
- 3.7 An electronic file of all the letters received up Monday, 21 February, will be sent to members before the Board meeting.

4. Education

4.1 ESF University Fair

The ESF University Fair was held at Island School on January 27th. There were representatives from over 100 universities worldwide including the UK, Hong Kong, USA, Korea, and a range of international universities in Europe. The university stalls were spread across three venues in the school with admission representatives speaking with students and parents about the courses on offer. All year 12 students across the six secondary schools arrived on buses and had a time slot for their talks with university representatives. Feedback from the universities was very positive and they valued the opportunity to talk with our students and commented that they were very well prepared!

4.2 ESF and University Networking Breakfast

This event was held on the morning after the ESF University Fair, January 28th and all university representatives were invited to meet our ESF Senior Leaders, the Education Team and Higher Education Counsellors, IB Coordinators and school leaders from across the foundation. I gave an introduction about our courses, our students and our desire to continue to develop partnerships and strong relationships with universities. The morning was very fruitful in that through discussion we were able to deepen our understanding of some admission issues, concerns and processes. We were delighted to learn that some universities had come to Asia especially for this event and felt it was key to their work with our schools.

4.3 ESF Marketing Competition

The ESF Marketing Competition will be held on 10th March at Renaissance College. We have an important sponsor this year, the Efficiency Unit of the HK Government, and we are quite excited to be working with them. Business and Economics students from across our six secondary schools will form 12 teams to compete in a competition that will have three parts. All the challenges will focus around updating the image of the youth portal [on the internet] developed by the Efficiency Unit for international and English speaking students. This event will give our senior students the opportunity to be very innovative and to contribute to on-going youth work in Hong Kong.

4.4 ESF Advanced Diploma Higher Education Fair

The ESF Advanced Diploma Higher Education Fair will be held on 9 March from 4.30 -7.30pm at West Island School. The focus of this event is to support our applied learning students in their progression to higher education. The format will be a series of seminars held by a range of institutions ranging from Oxford Brookes(UK),the International Hotel Management School in Milan, Savannah School of Art and Design (HK and USA), the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Ecole Hoteliere Lausanne, University of West England. Key talks will be given on Australian and New Zealand foundation and university preparation courses as well as US Community Colleges as a pathway to university and college education in the USA, recognition of the BTEC qualification in the UK and a wider talk on alternative pathways into higher education.

4.5 Applied Learning Parents' Evening

This information evening is being planned for mid-March in cooperation with the Committee of Parents. Our applied learning leaders will explain the pathway, options within our schools and progression pathways to higher education. Details of the event will be available shortly.

5. **Finance**

- 5.1 Most of our time in the last few weeks has been taken up with work on budget and fees. Papers resulting from this work are included elsewhere on this agenda.
- 5.2 For academic year 2011-12, out of the 1,036 Year 7 places that were offered to current primary students, we have already received 1,023 acceptances. 63% of the parents have paid the deposit and refundable capital level (due in May) in January, and the rest provided post-dated cheques for the latter. The deadline for Year 1 applications was 18 February and an update on these will be given at the meeting.

6. **Human Resources**

- 6.1 The number of resignations and non-renewals has dropped from 79 to 78 as a teacher at one of our secondary schools has withdrawn his resignation (Primary 26; Secondary 25; PI schools 16; and ESL Kindergartens 11). For the purpose of recruitment, this number increases to 141 when new posts are included (Primary 39; Secondary 39, PI schools 52; and ESL Kindergartens 11).
- 6.2 The majority of interviews for Primary and Secondary schools were completed by Friday, 11 Feb, and we are expecting to appoint to 5 more Vice-Principal positions by early March. Skype was used more often this year and has proven to be both

more reliable and convenient. The recruitment and selection process ran very smoothly, offers were made to the successful candidates (at present 61% from overseas, 14% from Hong Kong, and 25% recruited within ESF) and HR are continually receiving their confirmation of acceptance. This is a busy time for contract issuance; the next steps will be applications for employment visas and teacher registrations for the new teachers.

- 6.3 At present, 4 positions in Primary, 9 positions in Secondary, 14 positions in PI, and 9 positions in Kindergartens are pending to be filled.

7. Development and Communications

7.1 Fundraising

The Development team met with several potential sponsors to solicit their support for a number of ESF projects, including the Marketing Competition in March, the KGV Fundraising Gala Dinner and the Primary Choral Concert in April, the HK Film Awards in May and the ESF Opera in September.

While the team secured prizes for the KGV Fundraising Gala Dinner on 2 April, they have also confirmed sponsorship from the Efficiency Unit of the Hong Kong Government for the Marketing Competition which is to be held on 10 March at Renaissance College, where 72 students from six secondary schools will participate.

Soliciting sponsorship support for the ESF Primary Choral Concert and the ESF Opera performance are works in progress.

Furthermore, in cooperation with Peak School, the team is developing plans in promoting the Peak School's centennial year, developing special fundraising projects, and building a data base for alumni membership.

7.2 Communications

Several interviews with the media were arranged in the month of January.

An interview with Keith Tucker, Director of Human Resources and Ed Wickins, School Principal of KGV were arranged with the HK Trade Development Council. The interview focused on teaching opportunities available in Hong Kong, in line with the Government's initiatives in making Hong Kong an Education Hub. The interview will be published online on the HK Traders' webpage.

Sing Tao's Smart Parents magazine feature an article on ESF schools, with information on IB, the value of education and academic excellence. Emma Navin from Wu Kai Sha Kindergarten and Ed Wickins from KGV interviewed for the stories.

In the meantime, Island School were highlighted for their Solar Panels and Wind Turbines project from South China Morning Post and RTHK. Jonathan Horner, Head of Science and students explained the development and the challenges they encountered while working on this environmental conservation project.

Prof Felice Lieh Mak had an interview with East Magazine sharing her journey while serving as Chairman of ESF's Board.

The Communication team also help produced a video on the subject of budget and finance where Samuel Poon, Vivian Cheung and Heather Du Quesnay were interviewed. The video was posted on the ESF website.

The Communication team worked with the Education Department in producing the leaflets and brochures for parents and people interested generally in ESF. In the month of January, "About ESF" and a leaflet on Japanese mother-tongue curriculum were produced.

8. Facilities Development

- 8.1 We are pleased to note that the Legislative Council approved the government contribution to the cost of the Kowloon Junior School redevelopment project, at its meeting on 18 February 2011. The approval is the product of much hard work from the project team over the last few years.
- 8.2 As this is the final approval for government funding we will now proceed to complete tender preparations and other advance works before Summer 2011. This includes moving the existing Perth Street campus to its temporary home in Hung Hom.

9. ESF Educational Services Limited

- 9.1 Following the adoption of the new structure of four ten-week programmes per year for Language, Programme 3 got underway after Chinese New Year. To date, the new arrangements seem to be working well for parents, with enrolment holding up positively. However, because the effective teaching time over the course of a year is longer than before, and also cuts into the traditional ESF holidays, we are seeing higher levels of movement amongst hourly teaching staff.
- 9.2 The kindergarten recruitment round is in progress and we are looking to fill five teaching posts and one Curriculum Coordinator's post.
- 9.3 Offers for places at the kindergartens for 2011/12 are being made, following the visits of prospective K1 students.
- 9.4 Following a curriculum review, the kindergartens plan to adopt the IB PYP programme and are now preparing their applications for candidacy. The authorisation process is likely to take two to three years and, assuming acceptance of their applications, would commence at the start of the new school year.
- 9.5 ESL launched its IB Finals revision courses on 11 January. Teachers for the courses have been selected and almost all subjects are already covered. We are starting to receive enrolments from students, including a couple from overseas.

Heather Du Quesnay
21 February 2011

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