



MINUTES

20th MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF PARENTS

of the English Schools Foundation

on Thursday, 24th November 2011, at 6:00pm

at the ESF Centre, 25/F, 1063 King's Road, Quarry Bay, HK

Present:	Mr Chris Erving	South Island School (Acting Chairman)
	Ms Amani Sue	Island School
	Ms Susan Finder	Island School
	Ms Elke Wiedemann	King George V School
	Mr Ram Ekambaram	South Island School
	Ms Sarah Cunich	West Island School
	Mrs Michelle Bo Shan Tsang	Beacon Hill School
	Ms Annie Van Weerdenburg	Beacon Hill School
	Mr Stephen May	Clearwater Bay School
	Ms Tess Lyons	Kennedy School
	Dr Ada Lo	Kowloon Junior School
	Ms Nicci Corrado	Peak School
	Ms Fiona Bishop	Quarry Bay School
	Mrs Angela Schael	Quarry Bay School
	Mr Thomas Chan	Sha Tin Junior School
	Mr Terry Mountain	Jockey Club Sarah Roe School
	Ms Elspeth Shaw	Discovery College
	Ms Adair Gordon	Discovery College
	Ms Lina Leung	Renaissance College
	Ms Nikita Mehta	Renaissance College
	Ms Amy Wong	Renaissance College
	Mr Simon Joyce	Parent Member of the Board
	Dr Vincent Ho	Parent Member of the Board
In attendance:	Mr Carlson Tong	Chairman of The Board
	Mrs Heather Du Quesnay	Chief Executive Officer
	Mr Jonathan Straker	Head of Student Support
	Ms Pam Ryan	Director of Education
	Mr Chris Durbin	School Development Adviser, Secondary
	Mr David Kirby	Student Attainment Manager and VLE Manager
	Mr Charles Caldwell	Human Resources Director
	Mr Wang Xiao-ping	Advisor for Chinese
	Ms Sarah Purcell	Minutes Secretary

Action By

CoP20-1

Apologies

Apologies were received from: Ms Joan Lye, Ms Shalini Sujanani, Mr Marc Castagnet, Ms Lena Chan, Ms Mimi Hsiao, Ms Breaca Moger, Dr Richard M Walker, Ms Terri Donlon, Ms Cassie Jullienne, Dr Ken Lam, Ms Scarlett Mattoli, Mr Peter Chu, Ms Liselle Carey, Ms Janita

Hogervorst, Ms Clare Allum, Ms Kimberly Whiley, Mr Mark Clifford, Mr Simon Osborne, Mr Robert Bennett and Ms Kim Anderson.

CoP20-2

Election of Chairman

Marc Castagnet was elected as Chairman. In Marc's absence Chris Erving was invited by the committee to chair the present meeting.

CoP20-3

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CoP20-4

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2011

The minutes were approved.

CoP20-5

Introduction of Corporate Agenda

The Chairman of the Board welcomed the parents as important stakeholders and expressed his commitment to openness and transparency.

It was explained that the Board reaches decisions and governs through collective responsibility. The structure of the Board was highlighted as comprising 26 members, ten of whom are independent, eight are elected parent members, and the remainder are representatives from Principals, School Council Chairmen, teachers and support staff; the CEO is a non-voting member. It was pointed out that the three standing committees – Finance, Remuneration and Audit are all chaired by independent Board members. There are several advisory committees which advise the CEO and report into and receive feedback from the Board.

The Chairman of the Board requested that members respect confidentiality.

CoP20-6

Update on subvention

It was stressed by the Chairman that it is ESF who are driving the communication with EDB and doing everything they can to resolve the issue of the subvention. It was explained that ESF's aim is to secure the subvention to an equivalent level as that afforded to DSS schools. It was noted that this might take some time given the forthcoming change in government.

It was imparted that fee increases are a direct result of the government having frozen the subvention 10-11 years ago. It was impressed upon the parents that the government should be made aware that parents are long-term tax paying residents.

The increasingly cosmopolitan nature of Hong Kong was pointed out as well as the suitability of ESF's varied curriculum to this environment. The Chairman appealed to parent members for their support for students' rights to an

ESF education and asked them to lobby government to that end.

It was suggested by one member that ESF should provide the various arguments in point form together with the contact details of EDB to parents in order that parents can easily create letters addressed to the appropriate people. The Chairman replied that what had been distributed to parents was only the first of several letters and that subsequent letters would provide such details. It was explained that timing is critical, and that lobbying should ideally take place just prior to the LegCo education panel.

HDUQ

There was a discussion amongst members as to whether quantity or originality of letters would have more of an impact on EDB.

The Chairman of the Board left the meeting.

CoP20-7

11-16 Education

The Director of Education presented the paper which had been circulated to members.

She explained that the curriculum for 11-16 year olds was being addressed to complement the work already done on the PYP and the post 16 curriculum. It was explained that middle years can be divided into Years 7-8 and Years 9-11 during which time students prepare for their next pathway either IB Diploma, Applied Learning or Foundation Diploma. Schools make slight adaptations within this overall system.

Two main approaches were highlighted for middle years education:

Private Independent Schools run the Middle Years programme as a link from PYP to IB.

The traditional ESF schools link the primary and diploma years through a self-designed middle years curriculum and IGCSE and GCSE.

The page displaying alternative curricula for different student needs was highlighted and it was pointed out that during a recent visit, EDB had been very impressed with the SEN provision.

CoP20-8

University Entries

A report had been circulated detailing university destinations including student numbers and subjects studied.

One member questioned whether subject areas could be analysed by country breakdown in case of any implications for the IB and Diploma programmes.

The Director of Education commented that one of the Principals is considering a 'Gifted' Education Programme for students in the younger years for accelerated entrance

to 'top' universities. It was pointed out that the curriculum would need to be individually tailored which would be difficult to administer but was necessary to meet students' needs.

CoP20-9

Chinese Review

Members were informed that a strategic review of the Chinese programme was to take place in both secondary and primary schools. Seven secondary and two primary schools were to be involved. It was noted that the focus would be on the student learning experience rather than on academic performance. Members were told that in terms of academic achievement marks obtained for the IB programme in Chinese are above or very close to the world average, and are above those of a particular bi-lingual school in Hong Kong.

WXP

It was explained that classes would be observed and that student representatives, teacher representatives and parent representatives would be interviewed. Both internal and external experts will carry out the reviews.

The Chairman commented that the ESF schools are very English speaking and that there should be more evidence of Chinese. Members commented that Sha Tin College, Kowloon Junior School and King George V School do have signage in Chinese.

CoP20-10

Compensation and Benefit Update from HR

The Human Resources Director provided information on staff attrition rates for ESF and ESL employees. He revealed that voluntary attrition was stable at around 8% for the last 3 years. Support staff attrition was at 14-16% which is considered high but the difficulty of determining whether this is voluntary or involuntary was pointed out. A common exit window for staff was noted at between 6 and 9 years of service.

An analysis of ESF and PIS teachers' salaries were presented to illustrate how they compared with those of similar schools. For both single and married teachers the base salary, housing allowance and gratuity at the end of each two year period were taken into account as well as school fees for teachers' children. Data on comparative teacher pay had been gathered from Hong Kong international schools, comparative Hong Kong English speaking schools, NET teachers, comparable schools across Asia and the markets from where ESF recruits teachers. In terms of net disposable income for single teachers, assuming a HKD 16K housing allowance, ESF schools were found to be 17% ahead on the lowest pay band, 5% ahead on the median and on par with other schools at the maximum band.

In terms of net disposable income for married teachers, assuming a HKD 20K housing allowance, ESF schools were found to be 4.8% behind comparable schools on the lowest pay band, 8.3% behind on the median and 4.7%

behind on the maximum band.

The Human Resources Director explained that ESF are engaging a consultant to provide data from a larger number of international schools which will also take into account additional pay for leadership and management responsibilities.

It was explained that the current Health Insurance contract expires in August 2012. In preparation for a tender process focus groups have been formed. CC

The Human Resources Director summarised his update:

- the most competitive, value for money Health Insurance plan would be implemented
- salary consultancy and desktop research is to be deployed to ensure ESF teacher salaries are in an appropriate relationship with the market
- a major review of support staff compensation would take place
- exit interviews would be conducted
- training and development would be increased for support staff in parallel with professional development for teachers.

CoP20-11 Update on PTA Administrators Meeting

It was reported that at the 7 November PTA meeting a small group had agreed to work toward the overall 15% profit margin ceiling and questions had been taken on database items. Members had shared information regarding the organisation of services and events.

CoP20-12 2012-2013 Calendar

The provisional ESF school term calendar was distributed. It was noted that this would not be finalised until April or May 2011. Three teacher CPD days are yet to be identified.

One member suggested that CPD days could be co-ordinated between schools, especially related primary and secondary schools.

CoP20-13 PTA Updates

PTA updates were circulated to all members.

CoP20-14 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is 19 January 2012 at the ESF Centre, 25/F, 1063 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong.

The meeting closed at 7.43 pm.

Marc Castagnet
Chairman

