



AISA SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS FRAMEWORK

A Practitioner's Guide for School Leaders



INTRODUCTION

The AISA Mission Statement

"AISA is dedicated to transforming student learning by leading and supporting strategic thinking, professional growth and school effectiveness."

The concept of School Effectiveness is notably broad in scope and certainly open to a wide range of interpretation. This handbook has been developed to provide some definition to what is meant by school effectiveness in AISA schools. In order to maximize student learning and to promote professional growth for staff in AISA schools, it is essential that the school functions in an effective manner, providing a stable and supportive environment, and a sound and viable school organization that ensures sustainability in the years ahead – even through the frequent changes in leadership that tend to characterize AISA schools.

The purpose of this AISA School Effectiveness Framework (SEF) is to establish a common understanding of school effectiveness in the AISA region and to suggest good practices, structures and resources that will support learning in AISA schools. A key component of school effectiveness is how a school defines learning and builds a coherent curriculum aligned with the guiding statements of the school to ensure mission integrity. When all components of school decision making and procedures connect back to student learning we build a stronger evidence based learning culture. This handbook should assist you to think about school effectiveness in your own context by considering how learning is defined, and how this definition is used as a scaffold to support the different elements of your school.

This SEF handbook focuses on a range of topics including: governance, strategic planning, financial and viability planning, emergency planning, accreditation and school improvement programs, child protection programmes, community service, measurement and assessment of school effectiveness, personnel practices, facilities management, and community engagement. The SEF handbook is intended for school leaders, board members, administrators and teacher leaders at all levels of international school organizations.

The AISA School Effectiveness Framework serves as a companion to other AISA online resources including the AISA Code of Governance, the AISA Child Protection Handbook and support materials, the AISA Service Learning Handbook, AISA's Blended Learning materials, and the A/OS Emergency Procedures Handbook. In line with the AISA Strategic Plan, AISA continues to author resources that promote quality and consistency across our member schools, to ensure they have access to research-based best practice that is set out in a language and format that practitioners find useful, and to provide access to resources for school leaders and educators in a convenient and centrally located Knowledge Bank on the AISA website. These AISA resources not only provide commonality among our schools, but also serve as a benchmark to assess the ongoing development of our programmes across the region and to identify specific topics for ongoing, impactful professional development that builds the capacity of individuals and schools across the entire AISA community.

This handbook also offers experienced leaders in AISA member schools a toolkit to examine the current status and needs of their school and to consider what additional structures and resources might be used to further improve school effectiveness. AISA welcomes feedback and suggestions to be incorporated in future editions of this handbook and any encourages you to send us additional resources to be considered for inclusion in the Knowledge Bank hosted on the AISA website.

Finally, AISA would like to acknowledge the primary author of this Handbook, Dennis Larkin Ed D. whose experience and resources, developed over a lifetime in International Education, now find voice in this publication.

Dr. Peter Bateman
Executive Director

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About AISA

The Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA), established in 1969, is a non-profit education association supporting the professional learning and school improvement strategies of international schools on the continent of Africa. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, AISA offers a professional learning programme specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our diverse member school community. AISA also offers a number of supplementary programmes, scholarships and facilitates collaboration among member schools to advance school effectiveness and improve student learning.

SECTION ONE: GOVERNANCE

Effective governance of international schools is essential to the long-term viability of each school and to provide a strategic direction for the school community.

In the not for profit realm of international school governance AISA has developed, and the AISA board has adopted, the **AISA Code of Governance** for member schools. Recognizing that a high degree of Board Member turnover and the transience can be detrimental to best practice governance, the AISA Code of Governance is intended to provide continuity of purpose and practice for AISA member schools.

For the purpose of this school effectiveness framework, the following aspects of school governance offer a standard of implementation and development that should be the norm for all international schools.

Principles of Best Practice in Board Policy

As in all areas, the governance practice at individual schools must be guided by best practice research. Board members should study and consider best practice research in order to adopt for their school a set of principles to be followed at their school. Once established, these principles should be adopted in the schools Board Policy Manual and reviewed annually.

Adopting best practice governance principles in policy serves to direct and inform board and community members as to how the school is governed and to offer transparency and consistency in regard to all governance matters. Given the high degree of turnover common to many international schools, the principles adopted by the Board will provide continuity from one Board to the next.

Governance Roles & Responsibilities

Essential to all effective governance is a clear and shared understanding of the roles of the Board of Trustees and the roles of the school administration and staff.

Key Board roles include:

- Serve in a policy making function
- Responsible for setting the strategic direction of the school
- Ensure the sound financial position of the school (viability planning)
- Conduct an annual audit of school finances, passing of a balanced budget and ensuring the school is legally compliant
- Hire, support, evaluate and supervise the Head of School

Key school administration and staff roles include:

- Implement Board policies
- Develop written procedures for Board policy
- Conduct all aspects of the work of the school in educating students

Board Recruitment and Training

Board members, in collaboration with the Head of School, develop and implement annually a transparent process to elect or appoint community members to serve on the Board. This process should include orientation to the role and responsibilities of being a

See **Appendix A** to review the entirety of the AISA Code of Governance which can also be downloaded from the AISA website.

A common reference source for Principles of Best Practice can be found from the National Association of Independent School (NAIS) and also from the International School Trustees Handbook published in collaboration with NAIS found in **Appendix B**.

Board Member in advance of an individual being elected or appointed to the Board. It is important for those considering serving on the board to know in advance the Board adopted best practices (how the board conducts its business) as well as the time commitment serving as a board member.

The Board should develop and publish to the community on an annual basis a “**Board Profile**”. The profile should explain how the Board is constituted, what specific skills, experiences and dispositions are currently being sought, for example, experience with construction financing, professional experience with strategic planning, etc., to ensure the Board and school achieve the existing vision or long-range plan of the school. The Board Profile should be no more than one page and should be sent to all school families and presented publicly at a board meeting or other parent forum.

The school should have a well-developed **Board training programme** in place. This programme should include annual board training in a retreat or similar format. This session is usually facilitated by an external facilitator. The annual Board training provides the opportunity for the Board to review its governance principles, reflect on previous year’s work and achievements as well as to consider recommendations from previous year Board Committees. Finally, the Board should use this time to develop the Board and Committee goals and objectives for the coming year.

As mentioned above, schools should also have in place a **Trustees Orientation Programme** that communicates essential information about being a Board member in advance of an individual deciding they are willing to serve on the Board. This orientation should be complemented by a formal orientation programme for all new Board members after they are elected or appointed to the Board and prior to the annual board training programme. The orientation sessions are usually conducted by two Board members (Chair of Board and Chair of Trustee Committee) and the Head of School. A typical agenda would be to provide new members with foundation documents of the school, grant access to electronic Board website and past minutes of Board and Committee meetings and a presentation that orients them to the recent initiatives of the Board and any specific information that will help the new Board Member assume office effectively.

For more information on how to develop a **Board Profile**, see **Appendix C**

School Foundation Documents

School Foundation documents should include:

- Conflict of Interest Statement signed annually
- Mission and Vision Statements
- Principles of Best Practice (adopted in Board Policy)
- Board Policy Manual
- Strategic Board Evaluation (research and standards based)
- Head of School Evaluation (research and standards based)
- Strategic or Long-Range Plan
- Strategic Financial Plan
- Board Profile (updated annually)
- Board Succession Planning Chart
- Defined oversight measures: viability factors and program factors
- Formative Board Evaluation
- Code of Conduct signed annually

Board Committee Structure

In order for the Board to carry out its responsibilities and to accomplish annual goals and objectives, the Board establishes Committees or task forces to conduct the work of the Board. **Standing Committees** are those Committees that are necessary for the essential work of the Board; Standing Committees have no end point and are in effect each year.

Typically, the **standing board committees** include:

- Committee on Trustee
- Finance Committee
- Advancement Committee
- Facilities Committee (often this can be an ad hoc task force)
- Strategic Planning or Futures Committee or task force
- Executive Committee (optional)

The membership and responsibilities of each standing committee should be defined in policy and reviewed each year. Committee membership can vary greatly from school to school but will usually consist of at least two Board Members and often include specific members of the community who bring professional experience and sought after skill sets related to the charge of the committee. The Head of School is a member of all Board Committees and all Board Task Forces.

From time to time, Boards employ an **Ad Hoc Task Force** to address specific and topical issues that need research or development and are consistent with the strategic plan of the school. The Ad Hoc Task Force should be established by vote of the Full Board.

A formal proposal for establishing a task force should define:

- membership,
- written charge the task force is to accomplish,
- the specific time frame the task force will be in effect (beginning and projected ending time)
- the outcomes the task force will accomplish.

Membership of the task force is consistent with membership guidelines for standing committees.

Board Ethics

The Board must demonstrate the highest ethical standards in carrying out their leadership roles and responsibilities. To this end the Board must develop and adopt in policy written ethical standards and/or guidelines to which all members of the board will comply. Typically, Boards develop, review annually and sign annually a Conflict of Interest Statement and a Code of Conduct Statement. In addition, some Boards may see the need to develop core value statements or similar document of agreements to guide the Board in its deliberations and decisions. These statements of the ethics of the Board should be communicated broadly.

Board Evaluation

The Board should develop a written, research and standards based evaluation document that allows the Board to self – evaluate its performance annually. This evaluation document should be reviewed in the annual retreat of the Board and revised when needed. It is good practice for Boards to compare their evaluation document and

Lincoln Community School example **Conflict of Interest Statement** can be found in **Appendix D**.

A sample **Strategic Board Assessment** document developed by ISM is included in **Appendix E**

procedures with other boards and with professional organizations such as National Association of Independent Schools, BoardSource and Independent School Management Group (ISM).

Board Policy Manual

The Board Policy Manual defines the roles and responsibilities of the Board and sets broad guidelines and expectations for the operations of the school.

The policy manual is organized into broad sections that typically cover the following areas:

- School Organization and Legal Status,
- Board Organization Matters,
- Instructional Programme,
- Students,
- Personnel,
- Financial Oversight,
- Facilities,
- Inter-Organizational Relations,
- School Community Relations,
- Fund Raising and Alumni Relations.

Often schools are willing to share Board policy documents; similarly, organizations such as Academy of International School Heads (AISH), Association for the Advancement of International Education (AAIE) and AISA can serve to provide policy development guidance.

It is important for the Board Policy Manual to contain a clear statement on how board policy is developed, reviewed and revised to ensure a Board Policy is current, reflects best practice governance and that board policy explicitly meets the needs of the school in its particular setting.

Supporting Administrative Procedures

The administration is tasked to develop written procedures to guide implementation of each Board Policy statement to the degree that each policy statement requires administrative action. These administrative procedures detail the manner in which Board policy will be implemented by school personnel in concrete terms including action steps when appropriate.

Administrative procedures are adopted by the school administration. The administration should be expected to inform the board of procedures and any changes to procedures. While in the spirit of good governance and collaboration, the Board may offer suggestion to procedures, the responsibility for forming and acting on these procedures rests solely with the Head of School and the school administration.

Operations Manual

In addition to administrative procedures related to Board Policies, the administration should develop and maintain an Operations Manual. The Operations Manual serves to detail for all members of the administration at all levels of the organization the processes and practices of the school to ensure smooth daily operations as well as to ensure sound and ethical practice by all school employees.

Appendix F contains the Table of Contents of the Board Policy Manual from Lincoln Community School, Ghana

Appendix G contains a sample Table of Contents for an Operations Manual from Lincoln Community School, Ghana

SECTION TWO: PLANNING

Effective schools excel in the realm of planning for all major aspects of the school's programme and services.

The Board has the responsibility to engage the community in broad based strategic or vision planning that sets the direction of the school; the board also collaborates with the school administration to develop a financial planning process and document that ensures the long term financial security of the school. Financial planning is presented in detail in the next section.

It is important to have a clear purpose and understanding of the type of planning in which the Board, community and administration engage. Some confusion can occur as different terms are at times applied to describe the same type of planning. In some cases, the term “strategic plan” is used to describe a process and plan that articulates the vision of the school for a specific period of time. However, this “strategic planning” is also used to describe a plan designed to ensure the long-term future of the school for the next generation of students. This plan is also called “viability planning”. Similarly, the term “long range planning” is also used to describe the goals and aims of a school over a specific period of time; this approach would equate to the “strategic plan” mentioned in the first example.

Strategic or Long-Range Constituency Based Planning

There are as many forms of strategic planning as there are consultant firms and agencies that offer their services to facilitate these processes for schools. Typically, the strategic planning process engages the Board, administration, faculty, staff, students and community members in developing a three to five-year vision to guide the school to achieve specific goals within the given time frame. This process often emerges from specific needs of the school at a given time, from a change of Head of School, can be aligned with accreditation activities, or simply occurs at the end point of the existing strategic or long range plan.

This type of planning is usually facilitated by an external facilitator and would include all or most of the following:

- some form of community engagement in advance of the planning (survey, focus groups or other)
- representational participation by all constituents
- data sets related to the key programmes of the school
- needs assessment or SWOT activity to describe and review factors critical to the school
- processes that engage participants in reviewing mission statement, envisioning school of the future, drafting of a vision statement and goals that align with that statement.
- the plan will ultimately include action plans, measurement and assessment processes and procedures

Typically, this plan is a lengthy and detailed document of many pages and may include graphic displays and is often used for marketing of the school.

Know the difference?

- Strategic Plan
- Strategic Planning
- Viability Planning
- Long range planning

See [Appendix H](#) for more on Planning

Strategic Financial or Viability Planning

This plan is designed to focus a sharp lens of critical aspects of the school programme in order to ensure the school is viable and financially sound for future generations of students.

Viability planning considers critical elements including but not limited to:

- financial health of the school and financial planning,
- reserve position of the school,
- risk and debt ratio,
- master facilities planning,
- enrolment strength/marketing.

This type of planning is accomplished by the Board and administration and usually results in a two-page document that provides high level information. The strategic financial or viability plan tracks the school's viability annually, historically and makes projections for future development of the school.

Emergency Planning

International Schools face the ever-present challenge of preparedness for a wide range of emergencies that might occur at any time. There are many sources that provide emergency planning guidelines and sample planning tools. The **Office of Overseas Schools (OOS)** is a good resource for emergency planning information. See appendix I.

The emergency plan can become a long and detailed document; it is good practice to provide a summary of key emergency responses in a form or flip chart or tabbed document that is hand held and is provided to each staff member. The school emergency plan should be reviewed by external resource persons with expertise in the area of emergency preparedness. Often the regional security officers of the US and other embassies are excellent resource persons for the school.

Emergency plans need to consider and practice a variety of safety measures including:

- fire and evacuation drills,
- lock down or active shooter procedures,
- communication protocols,
- engagement and coordination with local host country safety emergency services
- natural disaster contingency planning

Schools also need to include in emergency planning the socio-emotional needs of community members in response to an emergency scenario such as loss of life, traumatic incident response etc.

Emergency plans must be updated annually and also adjusted in real time as necessary to respond to any unexpected incident or outbreak of medical incident such as Ebola, H1N1 Flu, etc. In cases where temporary school closure is warranted, the school should have in place and have practices as part of the on-going instructional programme, a distance learning programme to support student until the school can resume classes on site.

The Head of School or designee should be tasked to complete an **annual checklist of actions taken** according to a determined calendar of school events to ensure emergency preparedness is given a high priority for all members of the community. The Head of School should review the emergency plan annually with the Board.

Success in responding to an emergency by successfully implementing emergency protocols is very much dependent on the degree to which the plans are clear and concise, communicated to all constituents and well known and routinely practiced at school and in the community. The school must have a schedule of drills and other practice scenarios to ensure readiness.

Communications plays a huge role in responses taken by community members. There must be multiple and varied communication tools in place and these tools and communication protocols must be tested on a regular basis. Typically, the emergency communication system would involve SMS texts, messages on the school website and other social media tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter.



Rules of Thumb

- Engage community in strategic or long-range planning
- Ensure board commits to strategic or viability plan for internal use
- Emphasize the importance of high level data as indicators of viability of school
- Emergency Planning is everyone's responsibility
- Emergency plan annual checklist of actions ensures aggressive implementation of all area of safety and security
- Excellent communication is essential to successful implementation of all aspects of emergency plan

SECTION THREE: SECURE FINANCIAL POSITION

Of primary importance to the long-term success of any school is to ensure the school is in a sound financial position both in the present and well into the future. This is of even higher priority in Africa where schools are often located in areas of the continent that are less stable politically or can be more susceptible to unexpected challenges from external factors such as disease (Ebola, H1N1, Rift Valley Fever and others), natural disasters and civil unrest.

For this reason, international schools must take specific and deliberate steps to implement best practice financial planning in order to define operationally the financial resources needed to ensure the school can meet unexpected liabilities and to provide the necessary resources to ensure high quality programming for students.

Effective schools develop and implement a comprehensive yet relatively simple set of financial planning strategies to measure the school's financial performance, to plan for the future, to provide a strong reserve position and to communicate transparently to all constituents the financial position of the school.

The critical components of effective financial planning include:

- research based viability plan,
- defined standards of best practice financial planning,
- a three to five-year strategic financial plan that is connected to the school's vision and strategic plan

Schools must also adopt reporting strategies that are simple to understand yet provide comprehensive data for reporting and monitoring financial performance.

Research based Viability Planning/Standards of Practice

Schools can benefit greatly from aligning their current financial planning with research based standards that guide assessment of the school's financial health. School administration should review relevant research to propose a series of standards or benchmarks that can serve to measure the school's overall health. One noted source of this information is the Independent School Management Group's (ISM) position paper on financial stability markers and viability planning for the school.

Standards of particular importance include:

- reserve position of the school presented as a percentage of annual operating budget; this includes emergency and operational reserves; some schools may also wish to develop a capital reserve fund.
- professional development funding also as a percentage of annual operating budget
- annual incremental tuition levels
- enrolment in excess of capacity
- employee compensation programmes
- fund raising (when applicable)
- rolling long term plan in a five or seven years financial planning time frame.

For more information on **Financial Reserves**, see **Appendix N**.

Independent School Management group has developed **strategic financial planning processes** and document which can serve as a model for AISA schools.

See **Appendix J** for information on ISM's **stability markers** and a sample set of board approved standards for an international school.

Financial Benchmarking

The administration and Board have the responsibility not only to plan for and measure the financial success of the school but also to develop a series of financial standards or benchmarks that define in practical terms what comprises a sound financial position for the school in its specific setting and locale. These standards or benchmarks become the measuring tool to guide the administration and board in assessing the overall health of the school and in setting annual financial goals and objectives to meet each standard.

It is now common practice for schools to develop some means of comparison of the school's financial position and performance against similar schools in Africa. These benchmarks play an important role in determining the school's competitive position in regard to a series of indicators including tuition and fees, compensation packages, recruiting of faculty as well as in overall financial position of the school. The administration and Board should annually review the school's status in comparison to the school's established benchmarks and adjust accordingly.

See [Appendix K](#) for a sample of Board adopted **financial benchmarks** or standards.

Financial Reporting and Data Dashboards

In addition to the format for developing and reporting on the annual budget, the administration should develop a reporting tool that tracks the school's financial position against each of the established standards and benchmarks adopted by the Board of Trustees. Many schools around the world have developed a data dashboard to serve this purpose. A number of AISA schools as well as the AISA office have worked with **Interactive Data Partners** to develop and implement dashboards that organize and track not only financial data but also school performance metrics across various domains. The data dashboard is discussed in section four.

Data dashboards can be developed by AISA Associate member **Interactive Data Partners**. For example dashboards see [Appendix L](#)

Strategic Financial Plan: Process and Product

Effective financial planning consists of three major elements:

- annual budget development based on research standards,
- strategies to ensure the school builds and maintains a strong reserve position for unexpected circumstances
- a long term strategic financial plan (five to seven years).

Most schools excel at developing their **annual budget** through well-developed procedures that have been successful in their community.

For many reasons, too often schools fail to plan for and maintain a strong **reserve position**. The administration and Board have the responsibility to establish and maintain revenue streams to ensure the reserve position of the school can withstand unexpected circumstances that will demand resources beyond the annual budget.

Independent School Management Group recommends that the school reserve position should be 15 – 20 % of the annual operating budget. Strategies that need careful attention include liquidity and investment balance, policy adherence when using financial reserves and plans to renew a depleted reserve position in as immediate a time frame as possible. Failing to provide a strong reserve position places at risk the sustainability of the school programmes and perhaps even the school's survival in the long term. See [Appendix M](#).

The development of a **long term strategic financial plan** relieves the Board and administration from annually trying to adjust the school's financial position year to year. The long term financial plan sets annual tuition levels based on assumptions connected to all expense lines of the annual budget. Additionally, the long term financial plan provides for additional funding to support costs that are needed to accomplish initiatives that are called for by the vision document of the school. It is essential that the school plan for the funding necessary to accomplish goals and outcomes allocated to each year of the strategic vision of the school.

Essential Financial Policy Positions

The Board Policy Manual defines the expectations for Board oversight for the financial stewardship of the school's resources. The financial section of the policy manual should include the following topics:

- financial planning,
- spending guidelines and authority,
- banking and accounts,
- investment parameters,
- audit,
- asset management,
- risk management,
- legal and tax compliance,
- fees and collection/refund of fees,
- payroll and office processes,
- procurement processes,
- internal control

In addition, the Board should adopt in policy, research based financial standards and benchmarks and stability markers that ensure the school reserve position for the school.



Strategic Financial Planning and Accountability

- Agree to research based stability markers for school
- Assess financial position based on high level data aligned with board approved stability markers
- Achieve financial goals annually (balanced budget) and through multi-year planning (reserve position)
- Assure school's standing through benchmarking against alike schools in region.

SECTION FOUR: MEASUREMENT & DATA MANAGEMENT

Effective schools engage actively in comprehensive yet time efficient programmes to measure growth and achievement of the school vision and the long-range goals and objectives related to all aspects of the school's operations. Similarly, effective schools implement comprehensive assessment and evaluation programmes that are research based and that demonstrate student success; these assessment measures are used to provide relevant and specific information to guide curricular and extracurricular programme development.

Measurement and Assessment of Programmes and Performance

The school administration is responsible for developing varied means and tools to assess performance and describe the school's progress toward stated goals. In doing so, the administration and Board should adopt a series of high level measurements and data points that provide the board and community with accurate, clear and compelling information of the school's performance and progress. This set of data points allows the Board to meet its responsibility for oversight of school programmes and will help prevent micro-management by the Board. Administration should communicate this information widely in order to give Board and community members confidence in the progress and performance of the school.

The overall school assessment programme focuses on a series of **high-level, actionable data points** that can be tracked over time and can be communicated in straight forward and easily understandable terms. What is of most importance is that careful thought and research go into determining the data points that will be measured and that the Board and administration agree to these indicators.

For an example of a **viability indicators/dashboard** see **Appendix O**

Assessment Benchmarks

In developing its assessment programme the school should establish a series of indicators that serve to measure performance across a variety of areas; these indicators should be designed so that they can be tracked over time. The school administration should propose to the Board the indicators for each area to be measured and the means by which the data will be gathered. The indicators often include indicators for the academic and extracurricular programmes, financial viability data, enrolment information and may include student and faculty profile information. The indicators should reflect research of effective schools, regional comparisons when appropriate and specific goals and objectives of the school.

Collecting and Managing Data

As mentioned earlier, **Interactive Data Partners** has worked with a number of AISA schools in setting up school assessment programmes, designing a dashboard and scorecard formats and assisting in the development of assessment tools. Comprehensive data collection demands careful thinking and reflection beforehand so that the tools developed will provide the kind of information sought.

A common practice is to develop a **dashboard or score card** that contains the agreed to data points and provides relevant information to all constituents. One means of organizing this information is to develop a viability scorecard which tracks financial and other operational information and a separate academic or programme scorecard which tracks various measures of the curricular and extracurricular programmes including standardized test scores, college placement, participation in school activity programmes, constituent survey programmes, analysis of curricular information, among others.

Best practice suggests that the school employ multiple data points for each indicator and have a means to confirm data points against other measures. For example, in assessing the effectiveness of after school activities, information gathered from parent surveys might also be compared to student and staff survey information and quantitative data that measures actual participation.

Reporting to Internal & External Constituencies

In addition to implementing a comprehensive approach to measurement and assessment, the school needs also to have a well-developed communication plan to disseminate the information. It is important to note that not all data is for public consumption, thus, the administration of the school should consider what information is reported to the parent community and made available to the community at large, what information is reported to the Board in the normal course of Board work and what data is for internal use by the school administration as the school seeks to continually improve.

In many cases the data gathered about the success of students in academics, college placement, student success and participation in the breadth of the school programmes should be celebrated with students, staff and parents. This information can easily be designed and formatted to serve as excellent marketing materials for the school.

Internal data such as personnel information, enrolment trends, financial information, should be used to ensure the school maintains a high-quality programme and remains in a strong financial position but may not always be communicated publicly.

The school should develop a **multi-faceted communication plan** that is implemented throughout the school year. Common practice in this regard includes regularly scheduled and publicized formal reports at Board meetings such as IB results or standardized test analysis, Board and admin open forums or coffee mornings, focus group conversations to engage with parents in order to explain and discuss the assessment programme and specific data. In many cases the **school website** is used to provide updates, publish the school profile, report out on findings of a specific matter or even host a high level data dashboard for internal community access. Most schools publish an **Annual Report**, either electronically or hard copy. This report serves to bring together in a coherent and concise manner the components of the school comprehensive assessment programme and to celebrate the school's achievement and standing.

A Note of Caution

Measurement and assessment of schools is not an easy matter. Assessment tools by design often need to include qualitative measurements. If not purposeful, schools can spend inordinate amounts of time gathering data that, while interesting to know, does not result in school improvement or programme development. A good rule of thumb is to apply the filter that the most useful and practical data results in actions that can be taken based on the data. *High level, actionable data across multiple domains results in focused school improvement planning.*

It is also important to note that the process and procedures for gathering data must be a manageable task in terms of time and effort of school personnel who are charged with this responsibility. Individual schools do not have the resources to engage in full time research, however, with careful thought in developing a comprehensive assessment and measurement programme schools can and must use data to inform and improve school programmes and practice.

SECTION FIVE: PERSONNEL

The single most important factor in school effectiveness is the expertise, experience, continued learning, dedication and personal attributes of the individuals employed by the school who daily bear the responsibility to deliver exemplary service in all aspects of the schools programmes and operations.

Effective schools have well developed personnel systems, policies and procedures that guide all aspects of employee and human resource programmes. Many AISA schools employ highly skilled and experienced Personnel Directors or Human Resource Directors to design and implement a comprehensive personnel programme, however, not all AISA schools have a full complement of administrators and in some cases, due to the size of the school, the personnel function is conducted by the Head of School or is shared with the Business Manager or Finance Director of the school. In all cases it is important to ensure a strong and vibrant personnel function of the school.

Personnel Manual

A comprehensive personnel programme is essential to the school's overall success of the school. In order to provide continuity and consistency of the school's personnel function the school should develop a Personnel Manual to guide all personnel actions. The Personnel Manual should include relevant board policy and supporting administrative procedures to define all aspects of the personnel services. The Personnel Manual is sometimes included as a section of the overall Operations Manual or is a complementary document.

The Personnel Manual should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- written job descriptions for all school roles that are updated regularly
- labour relations procedures including negotiating principles
- staff evaluation procedures and documents
- template of contracts for each position in the school
- processes to ensure staff welfare
- clear description of communication procedures and protocols
- grievance procedure
- professional development plan and procedures and implementation guidelines for all school employees
- established practices for the recruitment, selection, hiring of school employees
- new employee induction programme
- leave procedures
- payroll and payment procedures
- procedures for confidential files and record keeping
- visa, work permit, residency procedures for expatriate staff
- salary and benefits and terms and conditions of employment
- disciplinary and probations processes and procedures including personnel involved in hearings and all negotiated agreements.
- Developing and maintaining a current and comprehensive Personnel Manual is essential to ensure continuity of personnel decisions and actions, transparency in personnel matters, and positive morale in the school organization.

For an example [Table of Contents of a Personnel Manual](#) from Lincoln Community School, Ghana, see [Appendix P](#).

- The Personnel Manual should be reviewed annually and updated in real time based on any decisions that affect personnel processes and procedures. A meaningful and fruitful task is for school Personnel or Human Resource persons to share personnel procedures with other schools so as to provide a broad base of practices that can inform individual school personnel programmes adapted to each locale.

Record Keeping

Another important element of the personnel programme is **exceptional record keeping** to ensure all deadlines and contractual obligations are met as well as to connect with the finance/business office to implement payroll accurately and efficiently. Schools often use some version of integrated software packages to accomplish this task. In addition, the Personnel Director must develop a system or series of data bases to track internal office responsibilities, to maintain accurate and up to date personnel information and to ensure accountability and accuracy of each individual employee confidential file.

Recruitment

Employing and supporting a highly trained and experienced staff is a key role of the personnel function of the school. Effective schools have in place a well-developed recruitment programme for all openings that may occur. This programme provides continuity of practice yet is also adapted to the specific requirements of the position to be filled. It is essential that all recruitment and hiring practices are open and transparent to the staff and community and engage a number of staff members as appropriate in the hiring process.

The employee recruitment programme is rooted in detailed and technical job descriptions that describe the role and expectations for the position, list a series of responsibilities for the position and state the qualifications needed to fill the position. The recruitment process should include public position announcements in accordance with personnel policy, in screening of all applicants without prejudice, personal interviews for qualified candidates and demand a thorough criminal background and reference checks including police clearance and personal references to **ensure child protection standards are met**.

Upon selection and hiring to fill the position(s), a well-developed **orientation and induction programme** is implemented to ensure a positive transition experience for the new staff member. Schools are encouraged to review the research on transition and induction of new employees. Systematic attention to the orientation and induction programmes will have a positive effect not only on short term success of the new employee but also on job satisfaction and retention of the staff member.

Professional Development Programmes

Continued learning and professional development is the responsibility of the school administration and falls within the purview of the Personnel department. A comprehensive professional development programme must be multi-faceted in order to engage all staff members. The programme will employ a variety of strategies that are aligned with the desired outcome and will focus on three levels of learning and transfer of knowledge and skills to the job function. These three levels are: awareness, knowledge acquisition and skill development and finally transfer to implementation in the classroom or other role. A multi-faceted professional development programme will combine job – embedded onsite professional development with and between peers to promote skill

See the [AISA Child Protection Handbook, Section 1: Screening for more information on best practice recruitment processes](#).

Download this resource at: www.aisa.or.ke/resourcing/child-protection

See the [AISA Learning & Events](#) section of the website for details on conferences and professional learning opportunities available for AISA member schools.

<http://www.aisa.or.ke>

development and transfer, consultants to raise awareness and introduce specific foci, various external workshops and training programmes as well as graduate level courses. Attention and understanding needs to be given to the career stages of employees so that a variety and multi-leveled programme will positively impact the broadest range of school employees.

Professional Development/Support for Personnel and Human Resource Directors

The personnel function of the school is critical to the overall success of the school organization however too often this role and function is relegated to a second tier of administrative priority. Effective schools provide for ongoing training and support for the school Personnel department. In addition to formal training programmes and workshops, networking with other personnel directors provides a support system as well as expanded expertise needed to manage the multi-faceted responsibilities of the personnel function.



Competence, Comprehensiveness, Consistency

- Comprehensive Personnel Manual is bedrock of consistency in implementing Personnel Processes and Procedures
- Comprehensive Record Keeping is essential; set up and manage spread sheets for all employ information
- Consistent recruiting practices should engage candidates, involve referees, and include background checks
- Complete recruiting process with thorough and innovative orientation and induction programs

SECTION SIX: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The on-going success and viability of the school is greatly enhanced by a successful approach to community engagement that nurtures relationships with both the school community and the greater community at large.

While an individual parent's engagement within the school community will vary greatly, parent satisfaction with and connection to the school is critical. Effective schools recognize and plan for the importance of developing communication strategies and practices to promote a positive **partnership** with parents. Similarly, the school is wise to strategically engage with the larger community in the host city and country in order to promote and maintain a positive, successful presence of the school as a valued and contributing member of the community at large.

Communication Plan and Protocols

The school administration should develop a written communication plan that defines and aligns the philosophy and purposes of various communication strategies, with the individual communication tools the school uses to communicate to all constituencies. The communication plan and protocols should be contained either in a section of the school Operations Manual and should emanate from written **Board Communication Policy** with supporting administrative procedures. In order for communication to be effective, the community needs to have clarity about the means through which the school communicates and the purpose of each communication tool.

Effective schools must adapt with changing technology and be adept in using a wide variety of tools to communicate a timely and consistent message. The image and perceptions drawn about the school are easily shaped in the current media environment. Schools need to define clearly and communicate widely the kinds of communication, the nature of the information and the frequency of the communication to be delivered.

The Board policy sets the standard for communication practices of the school and authorizes the Head of School or designee and Board Chair as the only official spokespersons of the school.

The school **Communication Plan** provides an overview of the various venues and tools the school uses to communicate with parents. The **communication protocols** define clearly who is responsible for what forms of communication as well as providing an overview schedule of which communication strategies are implemented on a regular basis.

School administrators should publish and distribute the school communication plan and protocols annually so that parents know how and when the school will communicate with them. This document should make clear which types of communication will be delivered to the constituents (emails, texts messages, other materials sent to parents) and which information parents must go and get from the school website and/or parent portal. Schools also have to make a point that effective communication is a two – way proposition and parents have an obligation to make an effort to stay well informed about the school.

See the [International School of Kenya](http://www.isk.ac.ke) website as a best practice **Communication Plan** exemplar.

www.isk.ac.ke

Varied Venues for Communication

A well-developed communication strategy will include multiple tools and strategies that fall under two general areas: written communication and oral or first-hand communication.

Written communication now must include, in addition to regular school communications and marketing materials that the school produces, careful and timely attention to the use of **social media platforms**. It is important for the school to decide on which social media platforms it will use and to connect parents to those platforms to receive regular communication from the school for specific categories of information.

For instance:

- **Facebook** might be used to communicate and publish event information, pictures of athletic and arts performance and to connect with alumni.
- **SMS texts** might be used for immediate emergency communication as a first response to provide guidance to parents, staff and students. SMS texts can also be used as reminders of important upcoming events such as board elections, PTO meetings etc.
- **Twitter** might be used to initiate topical information or to connect informally with the community.
- The **school website** can be used to promote the school, to recruit families and faculty and to keep a positive presence of the school in the greater community. Within the school website a **protected parent portal** can be used to conduct school business, re-enrolment, access to information directories, etc.

With such a wide array of written communication tools, the school must be clear about the purpose and use for each communication tool and must dedicate personnel resources to ensure written communication is published in a timely manner, avoids any contradiction and is accurate in all accounts.

The age old axiom that the best form of marketing is word of mouth plays an important role in school communication programmes. **Personal interaction** with community members is still the most effective means of communicating the school's message. A variety of such opportunities include: regularly scheduled Board meetings, Parent Forums to explain specific topics or issues, monthly PTO meetings, administrator hosted focus groups or evening sessions and annual community meetings all serve the purpose of engaging in personal ways with parents.

The **role of teachers and staff members** in the school communication plan and strategies must not be overlooked. Independent School Management group also emphasizes the important role teachers and staff play in communicating the school message. Parents have the most interactions with their child's teacher and as such often view teachers as the most trusted source of information about all things related to the school. It is important that administrators communicate well with all school personnel so that staff members have an understanding of specific issues when they arise and can provide consistent and supporting messages about the school.

Formalized Feedback Systems

Part of the communication plan of the school should provide for two-way communication and opportunities for communities to listen to each other. On the individual level, this begins with an open-door policy of school personnel but also includes channelling individuals to the correct level of the school communication chain. It is important for the school to solicit meaningful and timely information about the school; to do so schools need to develop a formalized system for feedback. More formalized opportunities need to be provided as well; these opportunities often take the form of question and answer forums, PTO meetings, parent information sessions, curriculum meetings, community event and implementation of a survey programme.

Emergency Communication

The school must establish a specific strategy for communicating with students, staff and parents in an emergency. This strategy should employ more than one means of communication. To ensure reliability of the emergency communication plan, the school should implement tests of the system on a quarterly basis.



Clarity of Communication

- Develop and communicate widely the communication plan and protocols the school employs
- Manage Social Media through the school website
- Always focus on “word of mouth” as high leverage value: parent conversations, mobilizing teachers and staff members to promote the conversation
- Formalized feedback systems should be developed and implemented over time.

SECTION SEVEN: SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN/ACCREDITATION

Much as international schools seek to foster for students a path of continuous progress in their learning, so too must a school have a clear path for continuous school improvement in all of its programmes.

The core purpose and core values of the school are to provide for effective and engaging learning experiences for all members of the community; the school must seek to systematically continue to improve its programmes and performance. For the student-centered curricular and extracurricular programmes of the school, the accreditation process and protocols provide an important impetus and a set of standards of practice for continuous school improvement. As a membership requirement, all AISA schools must be accredited by an AISA approved accreditation body; this requirement of accreditation ensures that AISA schools are meeting externally set standards of excellence at their schools.

Integrated School Improvement Plan

Effective schools develop an integrated school improvement plan that guides the school's annual goals and objectives and aligns with accreditation requirements and recommendations and with the school's strategic vision and outcomes. In some cases, schools must also align with programme evaluation recommendations and requirements from external entities such as the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Bringing together standards of practice from multiple sources is a challenge and can at times lead to repetitious and unnecessary efforts. To avoid this happening schools benefit from taking time to reflect on the requirements, overall standards and specific tasks from these multiple sources (accreditation standards, school vision statement and outcomes, IB and other organizations requirements) and to find areas of overlap and commonality. An **integrated, school improvement plan** brings together both similar and disparate standards and requirements into an overarching plan that articulates strategies and tasks that meet multiple requirements. In creating a written plan that integrates the many and various goals and recommendations helps to eliminate duplication and streamline key objectives to ensure the annual goals of the school and the school improvement initiatives undertaken are connected to the external requirements of accreditation agencies.

This **integrated school improvement plan** is developed to be implemented over a multi-year time frame (usually aligned with the accreditation and/or IB evaluation cycle). It often will include graphic organizers such as tables, flow charts, even data bases that align school improvement objectives and actions with the external standards, recommendations and requirements. The plan should also include evidence of progress or final accomplishment of each school improvement initiative, thereby providing "in real time" the evidence to be provided at the time of the next external review.

A well-developed school improvement plan of this nature takes a good deal of time and effort to create upfront, however, this effort is rewarded by providing a clear and prioritized annual plan as well as providing evidence of achievement that will serve to meet the standards of the external review from the accreditation agency and other external organizations.

Data Collection

The proof of the pudding is in the eating or in the case of an integrated school improvement plan it is in the demonstration of addressing recommendations, standards and requirements successfully. For this reason, it is important to develop assessment and measurement instruments as part of the overall strategic plan and aligned

with requirements of external agencies. As mentioned earlier, the data to be collected and the benchmarks for success should be organized into a reporting tool such as a scorecard or dashboard.

Recognizing the complexity of schools as organizations and that some aspects of school service and success are not easily measured quantitatively, it is important that the school improvement plan metrics use a variety of approaches. At the time of setting the objectives to be achieved in the various components of the school improvement plan, consideration needs to be given as to the evidence that will be collected to assess that the objective has been met. A specific space to record evidence to record the assessment results should be a part of the integrated school improvement plan when it is designed. This inclusion of data and evidence gathering as part of the annual work of the plan ensure the required evidence can be easily accessed for reporting purposes both the community and to the external agencies.

Professional Development and School Improvement Planning and Funding

Effective schools recognize the critical importance of a multi-year, comprehensive and integrated school improvement plan. The school needs to provide resources for the development of the plan as well as for the continued improvement of school programmes and performance. The school administration, based on the objectives within the school improvement plan, should align professional development programming and funding to meet these objectives and should support staff in professional development activities of this priority. Similarly, at the outset, the school must allocate time and personnel to create a well-developed school improvement plan. This may involve providing financial support for consultant services or training programmes for individual administrators in order to ensure high quality planning processes with a vibrant and actionable integrated school improvement plan being the result. Again, this is an area where investment upfront will pay off many fold over the years of the plan.



School Improvement Plan & Accreditation

- Integrated School Improvement Plan connects the dots: long range goals of school with external agencies to ensure continuous progress in all areas
- School Improvement is based on data collection of agreed to metrics for both academic programs and various operations of the school.
- Professional Development programs need to include staff as well as faculty and must align with goals of the school as well as individual aspirations of employees.

SECTION EIGHT: COMPREHENSIVE CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM

In recent years AISA has provided significant leadership in promoting the issue of child protection in international schools. The **AISA Child Protection Handbook** is a seminal document that has been widely circulated and implemented in schools across the globe. This handbook serves as a “how to” guide for international school leaders in establishing a comprehensive child protection programme in their schools. The handbook provides a wide range of information and important research to promote a deep understanding of the issue of child protection. The handbook includes information on policy, procedure and programme development, provides a number of sample materials as well as links to relevant resources, including sample lesson plans and communication templates that can be used to implement a comprehensive child protection programme.

This ground-breaking work was accomplished as part of the AISA Strategic Plan and through the efforts of the Child Protection Working Group that was formed for the express purpose of developing child protection programmes specific to the international school sector. In addition the AISA Child Protection Handbook, the Working Group has developed specific training modules to support AISA administrators, counsellors and teachers as they implement their child protection programme. These training modules are focused on: policy development and procedures, K-12 curriculum development and implementation, engaging and teaching the parent community, connecting with local resources by forming a community based multi-disciplinary team, Adult Education for teachers and staff, contracted staff, parents, Board members etc.

AISA has served as a vanguard organization in providing leadership to international schools around the world. The AISA Child Protection Handbook has been recognized by school leaders as a critical resource in their efforts to either begin or further develop the child protection programme in their schools and communities. At this point in time, accreditation agencies have revised their protocols to include standards and practices to ensure Child Protection Programmes are in place at all schools accredited by the various accreditation agencies. By extension, all AISA schools must develop and implement a comprehensive child protection programme at their school.

International school administrators and other school leaders should be knowledgeable about all aspects of this programme and should be actively engaged in the programme implementation. To this end all school leaders need to review the breadth of information contained in the handbook and required by the standards of practice school’s accreditation agency. As a matter of brevity, an overview of the key components of a comprehensive child protection programme are described below.

Comprehensive Child Protection Programme

Putting in place a comprehensive child protection programme takes a good deal of time and effort as well as a significant amount of awareness raising within the school community as a whole and especially with all school employees, contracted staff and volunteers. Administrative support is essential in this effort and begins with an engaged

AISA Child Protection Resources:

- [AISA Child Protection Handbook](#)
- [Building & Using Multidisciplinary Teams in AISA Schools](#)
- [AISA Child Protection Handbook Curriculum Guidance](#)

Download now at:

www.aisa.or.ke/resourcing/child-protection

and committed Head of School who demonstrates support openly and works side by side with staff members who implement the school's child protection programme.

Components of a Comprehensive Child Protection Programme

There are four major components, eight specific areas of accountability and two essential structures that make up a comprehensive child protection programme. These components are presented in great detail in the AISA Child Protection Handbook along with information and resources on developing and implementing these components.

Four Major Components of Comprehensive Child Protection Programmes at AISA schools

1. **Policy and Procedures** including mandated reporting
2. **K-12 Curriculum** that is age appropriate at each grade level and engages students in lessons to empower students with skills and understanding to keep them safe
3. **Adult Education** modules to include parent engagement, professional development for personnel who have specific responsibility, specific and annual training for all staff, contracted staff and adult volunteers
4. **Multi-disciplinary Team** that connects the school to local resources and social service agencies as well as establishes a network of international schools within the local setting. See Appendix Q for detailed description of Multi-Disciplinary Teams and steps to be taken to form a multi-disciplinary team in your community.

Eight Areas of Accountability of a Comprehensive Child Protection Programme

1. Policy and Procedures
2. Hiring Practices to include screening and criminal background checks for all employees
3. Code of Conduct for all staff
4. Education: age appropriate curriculum for all students, adult education for all staff, contracted staff, parents and volunteers
5. Child Protection teams with defined roles, responsibilities and action calendar for implementation of child protection programme
6. Community based Multi-Disciplinary Team
7. Community based partnerships
8. Measurement of programme impact to include self-audit, accreditation compliance, supporting forms to ensure documentation related to policy, procedures and case management.

Two Essential Structures of Comprehensive Child Protection Programmes at AISA schools

1. **School Based Child Protection Team.** The purpose of the school based child protection team is to ensure a comprehensive child protection programme is in place and to monitor implementation of the programme on an annual basis.
This team is formed by the Head of School; membership should include head of school, at least one building principal, counsellors from each division, school nurse and representative teachers. This team should meet at least twice a year, but quarterly is better. The team monitors implementation by following self-audit checklist and calendar of activities, reviews case management when appropriate, recommends changes or further development of the programme.
2. **The Child Protection Case Management Team.** The case management is formed by the Head of School when an instance of suspected abuse is reported. The membership of the case management team is determined by the nature of the suspected case of abuse, however, in almost all cases will include, the individual making the report of suspected abuse, school counsellor(s), school nurse, respective administrator(s) and possibly the Human Resources Director.

Depending on the specifics of the case the team will include local resource persons and will consider the need for a multi-disciplinary team meeting. The purpose of this team is to ensure the safety of the child first and foremost and to manage the handling of the case moving forward.

Effective schools recognize the importance of taking proactive positions and action to implement a comprehensive child protection programme in their community and to be well prepared in advance to handle a case of suspected or actual abuse.



Expand your expertise through Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs)

- Develop relationships with local resource professionals in your city
- Know who to call and how they can help before your school faces an instance of child abuse
- Assign an individual to plan for programs that engage and involve local professionals in your child protection program
- Develop a network with other international schools in your city or area

SECTION NINE: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Effective Schools adopt a strategic approach to facilities management and insure there are in place immediate, mid-term and long-term plans and financial resources to provide the necessary facilities to support the school's programmes for the community.

A strategic approach to facilities planning and management begins with a current and future master facilities plan. The current master plan includes maintenance planning that provides accurate information on the current status of all facilities and major equipment. This current master plan provides both detailed and high-level data to establish realistic repair, renewal and replacement cycles for all facilities, major equipment and furniture fittings of the plant.

Facilities Master Plan

The school should retain a professional architect to develop a facilities master plan that details all aspects of the school's facilities and description of all related factors of the campus including access to the location of the school and vehicle and pedestrian traffic patterns that impact functioning of all school programmes and operations. The facilities master plan should include all pertinent information to describe the current state of the facilities and to project a schedule for facility development (repair, renew, replacement cycles.) The master plan should include data bases that record all aspects of repair and replacement responsibilities and track the usage and condition of all major equipment, furniture and fittings and other components of the school buildings (roof, windows, doors, etc).

The facilities master plan should also provide a vision for what the next iteration of school facilities will be. This usually is in the form of a high-level concept design that inspires the community to ensure high quality facilities are provided to support the future of the school. Based on this concept design, the Board and administration of the school are guided in developing and funding long term facility development for the school community.

Maintenance and Repair, Renewal and Replacement Planning

It is important for the financial stability of the school to have a well-developed maintenance, renewal and replacement plan in place. This plan should be linked to the overall facilities master plan as well as the annual budget and the rolling strategic financial plan of the school. There is always the potential of unexpected events such as natural disaster or major incidents such as fire or explosion. Such unexpected expenses should be viewed as extraordinary and as such give reason for the school to maintain a **capital reserve fund** as a contingency to the facility plan.

The Facilities Maintenance Plan identifies and schedules routine maintenance that must take place on an annual basis. This plan accounts for such items as scheduled painting both interior and exterior and smaller capital projects. Some examples might include: upgrade to walkways, doors, windows, minor roof repairs, interior fixtures etc. The maintenance of school facilities has an established cost center and is funded annually according to this plan.

The Facilities Renewal Plan identifies specific plant needs that are not addressed on an annual basis but can be anticipated on a projected scheduled based on the estimated wear and tear of the facility. Some examples might include: repaving school parking lots on a rotating schedule, major landscaping projects, reconditioning of major equipment to extend life of the equipment before scheduled replacement, patching sections of gym floor, well-developed athletic field renewal and rest cycles, theatre seating restoration, upgrade of theatre lighting, large scale maintenance climate control equipment, etc.

The Facilities Replacement Plan creates a systematic replacement schedule for major equipment, furniture, vehicles, and other large budget items. This plan is essential to ensure continuity of service from the physical plant and to maintain quality environment for students and staff. Some examples might include: vehicle replacement cycle based on age and use, generator replacement plan based on use and manufacturer recommendations, replacement of major climate control equipment based on use or to improve energy efficiency, furniture replacement plan for classrooms, lab, libraries and other spaces, athletic field re-seeding or replacement of artificial turf, playground(s) equipment replacement cycle, etc.

Facilities Personnel

Most schools have in place a trained facilities manager who supervises and directs support staff, usually skilled technicians/artisans, to implement the maintenance, repair, renewal and replacement cycles of the school. Schools also contract professional service companies to provide a variety of services such as security, food services, transportation, cleaning, landscaping and other related services. Individual schools must determine which services will be outsourced and which will be assigned to in-house support staff personnel.

Contracted vs. Support Staff Facilities Personnel

Factors such as cost effectiveness and availability of professional and reliable service companies must be considered to balance the requirements of the community for high level services at a manageable cost.

Security Programme

Additional emphasis on security is a reality for all AISA schools. In most cases AISA schools contract security services to a local provider with proven experience in security and familiarity with the school environment. Schools strive to implement the right balance between maintaining a relatively open and welcoming physical environment while also implementing best security practices in areas such as campus access, emergency drills and procedures, off site learning experiences, health and personal safety among others.

In many cases the security programme of the school falls under the purview of the school facility manager who works closely with the head of school. In smaller AISA schools the security programme is developed and implemented by the head of school with assistance from identified support staff personnel. In almost all cases the schools collaborate actively with the security personnel and offices of various embassies. The Office of Overseas Schools of the US State Department has conducted extensive research into the security needs of international schools and has produced a number of security handbooks which serve as good resources for security planning and programme development.

The school security programme should detail policy, procedures and plans minimally in the following major sectors:

- Detailed Board Policy defining the breadth of the school's security programmes and responsibilities
- Security plans and practices for securing the physical plant during and after school hours and on all holidays

[Security Handbooks](#) have been produced by the [Office of Overseas Schools](#). For more information contact AISA.

- Detailed emergency planning document with synopsis documents available to all members of the community and posted in every classroom of the school along with evacuation maps
- Implementation of a series of scheduled drills as defined in emergency planning document
- Emergency communication systems that are practices at scheduled intervals throughout the school year
- Proactive collaboration with local emergency services and personnel: police, fire department, government ministries as appropriate, embassy personnel and departments.
- Security plans for securing all school information technology data including all school records and related information as well as adequate firewall for internet security.



Organizing the unpredictable: scope of Facilities Management

- A facilities master plan is the foundation of all facilities and services planning
- Professional consultants offer objectivity as well as expertise in planning processes
- Repair, renovation and renewal schedules allow for financial planning to ensure financial resources are available when needed
- Security planning should engage professionals in their field

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS CHECKLIST

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS CHECKLIST				
SECTION ONE: Governance	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Mission and Vision Statements are in place				
Board Policy Manual				
Principles of Best Practice are adopted in Board Policy				
Strategic Board Evaluation is research and standards based				
Head of School Evaluation is research and standards based				
Strategic or Long Range Plan guides actions of administration				
Strategic Financial Plan aligns with research based financial standards and with long range goals of school				
Board Profile is published annually				
Board Succession Planning Chart list when positions are open and guides succession planning				
Oversight metrics for viability factors and academic program				
Code of Conduct signed annually				
Conflict of Interest Statement signed annually				
SECTION TWO: Planning	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Engagement of community in strategic or long-range planning				
Strategic or viability plan for internal use aligns with agreed to metrics using high level data as indicators				

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS CHECKLIST				
Emergency Planning is well developed and communicated to all stakeholders				
Board communication plan and protocols guide all school communication				
SECTION THREE: Secure Financial Position	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Research based financial stability markers adopted				
Assess financial position based on high level data aligned with board approved stability markers				
Evidence that financial goals are achieved annually as evidenced by a balanced budget and through multi-year planning to ensure strong reserve position				
Financial Plan includes benchmarking against like schools				
SECTION FOUR: Measurement and Data Management	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Systems in place for data management, analysis and collection align approved performance indicators				
Data dashboard or spreadsheets organize data and measure trends over time.				
Academic measures and performance indicators adopted collaboratively with Board to provide oversight metrics				
SECTION FIVE: Personnel	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Personnel Manual includes processes and procedures to ensure consistency and continuity				
Comprehensive record keeping manages spread sheets for all employee information				
Consistent recruiting practices are thorough and meet child protection responsibilities				
Written orientation and induction programs support new employees as they transition to the school				
SECTION SIX: Community Engagement	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Board adopts communication program and protocols				

SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS CHECKLIST				
Communication plan and protocols are widely communicated and understood by all stakeholders				
School web site and social media programs are central to communication efforts				
Formalized feedback program includes survey instruments, focus groups and face to face communication				
SECTION SEVEN: School Improvement/Accreditation	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Integrated School Improvement Plan connects the dots: long range goals of school with external agencies to ensure continuous progress in all areas				
Data collection employs agreed to metrics to measure progress according to adopted metrics				
Professional Development plan is funded and supports all categories of employees				
SECTION EIGHT: Comprehensive Child Protection Program	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Multi-Disciplinary Team works with school				
Child Protection Program includes: policy and procedures, K-12 curriculum, adult learning and multi-disciplinary team				
School established Child Protection Management Team and Child Protection Case Management Team				
Child Protection Network of other international schools in the city or region				
Child Protection officer or related leadership structure				
SECTION NINE: Facilities Management	IN PLACE	NOT IN PLACE	IN PROGRESS	NOTES
Formal Master Facilities Plan is developed by outside expert				
Repair, Renewal and Replacement Plan ensures schedule of major facilities needs				
Comprehensive security program and planning engages local resource experts				

APPENDICES

The Appendices included in this School Effectiveness Framework are intended to provide convenient access to a sample of resources that support the implementation of many of the aspects of the ideas presented in this handbook. These resources are suggested as starting points rather than end points however each of the sample resources have been used successfully in a variety of international school settings by the author. Taken as a whole, these articles and sample documents should not be viewed as a blue print to be copied and implemented at each AISA school but rather as resources to stimulate thought and to promote best practice as adapted and adopted by the administration and Board at each individual school setting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following organizations are recommended as high quality and research based sources for the use of AISA heads of schools.

- AISA Resource Bank
 - Association of International Schools of Africa
- www.AISA.ke.or
- Independent School Management Group
 - Independent School Management
- 1316 North Union Street
- Wilmington, DE 19806
- Telephone: 302-656-4944 • Fax: 302-656-0647
- Web site: isminc.com/bookstore • E-mail: bookstore@isminc.com
- Interactive Data Partners:
 - Brian Bedrick
- Managing Director, Interactive Data Partners
- www.interactivedatapartners.com
- brian@interactivedatapartners.com
- Lincoln Community School, Accra, Ghana
 - www.lincoln.edu.gh
- National Association of Independent Schools
 - www.nais.org
- For list of NAIS books: 800-793-6701; 301-396-5911
- NAIS Principles of Best Practice; ISBN For Trustee Handbook, Eight Edition, ISBN 1 – 893021 – 55 - 6

LIST OF APPENDICES

- A. AISA Code of Governance
- B. NAIS Principles of Best Practice
- C. Board Profile (ISM) Sample Board Profile Document (Lincoln Community School, Accra Ghana)
- D. Sample Code of Ethics/Conduct and Conflict of Interest Documents (Lincoln Community School, Accra Ghana)
- E. Sample Strategic Board Assessment and Strategic Board Evaluation Tool
- F. Samples of Board Policy Manual Table of Contents (Edited from Various Policy Manuals)
- G. Sample Operations Table of Contents
- H. Long Range Strategic Planning
- I. AISA Emergency Planning Handbook
- J. Stability Markers
- K. Sample Board Approved Financial Benchmarks/Standards
- L. Financial Dashboard Screen
- M. Cash Reserves: Stability and Opportunity
- N. Strategic Financial Planning
- O. Viability Indicators
- P. Sample Table of Contents for Personnel Manual
- Q. AISA Multi-Disciplinary Team Handbook

Appendix A: AISA Code of Governance

AISA would also like to acknowledge the *Near East South Asia Council of Overseas Schools (NESA)* for the original draft of these indicators.

Using the AISA Code of Governance

The work of school leaders today often goes beyond solving technical problems. It requires they work through adaptive challenges that require new thinking and new ways of interpreting situations, and therefore, operating. School leaders who see this adaptive work as their domain alone have fewer resources than those who are able to engage their Trustees in the collaborative process of generative thinking.

A primary function of this Code of Governance is to support this approach to governance so that school leaders efficiently and effectively orient Trustees to their fiduciary roles so that they can introduce their boards to a more sophisticated and value-added role.

WAYS TO USE THIS CODE:

There are a number of ways your school may choose to use the AISA Code of Governance. These include:

- To review your current Code of Governance: Your school may have a Code of Governance and may use this AISA code to review your own code. You are welcome to include extracts from the AISA Code in your own Code but, if you do, please make a full acknowledgement of the source.
- To develop a Code of Governance for your school: You may want to develop a Code of Governance to suit your own school structure. We encourage you to use the AISA code to guide that process
- As part of the induction for new board members by including a copy in the board member induction pack
- As part of training for board members
- By discussing one domain area at a Board meeting or Board retreats
- As the starting point for governance reviews

The AISA 'Code of Governance'

1 Clear Roles & Responsibilities

A highly effective and engaged board has clarity around roles and responsibilities, aligning its work and performance with organisational values and vision. This requires boards to work both strategically and insightfully in collaboration with the Head of School.

- a) The Board understands the nature and value of the fiduciary, strategic, and generative modes of governance, and use mechanisms to distinguish among and promote each of these modes.
- b) The Board understands the meaning and value of good practice and ensure their own board practices and policies are so aligned.
- c) The Board establishes a process to ensure a current Policy Manual.
- d) The Board recognizes the difference between governance (their responsibility) and operations (the Head of School's responsibility).
- e) The Board understands the role of the officers of the Board and the unique responsibilities of the chair.

2 Fiduciary Responsibilities

School Boards have a legal responsibility to ensure financial viability for the present and future generations of students of the school, focusing on both the short term and strategic development of the school. The Board also have an ethical responsibility to ensure transparency, avoid conflicts of interest and promote effective communication with the school community.

- a) The Board devises processes to assess and address risks.
- b) The Board ensures rigorous financial audit procedures are in place.
- c) The Board uses an annual declaration of "conflict of interest" as part of board policy.
- d) The Board operates in compliance with the laws of the host country and the country of their incorporation.
- e) The Board recognizes the critical attributes of effective crisis preparedness and response and articulate the board's role and responsibilities in an Emergency Preparedness Plan.
- f) The Board understands the role of confidentiality in the board's operation and addresses breaches when they occur.
- g) The Board uses a variety of practices that fulfil their fiduciary responsibilities including indicators of financial health (emergency reserve levels, enrolment levels etc)

3 Effective Governance

To ensure effective governance, Boards have a responsibility to sustain membership, participate in professional development, reflect on the Board's performance and demonstrate behaviours that the school community should aspire to emulate.

- a) The Board understands their By-Laws and governance documents and have maximized their effectiveness.
- b) The Board has strategies for identifying, recruiting, selecting, and inducting new The Board when vacancies occur.
- c) The Board annually conducts both ongoing and summative appraisals of the Board's performance.
- d) The Board has a plan for ongoing development to increase effectiveness.
- e) The Board organizes itself into committees and when necessary task forces to accomplish its work.
- f) The Board uses operational norms of behaviour and commit to "essential agreements" to model these norms in all school settings. The Board use strategies for preventing, intervening in, remediating and learning from incidents of "misbehaviour".

4 Boards as Strategists and Visionaries

Establishing and sustaining a strategic direction for the school is a responsibility shared by the board and HoS.

- a) The Board understands their school's "mission," "vision," "values," and "objectives," and can articulate the purpose served by these guiding documents.
- b) The Board and HoS collaborate to implement processes to review and revise the school's guiding documents
- c) The Board ensures that policies, procedures, and practices are aligned with the precepts established by the school's guiding documents (By-Laws, Mission, Vision, Objectives, etc.)
- d) The Board understands the importance of developing and sustaining a financial plan in order to support the school's overall strategic intent.
- e) The Board ensures the school has a facilities master plan, understands its purpose and scope, and updates it annually as needed.
- f) The Board, in collaboration with the HoS, understands the "value add" benefits of strategic and generative governance and use specific mechanisms to stimulate and promote it as a regular part of their work.

5 Sustaining and Strengthening the Head of School

A successful, healthy school requires an open, supportive and mutually respectful relationship between the Head of School and the Board.

- a) The Board honours the role and perspective of the Head of School, recognizing the singular capacity and responsibility of the board to nurture, support and ultimately hold the HoS accountable.
- b) The Board uses policy and evidence-based standards to undertake a performance based appraisal process for the HoS that is linked to evidence, the job description, annual goals, and professional development plan.
- c) The Board understands and supports the unique relationship between the board chair and the head.
- d) The Board has an explicit procedure for succession planning including an emergency succession plan for the HoS and a thoughtful search process for a new HoS.

6 Conducting the Business of the Board

The Board establishes policies, procedures and essential agreements that define the Board's behaviours and how it conducts its business.

- a) The Board reviews the relevance of the board's structure and operating procedures.
- b) The Board articulates the purpose of board, has protocols for these meetings, including: development and structure of agendas, "rules" for the meeting itself, frequency and duration of meetings, use of "working" (or "executive") session, and recording of minutes. The Board develops and implements an annual working calendar.
- c) The Board understands the difference between committees and task forces; has criteria and rationale for standing committees; and establishes terms of reference indicating how they will function.
- d) The Board uses a Codes of Ethics consistent with their school's stated mission, vision and values.
- e) The Board understands the importance of effective community relationships and follows communication protocols.

7 Board Oversight of School Success

A responsible Board holds itself accountable for monitoring the school's success in fulfilling its mission, vision, values, educational objectives, and strategic intent.

- a) The Board identifies and uses performance indicators for monitoring and evaluating school performance.
- b) The Board translates data to "information" and, based on that, takes appropriate board action. They use perceptual data appropriately and use multi-year trend data to draw conclusions.
- c) The Board celebrates progress/success, recognizing those responsible, and communicates that success to stakeholders and the community in general.

Appendix B: NAIS Principles of Best Practice

The following Principles of Good Practice are set forth to provide a common perspective on the responsibilities of independent school boards. The board and the head work in partnership in fulfilling these principles.

1. The board adopts a clear statement of the school's mission, vision, and strategic goals and establishes policies and plans consistent with this statement
2. The board reviews and maintains appropriate bylaws that conform to legal requirements, including duties of loyalty, obedience, and care.
3. The board assures that the school and the board operate in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, minimizing exposure to legal action. The board creates a conflict of interest policy that is reviewed with, and signed by, individual trustees annually.
4. The board accepts accountability for both the financial stability and the financial future of the institution, engaging in strategic financial planning, assuming primary responsibility for the preservation of capital assets and endowments, overseeing operating budgets, and participating actively in fund raising.
5. The board selects, supports, nurtures, evaluates, and sets appropriate compensation for the head of school.
6. The board recognizes that its primary work and focus are long-range and strategic.
7. The board undertakes formal strategic planning on a periodic basis, sets annual goals related to the plan, and conducts annual written evaluations for the school, the head of school, and the board itself.
8. The board keeps full and accurate records of its meetings, committees, and policies and communicates its decisions widely, while keeping its deliberations confidential.
9. Board composition reflects the strategic expertise, resources, and perspectives (past, present, future) needed to achieve the mission and strategic objectives of the school.
10. The board works to ensure all its members are actively involved in the work of the board and its committees.
11. As leader of the school community, the board engages proactively with the head of school in cultivating and maintaining good relations with school constituents as well as the broader community and exhibits best practices relevant to equity and justice.
12. The board is committed to a program of professional development that includes annual new trustee orientation, ongoing trustee education and evaluation, and board leadership succession planning.

Appendix C: Board Profile Article and Document

Ideas & Perspectives
Vol. 20, No. 15

The Board Profile's Cornerstone: Your Strategic Plan

Of the many functions that ISM has suggested for a Committee on Trustees,¹ none is more fundamental to long-term Board and school success than the "profiling" process. The following anti-example, first published in *I&P* nearly two decades ago,² remains much too representative even today:

"Well," the Board President said, "We now have two vacancies on the Board – does anyone have names to suggest?"

The room was silent. People looked at one another and then at the President. Finally someone said, "What about Harry Jones? He headed the Theatre Party last fall and did a great job." Another brought up the name of the local Superintendent of Schools, soon to retire.

Within five minutes, six names were being bandied about. Since two of them received more positive reactions than the rest – and because one member volunteered to call on these people – an informal decision was made: The two would be approached about whether they would be willing to serve, if formally asked.

This dialog makes quite clear what not to do.

Match the Profile to the Plan

In contrast to this procedure, your Committee on Trustees should begin its deliberations with a careful study of your Board's strategic plan. Throughout its review of the plan, the committee should ask: "Given these strategic planning objectives, what sort of people – by experience, by profession, by education and training, by analytical and interpersonal skills – would most strongly guarantee the successful fulfillment of the strategic plan?"

The list that the committee then compiles will contain no names – the actual names of candidates will be generated later, after the profile has been completed and submitted to the whole Board for its endorsement.

The profile should be as explicit as possible. For example, listing a profile slot as reserved for an "attorney" is a categorization that may be too broad to be useful. The same is true with labels such as "marketing professional," "insurance executive," "accountant," "educator," or "Realtor." Your strategic plan contains specifics, and your Board profile should be specific as well. Such a profile might include:

- contracts attorney;
- human-resources professional knowledgeable in benefits, compensation, practice, trends, legislation, and law;
- plant manager from an institution of higher education or non-competing school;
- nonprofit organization marketing professional;

- nonprofit organization publications professional;
- nonprofit organization fund-raising professional;
- insurance executive whose firm deals with non-profit organizations;
- accountant familiar with non-profit accounting systems;
- retired independent school Head or other senior independent school administrator (or current independent school administrator from non-competing school); and
- Realtor specializing in institutional properties.

A cautionary note is in order: If the strategic plan implies the hiring of a particular professional at some point in the plan's execution, you may or may not need to include that professional category in the Board profile.

For example, the Board should have an attorney on retainer – or, at least, a law firm that customarily handles the school's business – quite apart from any Board profile slots calling for legal expertise. Further, conflict of interest is a real danger, and businesspeople cannot compete for school contracts once they become Board members.

The profile, then, should focus not on the strategic plan's implications for hiring professional individuals. It should, instead, focus on attracting to the Board expertise that will strengthen the Board's capacity to:

- continue to plan strategically (short- and long-term);
- execute the annual Board agendas, which are derived each year from the strategic planning document;
- generate effective strategic policy; and
- spearhead the fundamental Board cultivation processes (e.g., in development, in major gifts, and for other Trustees).

The rationale for including a slot for "nonprofit organization marketing professional" is not so that the school will have someone to "do marketing," but so that strategic marketing concepts can be developed creatively and effectively at the Board level. For example, this Trustee could provide valuable insights that assist in meeting the strategic plan's requirement for the "cyclical development of biennial marketing strategies and policies throughout the lifetime of this strategic plan."

Some profile slots may legitimately be filled by members who serve on a specific committee but are not Board members. Not every profile-filling individual can make the multi-year, full-fledged commitment to Board membership; however, valuable individuals may be interested in this shorter-term, more limited commitment. (And some profile slots may occasionally be better filled in this way than through Board membership, since some strategic planning-implied profile slots may themselves be quite limited in duration.)

Finally, the Committee on Trustees should not

¹ ISM recommends replacement of the traditional Nominating Committee with a Committee on Trustees. This represents a shift in concept, not merely a shift in labels. See "The Committee on Trustees," *I&P* 13-13-49, as well as

"The Ideal Trustees Behavior and Attitudes," 18-14-53.

² See "The Nominating Committee," *I&P* 2-9-36.

establish in advance a set number of specifically profiled slots. On a Board of 20 members, the number of profiled slots derived from the strategic plan may reasonably range from five to 15, depending upon the current strategic plan's implications and the current makeup of the Board.

The remaining slots should be profiled, certainly, but based on other considerations.

The Profile: Other Considerations

"Other considerations" – beyond those that are specific to a given strategic planning document's implications – do matter. ISM has traditionally designated six significant characteristics.

- **Work:** A willingness to serve is fundamental and often distinguishes a person who is "merely" a major gifts prospect or "merely" a candidate for a non-member Board committee slot from a person who is truly a candidate for the trusteeship.
- **Wisdom:** This characteristic often refers specifically to the professional and experiential characteristics of a given Trustee candidate. However, it also alludes to more general intellectual traits, and to breadth of personal and professional life experience.
- **Expertise:** School administrations often need advice about the non-educational aspects of operating a school (i.e., facilities management, financial matters, public relations). Board members who can act as "consultants" to the school's administration in areas of immediate concern become valuable.
- **Wealth:** In the overall mix of the Board, affluence and/or access to affluence must be conspicuously present. Any Committee on Trustees must consider this characteristic carefully.
- **Leadership:** Depth of leadership potential should always be present on a Board. Board members should readily be able to name six of their colleagues whom they could imagine as Board President. While this trait is not always easy to anticipate in the cultivation stage, the committee should make sure that its profile includes many individuals with proven leadership skills, preferably in more than one setting.
- **Clout:** This may be the single most important ingredient in this list of "other considerations." The most desirable prospective Board members, whether filling a particular niche in the strategic-plan-based profile or not, should be demonstrably influential members of the community – and not necessarily the school's community only, but the larger community of which the school is just one element.

There are other ingredients in the makeup of the ideal Trustee: integrity, compassion, a willingness to deny one's own needs when the institution's are greater, and a

willingness to give of oneself and of one's resources. These are essential characteristics for any successful group endeavor.

Converting the Profile to People

As the Committee on Trustees begins to think of people whose characteristics match the profile, the members must also attend to the total mix of the future Trusteeship. The well-developed Board will:

- be representative of all constituencies (but not elected or selected to represent any constituency in the congressional sense);
- comprise about 60% to 70% current parents in day schools and about 60% to 70% alumni/ae in boarding schools;
- exhibit ties (in the total mix) to each academic division of the school;
- exhibit geographic and age diversity;
- not exceed a 2:1 gender ratio, even if the school itself is single-sex.

With all this in mind and in writing, present these profile guidelines to the whole Board for approval. Then, when the profile is endorsed, the Committee on Trustees can develop a list of names of individuals suited to its profile and to its list of "other considerations." The "Potential Trustees" worksheet shown on the next page exemplifies this process.

Note the two columns at the extreme right. "Desirability," on a 1-to-9 scale, illustrates the predicted overall impact for good if the individual serves on this school's Board during the lifetime of this strategic plan. Adjacent is the "Approachability" column, using an A-to-E scale. This represents the degree to which an individual is currently familiar with, and committed to, your school, its mission, and its Board of Trustees.

It is likely that your Committee on Trustees will find, upon completion of this worksheet, several people with "8's and 9's" on "Desirability" who have been awarded "D's and E's" on "Approachability." This is not a bad thing; it simply illustrates the futility of the approach to Board-building that was so evident to you in the dialog at the opening of this article.

Cultivation must be the cornerstone of your Board-building process, whether yours is a PK-3 school of 125 or a PK-12 school 10 times that size.

Your Board will not develop a strong position by asking the question "Whom do we know who might do this?" You need a systematic, intensive process of examining the strategic plan, profiling exhaustively to support that plan, developing and researching a "people list" to fit the profile, and cultivating energetically and persistently until the profile is filled.

Potential Trustee worksheet										
NAME	IDENTIFICATION	WEALTH	WISDOM	LEADERSHIP	"CLOUT"	VIABLE SKILLS	RELATIONSHIP	DESIRABILITY (1-9)	APPROACHABILITY*(A-E)	
Joe Smith	Corporate Executive	✓	✓		✓	Legal	Grandparent	5	A	
Jane Doe	Hospital Administrator		✓	✓	✓	Former Teacher	Parent	6	C	
Henry Jones	U.S. Senator	✓	✓		✓	Political	Neighbor	9	E	
						* Readiness and willingness to serve if asked.				

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Exemplar: Lincoln Community School Board Member Profile

February 2014

Term: Two years

Scope of Responsibilities:

The LCS Board of Trustees is the governing body of LCS, serving in a broad oversight capacity. The Board of Trustees is responsible for: ensuring the financial health of the school; hiring and supervising the Head of School; developing and approving broad policies; and ensuring the school's longevity into the future. Individual Board members make a commitment to attend meetings of the full Board as well as one or more Board Committees. Members are expected to prepare for meetings by reading the necessary documents, and to participate fully in the meetings by contributing both a voice and vote to Board deliberations. Individual Board members do not have authority except as a member of the Board during convened Board meetings. The LCS Constitution requires that any elected Board Member must have a child enrolled as a student at LCS at the time of the election.

Seeking a Balanced Board Profile:

The Board of Trustees seeks individuals to provide policy leadership during an exciting time of continued development and transition for the school, in line with the vision of the community. With this in mind, the Board seeks interested and qualified candidates, particularly those who have expertise in any of the following areas:

- Engineering, construction, and architecture
- Finance/Investment management, particularly as relates to large scale projects
- Fundraising
- Management, governance and strategic planning
- Government Relations in Ghana
- Ghanaian business/institutional environment

The Board of Trustees seeks to maintain a Trustee profile that reflects the diversity of our community.

Other Desirable Qualities of Lincoln Trustees:

- Demonstrated collaboration skills and an Ability to work in a multicultural environment
- Willingness to make the necessary time commitment
- Wisdom
- A sense of humour
- Proven team player
- Ability and willingness to think strategically

Board Code of Conduct:

Serving on the LCS Board of Trustees requires a commitment by members to abide by the Code of Conduct, which is detailed in the Candidate Orientation Booklet.

Appendix D: Sample Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Documents

(LINCOLN COMMUNITY SCHOOL)

LCS Board of Trustees - Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure and Agreement

Trustees are appointed or elected to serve LCS and all its constituencies. The men and women who accept this position are expected to carry out their duties in a manner that inspires and ensures the confidence of the school and the broader community.

Trustees shall exercise the utmost good faith in all transactions touching upon their duties to the school and its property. They shall not use their positions as Board members, or knowledge gained therefrom, so that a conflict might arise between the school's interest and that of any individual Trustee.

A conflict of interest arises in any situation in which a Trustee (and his/her immediate family) is involved in an activity that could adversely affect his/her judgment with respect to the business of the school, or otherwise diminish the interest of the school.

I, _____, have read and understood the Board Policy on Conflict of Interest and have read and agreed with the preamble above. I have fully disclosed any potential conflicts of interest, below, that might affect the objectivity of my judgment, perceived or real, in Board deliberations for the _____ school year.* During the school year I agree to bring to the Board's attention any potential conflicts of interest that might be relevant to a particular deliberation, and will normally recuse myself from that discussion and decision.

(signature)

Potential conflicts of interest related to fee decisions:

This information will not require the Trustee to recuse him/herself from fee deliberations, but it is a reminder that each board member has an implicit conflict in such decisions if any fees are paid by the family.

- _____ My child(ren)'s fees are paid entirely by my family.
- _____ My child(ren)'s fees are partly paid by an organization, and partly by my family.
(Please provide details of the breakdown and the name of the organization:

_____)
- _____ My child(ren)'s fees are paid in full by an organization: (_____)

Other potential conflicts of interest:

- **Businesses** in which I, or any family members, have an interest or in which I/they work or serve:

- **Non-profit organizations** with which I, or any family members, are involved:

- **Government agencies** with which I, or any family members, interact in the course of our work:

** This form is to be completed and signed by Board members at the beginning of each school year, including re-signing by returning board members.*

Appendix E: Sample Board Evaluation Tool

The Strategic Board Assessment II

ISM has completed a two-year analysis of the relationship between ISM's long-established Strategic Board Assessment instrument¹ and the six ISM Stability Markers that are largely determined and driven by Board decisions and policies.² We now offer this update and revision of the original instrument. With one exception, the items are the same as in the first iteration, but the scoring of the instrument has been altered dramatically so that Board leaders can prioritize and focus structure and function with more precision.

As Board President or Chair of the Committee on Trustees, begin using this second-generation instrument in your annual or twice-annual administration of the Strategic Board Assessment, both as an independent measure of your Board's strategic orientation and as a critical self-scoring component in the ISM Stability Markers. The instrument's revised scoring system yields a single 24-point total. That total comprises your Board's score on the governance portion of the ISM Stability Markers.

Use this updated instrument and its revised scoring system as soon as practical, to establish a fresh baseline for scoring the

Strategic Board Assessment. You will not be able to compare your scores on this revised instrument to your scores on the first-generation instrument, since this data-based overhaul of the scoring system makes such comparisons meaningless.

In developing your Board's strategic orientation, place early emphasis with your Trustees on the items weighted most heavily in ISM's statistical analysis, since those are the items with greatest impact on your school's long-term strategic strength, i.e., items No.1 and 11, and, secondarily, items No. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 15. The remaining items should still receive your attention; make your Trustees aware that those items will impact your Board's ability to influence strategic excellence in a tertiary fashion. That is, changes for the better on these items are not going to result in direct, immediate impact on the school's stability. Instead, they will support improvement on the primary and secondary items. [J&P](#)

¹ See "Strategic Board Evaluation," *Ideas & Perspectives*, 26-4-13.

² See "The ISM Stability Markers: The Fourth Iteration," *IS&P*, 39-8-29.

The Strategic Board Assessment II

Date/Year: _____

This instrument is designed to be completed by Trustees at least once a year. The Committee on Trustees (COT) normally administers and scores the instrument. The COT then includes an analysis of its tabulation as part of the annual (or twice-annual) Board self-evaluation.

For Boards just beginning to move in the direction of the strategic Board, the initial self-score serves as the foundation for a Board development plan, fashioned by the COT for Board consideration.

Individual Trustees: Please circle a number to represent your impression of your Board on each of the 15 items below.

1. Our Trustees focus on the strategic, long-term impact of issues and decisions.

Rarely 0 1 2 3 4 Always

2. We have developed a planning document that is simultaneously visionary, practical, and financially feasible.

0 1 2 3 4
No planning document Exemplary planning document

3. Each spring/summer, we create our annual Board agenda using items derived explicitly from our planning document.

0 1 2 3 4
No planning document Board agenda derived explicitly from planning document

4. Our Committee on Trustees creates a Board profiles (a list of descriptors or characteristics aligned with the planning document) and cultivates potential Trustees with the profile as guide.

0 1 2 3 4
No profile Thorough profile-specific cultivation



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5. Our full-Board meetings are organized around one major action item on which a vote is taken or a consensus is reached during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4
Meetings not organized on this basis					Meetings organized on this basis
6. "Current day-to-day events" discussions do not dominate our full-Board meetings.	0	1	2	3	4
Current events dominate					Strategic/long range issues dominate
7. There is a Head Support and Evaluation Committee (HSEC), or its equivalent, which assists the Head, when appropriate, in handling "current events issues" and which is the only forum for Head evaluation.	0	1	2	3	4
No HSEC exists			HSEC operates effectively (handling "current events issues" and evaluation)		
8. Our Board committees are given explicit charges each year.	0	1	2	3	4
No charges					Annual charges for all committees
9. Our Committee on Trustees evaluates the Board based on the Board's fulfillment of its annual Board agenda (which is, in turn, derived annually from the planning document), and the Board takes action.	0	1	2	3	4
No Committee on Trustees evaluation				Comprehensive formal evaluation followed by appropriate action	
10. Our Board has instituted a major gifts program/committee in which potential major donors are continuously cultivated year after year, regardless of when (or if) the next campaign is scheduled to begin.	0	1	2	3	4
No major gifts program/committee				In place and effective major gifts program/committee	
11. There is depth of leadership on our Board (i.e., a number of individuals whom one can readily imagine in the Board presidency and/or holding critical Committee Chair positions).	0	1	2	3	4
No leadership depth					Great leadership depth
12. There is a high level of mutual trust between our Board and our School Head.	0	1	2	3	4
No level of mutual trust					Very high level of mutual trust
13. Our Board places great emphasis on its annual new-Trustee orientation and on its continuing education process.	0	1	2	3	4
No education of any kind				Great emphasis on orientation and on continuing education	
14. Our Board committees regularly tap the expertise of non-Trustees, using them as committee members, committee guests, or unofficial "consultants."	0	1	2	3	4
No use of non-Trustees				Appropriate use of non-Trustees by Board committees	
15. One-hundred percent of our Trustees take their "due diligence" seriously (i.e., preparation for meetings; on-time attendance at all meetings; full participation in meetings; personal financial contributions promptly made in support of all fundraising goals; serious commitment to the confidentiality of Board matters; enthusiastic support publicly for the school, its faculty, its Head, and each Trustee's own Board colleagues).	0	1	2	3	4
None					100% of our Trustees



Scoring: The Strategic Board Assessment generates 24 possible points in the scoring of the 147-point ISM Stability Marker array; the scoring approach shown below conforms to that number (i.e., 24 possible points).

1. Average the participants' scores for numbers 1 and 11; multiply by 4 (range 0–16).
2. Average the participants' scores for numbers 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, and 15; multiply by 2 (range 0–8).
3. Sum these two (range 0–24).
4. Do not include items 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, and 14 in the tabulation.

The items just listed in No. 4 above are included because they represent good practice in operating a “strategic” Board of Trustees. Thus, ISM recommends that the Committee on Trustees include these seven items in its annual analysis of the Board’s strategic orientation. (This would mean, for example, reporting to the Board on mean scores for items 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, and 14, just as on items 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, and 15.)

The items listed in No. 4 do not, however, correlate strongly with the ISM Stability Marker outcomes and, thus, do not play a role in determining your school’s score on the Stability Markers. Use only the items in No. 1 and 2, above, in computing your Board’s self-score on the governance portion of the Stability Markers.

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Appendix H: Long Range Strategic Planning

Insights on Private School Operations

Planning overview: The long range and strategic approaches

“Planning is a pain in the neck. Not only is it a lot of trouble, but it takes away your flexibility. Planning locks you in so that you find yourself going down what may turn out to be a blind alley, or worse. We’re better off figuring things out as we go, frankly.”

As Board Chair, you may have heard comments like these from your fellow Board members and other school leaders. The view of planning as a difficult, counter-productive, and even dangerous course of action is fairly common ... but only partially true.

Planning certainly can be a lot of trouble, particularly when a school tackles the process for the first time or faces far-reaching changes. The type of plan the school chooses, strategic or long range, also has an effect. (See the section on strategic vs. long range planning in this article.)

However, the concept that planning sets a school’s course in stone is an erroneous one. An effective plan is a road map. Initially, you set a course to follow, but along the way you may change your route or even rethink your destination. The plan provides a reference point, one that helps you make good decisions about your journey and avoid traveling in circles or getting thoroughly lost along the way.

The “figuring things out as we go” portion of the above statement is a danger sign. A school can function based on day-to-day decisions and good fortune. However, in order to make progress, the school’s leaders must have clear perspective on where the institution wants to be and how it’s going to get there.

With a plan in place, you have guidelines for making the decisions that undergird your school’s future. For example, if one of the goals is to increase the upper school enrollment by 30%, that factor could impact your assessment of candidates for the Athletics Director or Dean of Students position. In hiring, you would focus on applicants with demonstrated experience in *building* programs, for example, rather than those who had primarily sustained them.

Your plan also gives you an important tool that supports your marketing efforts, communicates your school’s goals and general direction to the school community, and demonstrates to major donors and/or foundations the impact the funds they contribute will have on your school.

The Board’s role in planning

The Board is charged with furthering the school’s mission and ensuring the school’s success. This key group’s reason-for-being should be *to take viability-focused action on behalf of the next generation of students*. And what does that imply? That your Board’s core activity is planning, and that your Board’s primary constituency is not today’s students but the students of the future – your current students’ children and, possibly, your grandchildren.

This responsibility cannot be met by making decisions on a day-to-day basis. That being the case, planning becomes an obligation, one that your Board must accept bravely, whether the process is in fact a “pain in the neck” or not.

Strategic vs. long range plans

Once you’ve decided to undertake the planning process, the next step is to determine which kind of plan will best serve your school. Planning comes in two flavors: strategic and long range.

Similarities

- Both cover a time frame of five to eight years.
- Both should be completely redone every four years. That way, one or more years will remain on the planning document, providing continuity.
- Both are designed to drive your Board and management activity, year-by-year.
- Both are focused on the planning benefits discussed above.

Differences

- **Focus:** A strategic plan deals with viability-related issues – what the school needs to enhance its stability and solvency. The key issues listed in the box below provide a foundation. Each school must determine its “ideal” for each item, adding to the list if necessary. The goal is to create a maximum two-page document of strategic plan items that will drive the school’s efforts in the coming years. (See the sidebar on p. 14 for sample strategic plan items.)

The resulting strategic plan provides your school’s leaders at all levels with a framework for making all kinds of decisions, large and small. Within that framework, excellence in the classroom can be sustained because it can be paid for.

A long range plan, on the other hand, includes the has nothing to do with the length of time – both cover

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five to eight years. Instead, the size of the written plans differs because of what each type attempts to accomplish. Dealing with student-program issues quickly makes for a very thick document.

• **Planning group:** A strategic plan is a Board/School Head document. A long range plan is a "constituency-based" document.

Strategic issues considered by well-grounded schools

Student-related

enrollment
tuition levels
tuition-assistance levels
student/faculty ratio and/or preferred class size
student body gender balance
student body racial/ethnic balance
attrition rate

Faculty and staff

salary levels
professional growth program characteristics/budget
benefits characteristics/budget

Administrative staffing

academic
cocurricular
Business Office
Development Office
Admission Office
counseling (academic, personal, college placement)

Finances

percent of operations expense covered by hard income
cash reserves level

Fund raising

annual fund levels
characteristics/yield of major gifts program
endowment level

Constituent relations

past parent or alumni/ae development
parent communication
parent education

Technology

hardware and software (academic, cocurricular, administrative)
implied personnel

Facilities

expansion
renovation

Long range plans are mission-specific. They provide guidelines for the development of your services to your students and their parents in ways that are implied by your mission statement. Since they include considerable programmatic detail, those who will implement the programs must be included throughout.

• Process:

Since the Board's basic mission is to "take viability-focused action" on behalf of the "next generation of students," the Board and School Head can create the strategic plan in a one-day session, held every four years.

In contrast, a long range plan is going to detail your school's approach to providing services to the students and to the parent body. Involve them!

This will probably mean at least two full-day retreat sessions with 40 to 50 people at each (a somewhat different mix each time), followed by weeks or months of document preparation by an ad hoc committee of Board members, administrators, faculty members, parents, and, if you have a high school, students.

While this constituency-based approach is certainly complex, it has strong benefits. You bring people from all areas of the school into the process of charting its future. This is important philosophically; in addition, this approach offers opportunities for interaction, creates a sense of ownership among the constituencies, and strengthens bonds with the school.

Another important benefit: You create a base of support from the various constituencies for any major fund-raising campaign, project, or change in direction because it grows out of the planning process in which they have participated.

Which type of plan should your school have?

A Board's core responsibility is to have a strategic plan in hand and up-to-date at all times. Note, however, that a long range plan is comprehensive; a good plan of this type will include all your strategic issues within itself.

The most effective course is to create the strategic plan first. In preparation for your strategic planning day (which, remember, will include only the Board and the School Head), it is advisable to collect data to assist you in making your strategic planning decisions.

For example, you might conduct a parent survey to find out what they view as your school's strengths, what causes the most concern, or what they wish your school could offer.

You might hold focus groups with parents of your school's graduates (or with the graduates themselves) to get a clearer sense of how the transition from your school to the next level institution seems to go.

Depending upon what you find, and depending upon the perspectives your Governor and School Head have concerning your school's future, you may decide that *one of the items in your strategic plan should be the development of a long range plan.*

Or you may decide that, while a long range plan isn't a priority right now, you want to keep an eye on the situation. As a result, one of the items in your strategic plan might be to conduct the survey/focus group process every two years and then – based on parents' levels of satisfaction and hopes for the school's future – re-assess the need for a long range plan.

The strategic plan's role in long range planning

If your data collection process indicates a need for program changes, that suggests long range planning for the upcoming school year. However, you need to update your strategic plan first. Otherwise, you run the risk of inadvertently turning your long range planning retreats into a sham.

Here's why: Once you get those groups of capable people together at a retreat and ask them to brainstorm "Our Ideal School for the Year 2005," they will do a great job. They will readily develop an impressive blueprint.

However, many of the "ideal school" items will have price tags, and some may be considerable. As a result, the retreat groups are likely to generate a long range plan your school cannot afford – unless you ensure that they operate within the financial (and other) parameters implied by the strategic plan.

The retreat participants need to take fiscal realities into account. As wonderful as the items may be (e.g., a full-time guidance counselor, an additional foreign language and the teachers required to offer it, additional sports and the personnel required to coach them, special education services and the experts required to provide them), making them a reality may necessitate higher tuition levels, larger class sizes, and/or depressed faculty compensation levels.

In addition, the long range planners may delineate capital projects. These will be funded through capital campaigns rather than tuition and other "hard" (not solicited) income, such as leases and interest on protected investments.

With either kind of price tag, your long range plan may prove to be unaffordable, unless you have indeed formulated your strategic plan in advance of such retreats and required your planning groups to operate within those constraints.

Once you have the appropriate planning document(s) in hand, your school's mission can be realized at all levels. Your strategic plan will provide a stable/solvent platform from which to operate, and your long range plan will spell out the programmatic steps necessary to achieve mission-specific excellence.

This article provides an overview of strategic and long range planning. For additional information, see the following articles in Ideas & Perspectives: Vol. 18, No. 16: "Strategic Planning: The Foundation Process," p. 61, and "Long-range Planning: a Review," p. 63. I&P, also published by ISM, focuses on emerging trends and leadership challenges in private schools, while To The Point deals with day-to-day operations and governance.

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Sample strategic plan items

In creating your school's strategic plan, envision two pages or less of sequenced bullet points like those shown below.

For each plan item: state a six-year goal concisely; show a cost estimate and the revenue source, affix responsibility for implementation of the item, and estimate a time frame for start and finish.

• **Build our cash reserves from zero to 5% of one year's operating budget**

Cost: one percent of our budget per year (a new line in the budget for expenses)

Revenue source: tuition and fees

Responsibility: administration

Time frame: start with next year's budget; continue annually

• **Create a Board profile and cultivate new members to fit the profile**

Cost: none

Revenue source: none needed

Responsibility: Board

Time frame: profile this year and every fourth year; cultivate prospective members continuously

• **Initiate a 403(b) retirement plan for the faculty**

Cost: estimated 0.5% of our budget per year (a new line in our budget of expenses)

Revenue source: tuition and fees

Responsibility: administration

Time frame: start with Year Two of this strategic plan; re-evaluate allocation and program annually

• **Create the position of Director of Parent Relations (half-time)**

Cost: estimated \$2,000 in Year 2, to advertise and conduct search process; \$15,000-\$20,000 for total compensation package in Year 3 and following

Revenue source: tuition

Responsibility: administration

Time frame: search in Year 2, hiring in Year 3, permanent addition to the administrative staff in Year 3 and thereafter; evaluate annually the need to increase from half-time

A Sample Strategic Plan

While most Boards and Heads of School now have planning documents in place, many have asked about the format and “look” of a strategic plan.* There is no correct format. However, ISM endorses the following sample (on pages 2 thru 5) for several key reasons.

- The sample plan meets ISM’s four basic criteria for any planning document in which items:
 - display cost estimates;
 - indicate projected revenue sources;
 - are sequenced by year of expected implementation; and
 - have been charged to a responsible person or entity.
- The items are “strategic”; that is, they deal only with “viability-related” issues, avoiding items that are “merely important.” For example, the characteristics of your reading curriculum have considerable importance in determining the quality of your students’ learning experience. However, those characteristics, important though they are, do not play a significant role in determining your school’s ability to “stay in business” as a competitive enterprise. On the other hand, the size of the classroom (i.e., number of students) in which those students read may well provide a competitive advantage (or disadvantage) for your school.
- The document is short, allowing the Board and senior administration to focus on the relatively small number of items that truly make a difference regarding a school’s strategic (i.e., competitive) success.
- The document can provide “talking points,” items that focus on the school’s strategic, competitive advantages. These may be added to a marketing brochure, admission flier, fund-raising booklet, campaign case statement, parent education guide, and the like.

Sample Introduction to a Strategic Plan

Strategic plans focus upon the viability-related issues implicit in school finance, governance, and management. Goals, procedures, and policies dealing with school programs, services, and personnel are shaped through regular organizational channels (i.e., administration-led policy development) rather than through periodic planning efforts.

Goals, procedures, and policies are required to fit within the financial and other constraints established or implied by the strategic plan. Implicit in the existence of a strategic plan is that future ventures will be undertaken only if they are consistent with the guidelines and parameters established by this document.

Sample Explanation of Terms and Symbols

This document assumes that all new and/or increased operations expenditures (as distinct from capital expenditures) must be taken from hard income. The result of this approach, over the life of the plan, is to increase the percentage of operations expense covered by hard income, a critical marker for financial stability and overall excellence in private schools.

Hard income refers to revenues that are billed or internally transferred rather than solicited. Hard income, so defined, includes such items as tuition, fees, surpluses from summer or extended-day programs, transfers of endowment interest earnings to the operations budget, and other similar revenue sources or procedures. Soft income refers to solicited funds: revenue from an annual fund drive, an auction, a special event, and so on. Capital campaign revenues fall into neither category since the hard/soft income differentiation applies only to operations budget items.

This strategic plan document assumes a 3.25% increase in expenditures per year as a “floor gradient.” A dollar sign (\$) represents an estimated 1% increase in expenses beyond the expected 3.25%. Using the dollar-sign symbol to represent the percentage-point impact of a given planning item on hard income requirements has the practical advantage of making it unnecessary to estimate, in the strategic plan, inflation-related changes in the value of the dollar. For example, an item with **2.0 \$** can be expected to require a 2% tuition/hard income increase. If that were the only new item in that year requiring operations budget revenue in support, then the total expenditure increase in that year would be 5.25%.

* ISM has written numerous articles during the past decade on the planning process, especially regarding strategic planning and strategic financial planning. See “Strategic Planning: The Foundation Process,” *I&P*, 18-16-61; “Planning and Viability,” 21-4-15; “Your Strategic Financial Plan,” 22-5-17; “The Strategic Financial Plan: A Checklist for Trustees,” 22-15-61; “Linking Your Strategic Financial Plan to Your Operating Budget,” 23-6-21; “Your Strategic Marketing Plan,” 24-8-30; “Strategic Continuity: The Importance of ‘Board Memory,’” 24-9-33; “Your Strategic Web Plan,” 24-15-57; and “10 ‘Failure Strategies’ for Your Board of Trustees,” 24-16-61.

A Sample Strategic Plan

Year One			
Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Create Committee on Trustees	None	None	Executive Committee
Create Board profile	None	None	Committee on Trustees
Reconceptualize Executive Committee functions to focus on strategic plan implementation and oversight	None	None	Executive Committee
Commit to "annual agenda" concept	None	None	Executive Committee
Create major gifts committee/program	None	None	Executive Committee and Committee on Trustees
Create one-page strategic financial plan as attachment to this document, showing major quantitative/monetary implications of the plan; benchmark median faculty salary to 90% of local public school median, with benchmark to be reached in Year Five of this plan; include increases of 3.25% per year in <i>all expenditure lines</i> unless noted otherwise	None	None	Finance Committee and senior administration
Conduct professionally assisted facilities audit	\$\$ (reserves)	Plant reserves	Senior administration
Conduct and conclude search for person to fill newly created position of Director of Parent Relations	0.1 of \$ search budget	Operations budget	Senior administration
Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year One items: 0.1 \$			
Year Two			
Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Integrate facilities audit findings and recommendations into Plant Maintenance Schedule and Campus Master (Physical) Plan	No direct costs for integrating findings; outcome costs to be subsumed under capital campaign umbrella	None	Board committee, created by Executive Committee and senior administration
Institute review process designed to enhance faculty retirement plan, with new retirement arrangements to be in place in Year Three of plan	None	None	Senior administration
Institute review process designed to convert faculty evaluation system into professional-growth-focused system by Year Four of plan	None	None	Senior administration
Begin negotiations regarding purchase of contiguous property on west and north sides of campus	None	None	Board committee, created by Executive Committee
Develop operations budget for Year Three showing faculty salary increase consistent with estimated gradient necessary to reach goal stated in Year One of plan	Needed to develop budget itself:		
	None	None	Senior administration
	Needed to fund faculty salary increase above the 3.25% per year specified for all expenditures:		
	(\$\$, beginning Year Three)	Operations budget	Senior administration
Launch new Parent Relations Program	\$\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year Two items: 2.0 \$			

Year Three

Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Initiate revamped faculty retirement plan	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Implement faculty salary increase plan (designed to reach stated Year One benchmark in Year Five of plan)	\$\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Implement revised faculty evaluation program, based upon Year Two review process	0.2 of \$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Conclude contiguous property negotiations	None	None	Board committee, created by Executive Committee
Achieve major gifts program "process goal" of 10 participants	None	None	Major Gifts Committee
Launch Instructional Technology Task Force	None	None	Senior administration
Create strategic marketing plan as subset of overall strategic plan	None	None	Board committee, created by Executive Committee

Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year Three items: 3.2 \$

Year Four

Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Extend faculty salary increase plan	\$\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Implement strategic marketing plan	0.2 of \$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Conclude Instructional Technology Task Force; make recommendations	None	None	Senior administration

Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year Four items: 2.2 \$

Year Five

Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Extend faculty salary increase plan	\$\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Initiate administration/staff salary benchmark plan	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Begin faculty mentoring system	None	None	Senior administration
Initiate accreditation self-study	0.1 of \$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Initiate faculty evaluation system enhancements, second phase	0.2 of \$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Rebuild cash reserves	0.7 of \$ plus year-end surplus	Operations budget	Senior administration
Implement Instructional Technology Plan	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration

Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year Five items: 5.0 \$

Year Six

Item	Costs	Revenue Source	Responsible Person/Entity
Faculty salary increase (benchmark was reached in Year Five)	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Extend administration/staff salary benchmark plan	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Host accreditation team visit	0.2 of \$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Rebuild cash reserves	0.8 of \$ plus year-end surplus	Operations budget	Senior administration
Continue Instructional Technology Plan	\$	Operations budget	Senior administration
Rebuild and expand major gifts program	None	None	Major Gifts Committee

Estimated hard income revenue increase (above 3.25% floor gradient) required by Year Six items: 4.0 \$

Final Notes

- A critical outcome of a strategic plan of the kind shown in this sample is that the division of labor between Board and administration is made clear. The Board finds itself immersed in the types of endeavors that only Boards can carry out; the administration/faculty/staff together engage in the tasks that they are required to handle.
- The strategic allocation of expenditures and revenues is also made clear by the document. Rather than the conventional, ineffective practice of making very small changes year-by-year in operations budgets, this strategic plan concentrates, one to three years at a time, on making a significant impact in a few strategically critical operations areas.
- The sample strategic plan, like ISM-endorsed "real" plans, does not attempt to "do everything." It focuses on the relatively small number of issues that will enable a school to remain competitive.
- ISM prefers that the planning process be quadrennial, even though the plan projects the next six to eight years of your school's life. Planners must be able to think six to eight years into the future, and to include that time frame in the strategic plan. But ISM also discourages Boards and Heads from allowing a plan to run all the way to its projected end point. Too many variables intervene. If your school wishes to utilize the recommended four-year (or any) cycle, then "new strategic plan" should be entered as a separate item in Year Four (or other appropriate place) in the plan itself.
- Capital campaign steps and expenditures are not shown in the strategic financial plan; the SFP deals only with operations costs. [Note: In this sample, property/facilities-focused items in Years 1-3 led to a capital campaign in Years 4-5, not shown here.]

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Appendix I: Office of Overseas Schools Emergency Handbook

Access to Office of Overseas Schools Emergency Handbook is with permission only.

Please contact director@aisa.or.ke for more details

Appendix J: Stability Markers

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The Third Iteration of ISM Stability Markers

At approximate five-year intervals, the ISM consulting staff conducts an internal study designed to identify those variables that are *associated most strongly with a private-independent school's ability to sustain excellence in its student programs*. The outcome list, termed the ISM Stability Markers™, changes moderately from one iteration to the next, in part because North American economic and enrollment-demand conditions tend to shift over time, and in part because ISM's capacity to measure—and, thus, to detect—prominent markers gains strength steadily with enhancements in the organization's internal research capabilities.

The second iteration, published in 2001, comprised two tiers, the first with eight items listed in rank order and the second with nine more items that were not prioritized. This new iteration also comprises two tiers, with six items in the top tier and 12 unranked items in the second.

The New Stability Markers: First-Tier Items (Rank-Ordered)

1. **Stability Marker No. 1: Cash reserves/debt/endowment mix.** This item is a formulaic mix of cash reserves, (reduced or eliminated) debt, and endowment. Of the three variables that combine to form this top-ranked item, reserves have the strongest association with the criterion variable of sustaining excellence in student programs. (Benchmark: total reserves equal to 15%–20% of one year's operations budget)
2. **Stability Marker No. 2: Strategic plan/strategic financial plan.** This refers to the existence and regular, routine utilization of a planning document that simultaneously displays viability-related items (usually items related to money, organizational structure, technology, and facilities/grounds) *and* the financial/quantitative consequences of those items, including the projected net tuition gradient, other hard-income gradients, and the basic expense gradient. It also refers to soft-income targets such as capital and/or major gift items that are identified in the strategic planning process. ISM recommends six-year planning documents that are completely re-done every four years (i.e., Year Four of each strategic/ financial plan is always the planning year for the school's next six-year strategic/financial plan).
3. **Stability Marker No. 3: Executive leadership.** This refers primarily to School Head leadership, but secondarily to leadership by other *Academic* Administrators (e.g., Deans, Division Heads, Department Chairs, grade-level coordinators). The specific content of this item is derived from ISM's School Head leadership studies, and comprises two eight-item lists, one labeled “leadership traits,” and the other “leadership points of emphasis.”
4. **Stability Marker No. 4: Hard-income driven.*** This refers to the percentage of a school's operations expense that is covered by “hard income”—monies that are billed (e.g., tuition, fees, profits from auxiliary services such as summer programs), or funds that are transferred from interest-bearing accounts (e.g., earned interest from an endowment corpus). (Benchmark: 95%–100% coverage with hard income. The goal, however, is conceptual, rather than specifically numerical, and that is to cover a sufficiently high percentage of operations expense with hard income so as to allow annual “soft-income” activity to concentrate not primarily on balancing the budget, but on named

“enhancements,” an approach that can be expected greatly to enhance any school's soft-income-generation capabilities.)

5. **Stability Marker No. 5: Profiled Board.** A profiled Board is one that is formed by systematically asking the question, “What are the characteristics of the *mix* of Trustees that will enable our school to execute its strategic/financial plan with the greatest distinction?” ISM recommends that the Committee on Trustees develop a new Board profile at least as often as a new strategic/financial plan is created.
6. **Stability Marker No. 6: Board leadership.** A Board that functions professionally and strategically is one that is led by individuals (President, committee Chairs, and other “untitled” leaders) who discipline themselves *and* the Board, as an organization, to “take viability-focused action on behalf of the next generation of students.” Such a Board's core activity is the quadrennial strategic/financial planning event.

The New Stability Markers: Second-Tier Items (Not Rank-Ordered)

- **Growth-oriented faculty culture.** This refers to the extent to which there is a culture in which each teacher's view of his or her vocation includes career-long professional growth at its very core. (Scoring instrument: [ISM's Faculty Culture Profile](#))
- **Budgeted support for faculty professional development.** (Benchmark: 1.5%–2.0% of total budgeted expenditures)
- **Trustee education.** This item stresses the crucial importance of continual attention to the education of Trustees regarding all things strategic and strategic-financial (see first-tier item No. 6), and to the implications of the fundamental distinctions between governance and operations. (Scoring instrument: [ISM's Strategic Board Assessment](#))
- **Board/operations differentiation.** This item focuses on clarifying—in terms of structure and function—the distinction between Board responsibilities and School Head (and faculty/staff) responsibilities. (Scoring instrument: [ISM's Strategic Board Assessment](#))
- **Consistent donor cultivation.** This item refers to identifying, cultivating, soliciting, recognizing, and stewarding donors and prospects, particularly (potential or actual) lead donors. The amount and kind of attention paid to these individuals/families/entities *when not actually soliciting from them* can make enormous differences in any school's

“soft-income” success, both short- and long-term, and for annual, capital, and major donor efforts.

- **Development Office management.** This item refers to the capacity to collect and organize financial and other data, to participate meaningfully in the school’s internal and external marketing program, and to provide direct and/or logistical support for “consistent donor cultivation” (see previous item). Soft dollars raised is an outcome of the excellence with which these kinds of management activities are undertaken and executed.
- **Faculty salaries.** Salaries must be competitive, that is, viewed by the teachers themselves as adequate *when compared to known salary markers that the teachers view as “good.”* This often means local public school medians or ranges, or published private-independent school figures pertaining to meaningful (to the teachers themselves) referent groups.
- **Employee benefits.** This refers to the adequacy (in the eyes of the employees themselves) of the breadth of offerings in the school’s benefits package.
- **Quality of facilities.** This refers not to the opulence of a school’s buildings and grounds, but to the extent to which they are well-tended, showing “pride of ownership.” This includes the “view from the street,” the “view from the seat” (in the classroom), and the extent to which the facilities assist (or impede) the delivery of the mission to the students.
- **Master property/facilities plan.** This refers to the existence of an actual planning document that projects both a preventive maintenance schedule (and its costs and revenue sources, both subsets of the strategic/financial plan) for existing buildings and grounds, and projected new-structure/new-acreage expectations.
- **Internal marketing.** This refers to the excellence of the school’s re-recruitment program, the process of reinforcing for current clients (i.e., parents, students, grandparents) the wisdom of their *ongoing* decision to re-enroll and support your school. Converting these clients into an informal (word-of-mouth) sales force is crucial in maintaining high levels of enrollment demand.
- **Enrollment demand in excess of supply.** The existence of waiting pools is fundamental to maintaining a mission-appropriate student body—i.e., a student population that fits the school’s desired demographic *and* that can benefit most strongly from immersion in its curriculum/cocurriculum/program.

The Revised ISM X

The ISM X™ is a graphic positioning of the ISM Stability Markers, arranged to communicate the functional relationships among them. All 18 of the new markers are shown in the revised X displayed on the next page. As with the original X, the markers shown along the base comprise those that are financial and/or organizational/structural, while those along the top are interpersonal in nature.

The outcome marker shown at the bottom right is Stability Marker No. 1, the school’s mix of reserves, (reduced or eliminated) debt, and endowment. The outcome marker shown at the top right is the final marker listed among the second-tier variables, and represents the extent to which enrollment demand exceeds supply. Excellence on the lower-right outcome marker is the result primarily of excellence all along the base of the X. Excellence on the upper-right outcome marker is the result of excellence *throughout the entire X*.

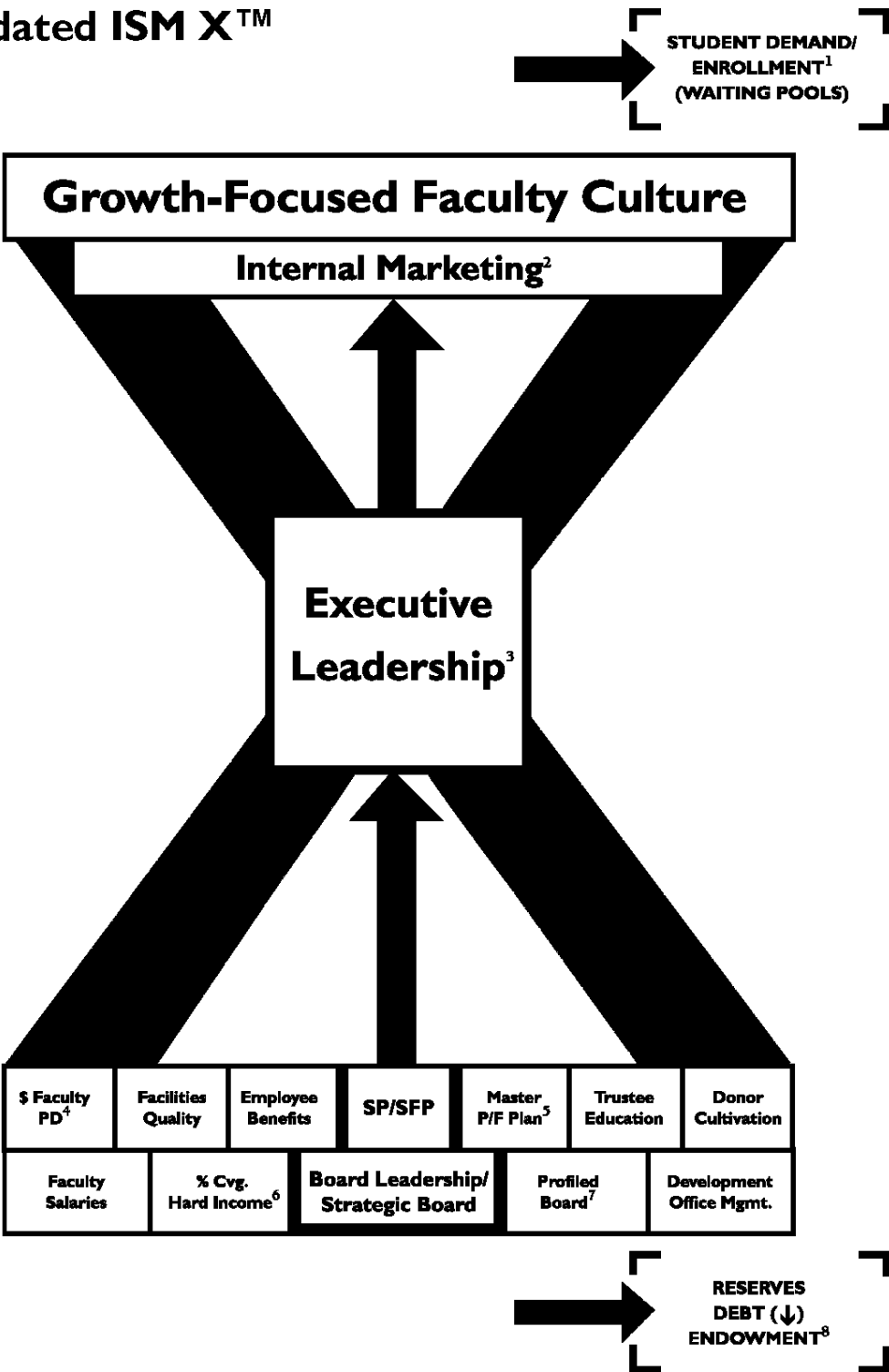
The center box—“Executive Leadership”—shows the positioning of Stability Marker No. 3 in the new array. The heavy arrow rising from the center of the base and then continuing from the center box to the top of the X is designed to communicate the idea that the School Head (with her/his Management Team) is responsible for *translating financial and organizational/structural variables into interpersonal variables*. Ultimately, the delivery of the mission is done by people, working with other people. Excellence in every compartment of the ISM X positions your school to deliver its mission at the highest possible levels, and to sustain that excellence over time.

Conclusion

As you prepare for your next strategic planning event and/or your mid-planning cycle annual agendas, take a close look at your school’s performance against all 18 markers. You should be sure to account for all of them in your multi-year and annual planning. While a given marker may not be pertinent in your situation or at this time, none should be omitted by accident. Consider each one in your own context, and craft your plans accordingly.

* ISM defines hard income as those dollars that the school is legally entitled to collect, primarily through contracted services. Hard income includes tuition payments, fees for special programs, extended day and summer program fees, income from rental of facilities, and any income from transportation and food services. The annual transfer from endowment based on your school’s endowment spending policy counts as hard income—but only when applied to operational expenses. Soft income includes solicited funds through fund-raising events and campaigns.

The Updated ISM X™



Notes for the Updated ISM X

- ¹ Refers to student demand in excess of supply; also associated with high levels of student performance, enthusiasm, and satisfaction

² Refers to excellence in internal marketing (specifically mission-supportive communication with current parents)

³ Refers primarily to the School Head, but may also include Academic Administrators

⁴ Refers to operations budget funding for professional development

⁵ Refers to the master plant/facilities plan
- ⁶ Refers to the percent of operations expense covered by hard income

⁷ Refers to building Board membership from a determination of the best mix of person-characteristics to fulfill the strategic plan/strategic financial plan

⁸ Refers to the formulaic mix of cash reserves, reduced or eliminated debt, and endowment

The Third Iteration of ISM Stability Markers: A Self-Scoring Process

ISM's Stability Markers™ are those variables that are *associated most strongly with a private-independent school's ability to sustain excellence in its student programs*. ISM has noted in the past that “there is a specific relationship between the ISM Stability Markers and the approach to planning that you, as Board President or School Head, should consider. To help you determine the planning ‘avenue’ that best suits your school's current status (based on the Stability Markers), ISM has developed a self-scoring process.” Use the revised self-scoring process to support your future planning efforts as you move toward achieving success on all 18 markers.

When implementing the assessment process, keep in mind that the lower your school's self-score, the more closely ISM recommends that you adhere, in strategic planning, to the Stability Markers as each is applied to your school. The higher your score, the more freedom you have to move away from the markers without placing the institution in financial (or other) jeopardy. Even with the highest-scoring schools, however, ISM strongly recommends that you consider including the Stability Markers in your plan (e.g., “maintain current level of coverage of operations expense with hard income”) as a precaution against drifting away from the high level of stability that you have established.

To determine your score on the Stability Markers, take the following steps.

- As Board President or School Head, designate one individual as Chair of an ad hoc committee charged with the task of determining your school's score. The person selected might be a senior administrator or Chair of an existing Board committee. The process will involve interaction and data collection at several levels of your organization, so the assignment should be given to a person of stature.
- Ask the committee Chair to form a small working committee consisting of at least one member of each major constituent group (e.g., faculty, parents, alumni).
- Charge the committee Chair with (1) determining the data source(s) for each of the 18 Stability Markers, (2) developing an approach to obtaining the data, and (3) adhering to a reasonable deadline for submission of the scoring outcomes (perhaps two to three weeks). Some of the markers are scored objectively and represent the result of simple arithmetic. Others are partially or wholly subjective; some of these are scored by use of an ISM instrument such as the Faculty Culture Profile or the Strategic Board Assessment, while others are strictly impressionistic.

Planning Category One (71 points or fewer): “Core Stability”

If your school scores in this range, ISM recommends that (1) your strategic plan/strategic financial plan be developed by your Board and senior administration only, without constituent participation (other than indirectly as, for example, through use of a parent survey) and (2) your plan adhere very closely to the Stability Markers, with special attention to first-tier items 3 through 6.

Note that the first-tier, top-ranked item and the last-listed, second-tier item are both outcomes of your execution of the other Stability Markers; see the ISM X™ for a graphic depiction of these relationships. Note, as well, that Stability Marker No. 2 is fulfilled in the act of completing a properly conceived and executed strategic/financial plan.

Planning Category Two (72-101 points): “Enhanced Stability”

If your school scores in this range, ISM recommends that (1) as with a Category One outcome, your strategic/financial plan be developed by your Board and senior administration only, with only indirect constituent participation and (2) your plan attend closely to the Stability Markers, but with a moderate degree of “earned freedom” from tight adherence to them. For example, second-tier markers such as the breadth of employee benefits or the expenditure line in support of faculty professional development might become centerpiece items in a Category Two planning document. Under Category One conditions, ISM would urge that first-tier items receive priority as a matter of course.

Planning Category Three (102-131 points): “Programmatic Option”

If your school scores in this range, ISM suggests that (1) your institution has become sufficiently stable to entertain the idea of constituency-based planning, but (2) the constituents should be asked/required to work within at least a rough “strategic/financial” framework provided by the Board and senior administration. This would imply that, prior to setting up one or more constituent retreats, the Board/administration would create approximate multi-year expenditure and tuition gradients *within which the constituents would be expected to operate in crafting the new planning document*. This preliminary work ensures that, first, the Stability Markers will be utilized to set up a financial framework for the retreat participants and, second, the participants will not be given carte blanche to develop a plan that cannot possibly be paid for, which is always the leading risk when inviting constituents—parents, former parents, faculty, older students, alumni, community members, and others—to engage seriously in institutional planning.

Planning Category Four (132-147 points): “Unrestricted Option”

If your school scores in this range, ISM suggests that (1) as in Category Three conditions, your institution has become sufficiently stable to entertain the idea of constituency-based planning and (2) constituents may be invited to develop your new plan without *necessarily* being forced to work within the constraints of a previously developed strategic/financial framework. The school has reached the point, in other words, at which it can withstand the strategic/financial risks inherent in asking people to “think big” *and without constraints* about the institution's future. This does not, of course, mean that the Board/administration is absolved from responsibility for the financial outcomes. Nothing takes that responsibility away.

Conclusion

The ISM Stability Markers are designed to serve as your chief set of guidelines for strategic decision-making. Used correctly, they will assist both the Board and the senior administration in attending to the “main things”—the relatively small number of variables that are difference-makers in your school’s ability to sustain mission-specific excellence in classrooms, on playing fields, on the stage, and, indeed, everywhere the mission is delivered to, and enacted by, your students.

As a visual reminder of how the markers relate to each other, ISM recommends that private-independent school leaders

acquaint themselves with the ISM X—the Stability Markers arranged physically to communicate several specific ideas—and utilize that graphic display hand-in-hand with the self-scoring outcomes, both in strategic planning and in the day-to-day execution of those plans. The Executive Leadership box in the center of the “X” stands as a continual reminder that School Heads must successfully translate financial and organizational/structural variables into interpersonal ones. *Sustained* institutional excellence will always require both.

ISM Stability Markers Scoring Instrument

A. Stability Markers: First-Tier Items (Rank-Ordered)

Stability Marker No. 1: Cash reserves/debt/endowment mix.

A. Sum all cash reserves and express the total as a percent of operating expenditures; award points on a 0-15 scale, as follows:

15%+	= 15 points
11%-14%	= 12 points
7%-10%	= 9 points
4%-6%	= 6 points
2%-3%	= 3 points

B. Next, compute the market value of your total endowment fund balance; divide that balance by total debt to achieve a ratio; award points on a 0-15 scale, as follows:

10 to 1 (or higher)	= 15 points
5-9 to 1	= 12 points
3-4 to 1	= 9 points
2 to 1	= 6 points
1 to 1	= 3 points

C. Next, sum all debts and express as a percent of operating expenditures; award points on a 0-15 scale, as follows:

0%-5%	= 15 points
6%-19%	= 12 points
20%-35%	= 9 points
36%-49%	= 6 points
50%-70%	= 3 points

D. Average the scores for B and C (to yield "BC").

E. Average A with BC. Enter the average of A and BC (range 0-15 points): _____

Stability Marker No. 2: Strategic plan/strategic financial plan.

Scoring on this item is "all or nothing." If you have a plan—by any name—that simultaneously (a) extends at least four years into the future (from time of development), (b) deals primarily with viability-related items (those dealing with money, organizational structure, technology, facilities/grounds, and general "positioning" in the marketplace), (c) deals with the financial/quantitative consequences of those items, (d) displays the projected net tuition gradient and other hard-income gradients, (e) displays the basic expense gradient, and (f) is in routine (at least monthly) use by the Board/administrative leadership, award 12 points (0 or 12): _____

Stability Marker No. 3: Executive leadership.

Using ISM's "16 Characteristics of School Head Leadership," score the Head, using a six-point scale just for this purpose (thus, with 96 as a theoretical maximum score). Divide the

outcome by 8 to reduce the score to a 0-12-point range. Reminder: The third bullet point in the introduction to this article delineates the systematic approach recommended; the ad hoc committee will determine the data source(s) and will devise an approach to obtain pertinent data. In this case, the ad hoc committee may, for example, invite a stratified random sample of the faculty to score the School Head on the 16 Leadership Characteristics, just for this purpose, as distinct from a "Head evaluation" purpose. Enter the result (0-12 range): _____

Stability Marker No. 4: Hard-income driven.⁹

Determine the total amount of "hard income" in the operations budget (monies that are billed, or funds that are transferred from interest-bearing accounts). Divide that number by total operations expenditures, including debt service but not depreciation. Award points for day schools as follows:

98%+	= 12 points
96%-97.9%	= 9 points
94%-95.9%	= 6 points
92%-93.9%	= 3 points

Award points for boarding schools as follows:

80%+	= 12 points
78%-79.9%	= 9 points
76%-77.9%	= 6 points
74%-75.9%	= 3 points

Enter the result (0-12 scale): _____

Stability Marker No. 5: Profiled Board.

This is another "all or nothing" item. If your Board has, in the last four years, created a set of descriptors delineating the "mix" of characteristics that would constitute the ideal Board in the strategic context within which the school found/finds itself, and, using the resulting descriptors, then began/has begun to identify prospective Trustees by name, thereby developing the Board composition from the implications of the profile, award 12 points for this item. If this process has not been followed consistently in the last four years, award zero (0 or 12): _____

Stability Marker No. 6: Board leadership.

Using ISM's Strategic Board Assessment instrument, have the entire Board self-score all 15 items (all of which will be used later in this self-scoring exercise). For this Stability Marker, attend only to items 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, and 12. Identify the number of items (of the six) that show 75% of the respondents scoring at the high end of the nine-point scale (i.e., circling 7, 8, or 9). Award two points for any item on which this occurred, and none where fewer than 75% responded at the high end. Enter the sum (0-12 range): _____

Subtotal for A (First-Tier Items, range 0-75): _____

B. Stability Markers: Second-Tier Items (Not Rank-Ordered)

Growth-oriented faculty culture.

Using ISM's Faculty Culture Profile, administer the instrument to the full faculty (allowing five minutes for completion and collecting the instrument immediately). If the Profile is in regular use in your school, simply obtain the most recent tabulation. For purposes of this exercise, enter the number of items on which the faculty scored at a 75% level or higher

(i.e., 75% of the faculty circled 4 or 5 on the five-point scale). If your school has added items beyond the original 12, do not include those in this tabulation. Having determined the number of 75%+ items, divide that number by two and enter the outcome (0-6 scale): _____

Budgeted support for faculty professional development.

Determine from your operations budget the amount of money allocated for faculty professional development. Divide that number by total expenditures to express that number as a

percent of the overall budget. Score the item subjectively, attending equally to (a) ISM's benchmark of 1.5%-2.0% of the budget allocated to this purpose and (b) the (perceived-by-the-committee) extent to which the school leadership appears to regard faculty professional development as a core component in academic excellence. Score subjectively (0-6 scale): _____

Trustee education.

Once more, utilizing ISM's Strategic Board Assessment instrument and the Board's own self-scoring outcome, note the tabulations for items 1, 13, and 15. Where 75% of the Board scored at the high end of the scale (i.e., circled 7, 8, or 9), award two points; where the percentage falls short of 75%, award none. Sum and enter (0-6 scale): _____

Board/operations differentiation.

Since this Stability Marker addresses "the strategic Board" question in the broadest sense, use the Board's self-score on the entire Strategic Board Assessment to determine the points awarded. (This will mean, of course, that nine of the 15 items will have been counted more than once in the overall Stability Markers self-scoring; six of them were used in tabulating the first-tier "Board leadership" item, and three more were used in the "Trustee education" item.) Here, award one point for any of the 15 items on which 75% of the Trustees scored on the high end of the nine-point scale (i.e., circled 7, 8, or 9). Sum the items and divide by 2.5 to reduce the outcome to the six-point scale used for second-tier items: Record (0-6 scale): _____

Consistent donor cultivation.

Score this item subjectively by asking and answering the question, "To what extent have we, in the last four years, attended fully and appropriately to (actual and potential) lead donors by 'stewarding' them consistently?" ("Stewarding" here refers to cultivation itself, as distinct from actual solicitation.) In awarding the proper score, do not attend to structures (i.e., School Head/Development Office/Board-level organization; this Stability Marker refers only to *function*). Award six points for consistently exemplary performance on this item over the last four years. Record (0-6 scale): _____

Development Office management.

Score subjectively by weighing Development Office performance over the last four years, attending not to actual dollars raised, but to excellence in management's ability to (a) collect and organize financial and other data, (b) participate meaningfully in the school's marketing program, and (c) provide direct and/or logistical support for "consistent donor cultivation" (see previous item). Record (0-6 scale): _____

Faculty salaries.

Salaries must be "competitive," that is, viewed by the teachers themselves as adequate *when compared to known salary markers that the teachers view as "good."* Determine the faculty's consensus referent (e.g., local public school median, regional association data, national association data). Subjectively, and/or in conversation with a sample of faculty members, rate the school's salary structure (median, mean, low-end, high-end) against the consensus referent, with "competitiveness" as the lens. (For example, a median salary within a few percentage points of the referent median—97th-103rd percentile—can be judged "competitive"; a median salary

more than 25 percentile points under the referent median can be judged "not competitive." The former might be awarded six points; the latter, zero.) Record (0-6 scale): _____

Employee benefits.

This refers to the adequacy (in the eyes of the employees themselves) of the breadth of offerings in the school's benefit package. Survey the faculty (entire or sample) regarding the breadth of your offerings. (A sample list might include life insurance, health insurance, retirement plan, long term disability, short term disability, long term care, dental insurance, vision insurance, employee assistance services, Flexible Spending Accounts.) Subjectively determine the adequacy and appropriateness of the breadth of offerings, with six points awarded for a list that most faculty members regard as "a very good list," and with zero awarded for a list that most faculty members regard as "completely inadequate." Record (0-6 scale): _____

Quality of facilities.

Subjectively, and/or in conversation with parents, students, teachers, and others, judge the quality of facilities, using "facilitation of the delivery of the school mission" as the lens. Consider the question from all viewpoints: student, teacher, parent, community member. Award six points for facilities that are judged to facilitate mission delivery across the board, and zero for facilities that actually interfere with mission delivery. Record (0-6 scale): _____

Master property/facilities plan.

Subjectively award six points for a plan that attends at a high level of excellence (a) to multi-year preventive maintenance, its schedule, its costs and its revenue sources (for existing buildings and grounds) and (b) to projected new structures/new acreage. Award zero for the complete absence of both. Record (0-6 scale): _____

Internal marketing.

Subjectively award six points for a marketing program that has consistently, over the last four years (a) communicated to parents and others *within the school community* the relationship between all student programs and the school mission, (b) affixed responsibility for this to one individual or unit through whom or through which all such communications flow, and (c) communicated successfully the details of next-level student placement and performance. Award zero for a program that has failed completely on all three counts. Record (0-6 scale): _____

Enrollment demand in excess of supply

Subjectively award six points for a track record over the last four years, continuing through today, of a substantial waiting pool of mission-appropriate students wanting to enroll at the school's major entry point(s). ("Substantial" is here roughly defined as a number of students that would more than fill one new section of students at a given level.) Award zero for the complete absence of waiting pools over the last four years, continuing through today. Record (0-6 scale): _____

Subtotal for B (range 0-72): _____

Add Subtotal for A (range 0-75): + _____

Total Score (range 0-147): _____

R_x for Stability Marker Fatigue: Three Ds for the Strategic Board

While some Boards may be relatively new to these variables and their planning implications, many others may be experiencing factors that may contribute to the Stability Markers being undervalued or even dismissed. The outcome of these factors over time is “Stability Marker fatigue,” a chronic condition that can usurp Board culture and contribute to institutional health problems down the road.

What Causes the Fatigue?

First of all, the Stability Markers are not “sexy”—they do not have the kind of human appeal that, for example, curriculum, athletics, and other cocurricular activities or new buildings typically have. It is admittedly more emotionally engaging for adults (Trustees) to envision what students will be doing (academic work, sports, arts) and where they will be doing it (classrooms, computer labs, playing fields) than, for example, monitoring the annual increase in the percentage of hard-income coverage of operations expense.

Secondly, while some markers are articulated with quantified benchmarks (e.g., defined percentage to target for cash reserves), others are measurable only by surveys or even less precise methods. In these cases, interest in monitoring over time may fade (for example, ongoing assessment of the quality of the Parent Education Plan). Thirdly, sometimes Boards become over-focused on constituent opinion. They allow the processes of seeking that opinion and then debating appropriate responses to dominate the agenda.

Finally, Board composition changes each year, and new Trustees may bring in “new ideas” with an energy that may redirect fatigued Trustees’ attention (e.g., building a football stadium rather than solidifying the major gifts program).

The Antidote

Boards stray from their fundamental strategic purpose if they fail to keep in mind that the Stability Markers are not end points to be attained, but indicators of institutional health to be sustained. ISM has encouraged Boards to acquire and demonstrate several strategic, behavioral characteristics: objectivity, due diligence, and vigilance, among others. It is your Board’s obligation to make judgments and take action for both attaining and sustaining institutional health by exercising a daily dose of the three Ds: **dedication**, **diligence**, and **discipline**.

The best way to ensure institutional health and to enhance the robustness of your Board’s three Ds is to focus on two major structures—your strategic financial plan and your strategic Board committees. The former establishes key assumptions and financial parameters as ongoing (and moving) targets expressed in the annual operating budget. The latter, with the oversight of the Executive Committee and Committee on Trustees, ensures that specific—and ongoing—action (delivered in committee charges) is being taken on behalf of strategic goals as defined by the Stability Markers and, ideally, as articulated in your current planning document.

A Board that aspires to thoroughly strategic functioning would well to consider Stability Markers as a constant work in progress. A school cannot ever be “done” with markers of health. Attaining and maintaining “good (or excellent) shape,” as defined by the best available markers of it, directly contribute to a long and healthy life for your school and the generations of students it will serve.

The Private-Independent School Headship: A Management and Leadership Xcellence Formulation

Consider the ISM X™ (The ISM Management and Leadership Xcellence Formulation) on page 6.

Designed to communicate a series of critical organizational, financial, and cultural principles, the ISM X also contains implicitly the outcomes of:

- ISM's 2004 Head leadership study,
- ISM's 1989-95 student performance and faculty culture study, and
- the internal ISM studies that have resulted in two iterations of the ISM Stability Markers™.

Note, first, that the basic components in the ISM X are, in fact, the ISM Stability Markers. Across the base of the X are displayed those Stability Markers that together promote organizational and financial stability for the long term. The top of the X is formed by the **Faculty Professional Growth Culture** rectangle representing the quality of the faculty culture (ISM Stability Marker No. 3, and, crucially, the primary determinant of your students' collective experience at your school). Just below this rectangle in the display are the three accompanying Stability Markers that associate themselves most closely with that one (the **Parent Education Plan**, **Faculty Evaluation**, and **Internal Marketing**).

Note second that, along the base of the X, a heavy black border accentuates the role of the **Strategic Board** (Stability Marker No. 2) in developing the **Strategic Plan/Strategic Financial Plan** (itself a second-tier Stability Marker) for the institution, and that, rising from those two interrelated Stability Markers, an arrow moves straight to the **Executive Leadership** box in the center of the display, suggesting graphically that the School Head, supported organizationally and financially by the Strategic Board, spearheads the process of *enhancing the faculty culture*.

Note finally that development of a Faculty Professional Growth Culture becomes the central management/leadership activity in the top portion of the ISM X. The Stability Marker-related outcome (shown as a lateral, summative movement at the top-right of the display) is **Enhanced Student Demand/Enrollment**, a secondary outcome expected to go hand-in-glove with enhanced student performance, satisfaction, and enthusiasm. An analogous dynamic outcome at the base of the X shows the interplay among **Cash Reserves**, **Debt**, and **Endowment**, the long-term result of excellence across the base of the X (and, as well, ISM's No. 1-ranking Stability Marker).

Management and Leadership

The phrase *enhancement of the faculty culture* suggests a mix of *management* (through systems and structure) and *leadership* (through interpersonal engagement) designed to elicit a powerfully professional-growth-focused faculty culture. Envision a School Head who has been given the essential monetary and personnel tools needed to succeed

via the strategic plan/strategic financial plan. When this Head then *manages* and *leads* the school's employees with faculty culture enhancement as the primary goal, he or she stands the best chance to generate the *type* of faculty excellence most likely to result in high levels of (1) school/community satisfaction and excitement and (2) student performance, enthusiasm, and satisfaction.

ISM studies have also identified 16 Characteristics of Head Leadership (divided into Table 1: School Head Leadership Points of Emphasis and Table 2: School Head Leadership Traits). These characteristics most effectively translate money and structure into culture, and, in the end, into enhanced student enrollment/demand.¹

Scrutinize ISM X again, in light of Tables 1 and 2. Note that the 16 characteristics provide the content for the Executive Leadership "translation box" in the center of the X itself. The ISM X thereby suggests graphically that the stronger the School Head develops along this 16 characteristic axis, the more effective her or his leadership is likely to be in its *core strategic role* of translation of money and structure into culture.

Obviously, those School Heads whose organizations are large enough to support an Academic Administrative Team (e.g., Division Heads, Deans of Faculty, Directors of Instruction, Curriculum Coordinators, and the like) will understand that the translation box in the center of the X becomes organizationally more complex. No longer is a single individual serving as "translator." The School Head is then both managing and leading an organization within an organization, but to the same end.²

Can It All Be Done?

The overall thrust of the ISM Management and Leadership Xcellence Formulation may strike the reader as a shift in ISM's longstanding emphasis upon the Stability Markers that form the base of the ISM X. In actuality, the Xcellence Formulation simply acknowledges this previously unarticulated fact: Since the conclusion of the ISM Model Schools Project (1989-95), ISM has pushed just as hard on *quality of the faculty culture* and its related items across the top of the ISM X as on those Stability Markers that form the base, yet without specifying the full extent of what this must mean for the School Head position. The research-derived 16 Characteristics of Head Leadership at the right that form the "translation box" in the center of the ISM X now provide balance in emphasis.

But can it all be done?

Yes, but probably not—or not very well—without a Board that is willing to develop a well-disciplined approach to its own *strategic structure and function*.

With this in mind, charge your Board to use the Strategic Board Assessment instrument (Table 3) in a self-evaluation process. This will assist the development of your Board as a

more “strategic” entity, and will help the Board be better able to support you in your leadership and management roles as delineated in the ISM X model.

The Committee on Trustees should tabulate and score the assessment (see Table 4), then construct a clear and succinct Board development plan. This plan, over time, will generate the kind of “predictability” and “supportiveness” needed to sustain excellence throughout the organization.

Whether your school is large enough to have full-blown second- and third-level academic administration or whether you, as School Head, lead and manage your whole faculty directly, you will need an organizational partner: a Board that will involve you in building great strength across the base of the ISM X, but will not require you to “do it for them.” With the right partner, and with the right

second-level administration in your Business Office, your Development Office, your Admission Office, and (where feasible) your Parent Relations Office, you can indeed move forward on the 16 characteristics in your current headship.

- ¹ Note this reminder regarding the nature of leadership: “Leadership in private-independent school settings entails setting out to translate organizational and financial structures and conditions, many of them constructed or shaped by your (i.e., the School Head’s) own hand, into a professional-growth-focused faculty culture. Actions, approaches, and ‘traits’ that contribute powerfully to the success of this translation comprise leadership.”
- ² Please bear in mind ISM’s research-based position that “management style” is not the issue here. One can, as School Head, manage and lead the Academic Administrative Team in an authoritarian manner, a democratic manner, or anything between the two extremes, *provided the 16 characteristics form a common vector that runs through all team members’ “leadership points of emphasis” and “leadership traits.”*

16 Characteristics of Head Leadership

Table 1: School Head Leadership Points of Emphasis

Leadership Statement	Coefficient of Correlation
1. The School Head vigorously seeks a professional-development-focused faculty culture.	+ .685
2. The School Head gives public, positive reinforcement to deserving employees in all categories—especially in regard to laudable professional-growth achievements—and, as well, to students at all levels.	+ .674
3. The School Head actively promotes an ongoing faculty conversation regarding high expectations and support for students.	+ .640
4. The School Head seeks to establish a faculty-wide conversation regarding professional development.	+ .632
5. The School Head places great emphasis upon the faculty's specific-to-each-student high expectations.	+ .595
6. The School Head demonstrates an inspired and inspirational commitment to the institutional mission.	+ .553
7. The School Head sustains high levels both of self-awareness and of self-management.	+ .519
8. The School Head exhibits determined pursuit of her/his own professional-growth program.	+ .499

Note: Values above .4605 (whether positive or negative) are statistically significant beyond the .001 level with N-2=46 degrees of freedom.

Table 2: School Head Leadership Traits

Leadership Statement	Coefficient of Correlation
1. The School Head is respectful of others, regardless of their position in the organization.	+ .793
2. The School Head is a charismatic person.	+ .747
3. The School Head displays great flexibility.	+ .733
4. The School Head is a supportive person.	+ .680
5. The School Head is steeped in moral purpose, moral clarity, moral conviction, and integrity.	+ .635
6. The School Head is a supremely ethical person.	+ .560
7. The School Head is predictable: One can rely on the consistency of her/his responses to events, both "good" and "bad."	+ .520
8. The School Head seems self-righteous.	-.511 (Negative)

Note: Values above .4605 (whether positive or negative) are statistically significant beyond the .001 level with N-2=46 degrees of freedom.

Table 3: The Strategic Board Assessment

Date/Year _____

This instrument is designed to be completed by individual Trustees at least once a year. ISM suggests that the instrument be distributed in a full-Board meeting and collected within 10 minutes. The Committee on Trustees, normally, will distribute, collect, and—after the meeting—tabulate the assessment. The Committee on Trustees will then include an analysis of its tabulation as part of the annual Board self-evaluation.

Individual Trustees: Please circle a number to represent your impression of your Board on each of the 15 items following.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Our Trustees focus on the long-term, strategic impact of issues and decisions.
Rarely 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Always</p> <p>2. We have developed a planning document (e.g., a strategic plan; a long range plan; an accreditation report modified to serve as a plan) that is simultaneously visionary, practical, and financially feasible.

No planning document 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Exemplary planning document (visionary, practical, feasible)</p> <p>3. Each spring/summer we create our annual Board agenda using items derived explicitly from our planning document.

No planning document 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Board agenda derived explicitly from planning document</p> <p>4. Our Committee on Trustees has “profiled” our Board (i.e., has created a list of descriptors or characteristics of people who, if on the Board, would be most likely to bring the planning document to fruition), and has cultivated potential new Trustees to the Board based largely on these descriptors.

No profile 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Thorough profiling, coupled with profile-specific cultivation</p> <p>5. Our full-Board meetings are regularly organized around one <i>major action item</i> on which a vote is taken or a consensus is reached during the meeting.
Meetings not organized on this basis 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Meetings always organized on this basis</p> <p>6. “Current (day-to-day) events” discussions do not dominate our full-Board meetings.

Current events dominate 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Strategic/long range issues dominate</p> <p>7. There is a Head Support and Evaluation Committee (HSEC), or its equivalent, that assists the Head, when appropriate, in handling “current events” issues (and to whom the Board has delegated responsibility for such issues except in genuine emergencies).

No HSEC exists 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 HSEC and Head handle “current events” appropriately</p> | <p>8. Our Board committees are given explicit charges each year.
Committees are never given charges 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 All committees receive written annual charges</p> <p>9. Our Committee on Trustees evaluates the Board based upon the Board’s fulfillment of its annual Board agenda (which is, in turn, derived annually from the planning document).

No Board self-evaluation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Thorough annual self-evaluation based on Board agenda</p> <p>10. Our Board has instituted a major gifts program in which potential major donors are <i>continuously</i> cultivated year after year, regardless of when (or if) the next capital project is scheduled to begin.

No major gifts cultivation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Continuous major gifts cultivation</p> <p>11. There is depth of leadership on our Board (i.e., a number of individuals whom one can readily imagine in the Board Presidency and/or holding critical Committee Chair posts).
No leadership depth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great leadership depth</p> <p>12. Our Board officers/Committee Chairs are highly respected by all Trustees.
Little respect, or respect from only a few 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great respect by all Trustees</p> <p>13. Our Board places great emphasis on its annual new-Trustee orientation.

No orientation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Great emphasis on orientation</p> <p>14. Our Board <i>committees</i> regularly tap the expertise of non-Trustees, using them as committee members, committee guests, or unofficial “consultants.”

No use of non-Trustees 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Appropriate utilization of non-Trustees by Board committees</p> <p>15. One-hundred percent of our Trustees take their “due diligence” seriously (i.e., <i>preparation</i> for meetings; <i>on-time</i> attendance at <i>all</i> meetings; full participation in meetings; personal financial contributions <i>promptly</i> made in support of <i>all</i> fund-raising goals; serious commitment to the confidentiality of Board matters; enthusiastic support publicly for the school, its faculty, its Head, and each Trustee’s own Board colleagues).

None 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 100% of our Trustees</p> |
|--|--|

Table 4: Scoring and Analysis Guide for Use by the Committee on Trustees

1. **Tabulate the Board's responses** onto a single blank copy of the Strategic Board Assessment.
2. **Do this simple arithmetic.**
 - (a) Count the total number of responses to each of the 15 items (a number that may not be the same for each item, since some Trustees may not have been able to respond to every item).
 - (b) Count the number of 7s, 8s, and 9s for each of the 15 items.
 - (c) For each item, divide "b" by "a" *to determine the percent of Trustees who have scored each item in the top third of the 9-point scale.* (Example: Imagine that a total of 20 Trustees respond to item No. 1, and that 12 of them circle the 7, the 8, or the 9. Dividing 12 by 20 yields 0.60. Thus, 60% of the Trustees scored item No. 1 in the top third of the 9-point scale.)
3. **Rank-order the 15 items**, from best to worst.
4. With this rank-ordering as your guide, **write a several-step Board development outline** designed to move your Board's responses on all 15 items to 75% or higher within the top third (that is, 75% or more of your Trustees selecting 7, 8, or 9 on each of the 15 items).

Appendix K: Sample Board Approved Financial Benchmarks

(LINCOLN COMMUNITY SCHOOL)

The benchmarks listed below also serve as performance indicators to be monitored by the Finance Committee of the Board. These benchmarks can serve to meet the board responsibility of strategic oversight and can help the board and administration agree to level of information to be provided to the full board.

It is recommended that the board and administration should develop a set of financial indicators such as these and that once approved the financial benchmarks should be adopted in Board Policy with appropriate administration procedure to indicate the process for reporting to the Finance Committee and Board through the course of a school year.

Finance Benchmarks/Performance Indicators

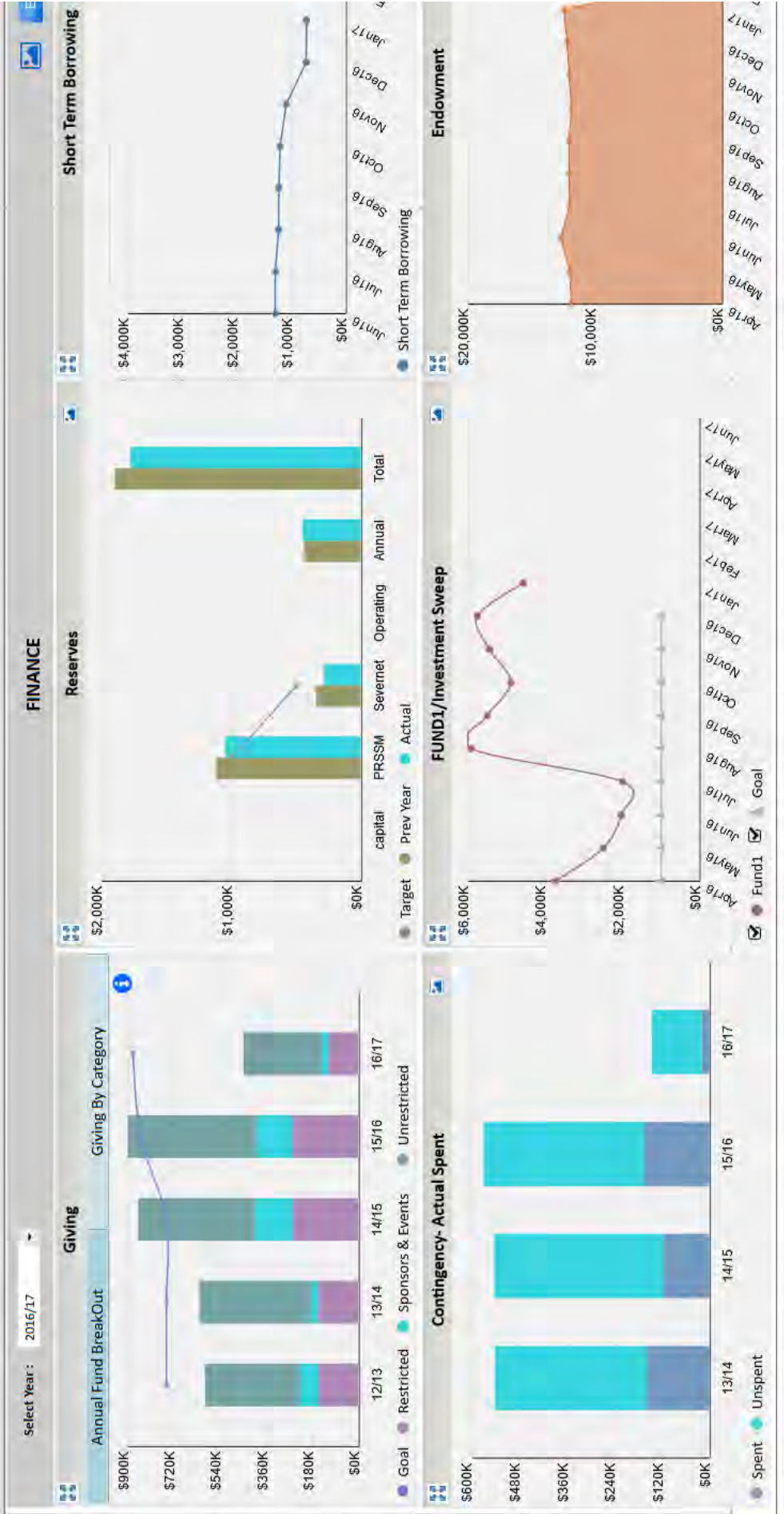
1. The school will maintain cash reserve position equivalent to 20% of the annual operating budget.
2. The school will annually approve a balanced budget and a fee structure whereby operating costs are covered by tuition fees.
3. The school will develop and annually review a rolling seven year financial plan.
4. The school will annually fund the school program through hard income including fees and interest income.
5. The school will annually fund professional development programs in the amount equivalent to 1.5% - 3.0 % of the operating budget.
6. The school faculty salaries will be in the top quartile of benchmark schools in AISA.
7. The school will strive to achieve an enrollment position where demand is more than seat capacity K – 12.
8. The school will implement a consistent donor cultivation program through the Advancement Office.

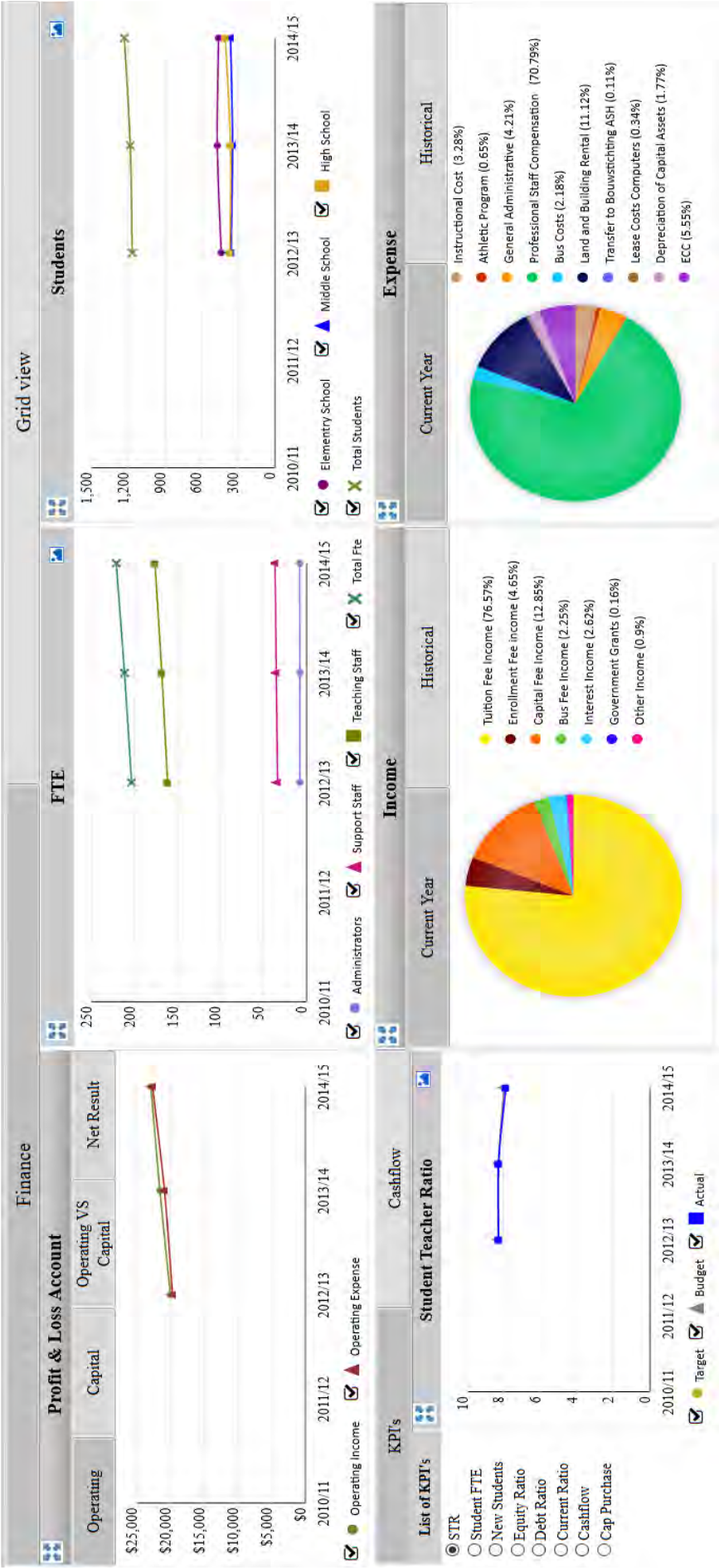
Appendix L: Financial Dashboard

(INTERACTIVE DATA PARTNERS)

Metric Name	Status	Current	Details
▾ Finance			
Reserves		3,107,906	
Net Income		15,935,433	
▾ Finance Performance Indicators			
Emergency reserves, 20% of operating budget		636,000	
Balance budget and fees whereby operating costs are covered by tuition fees		No	
Rolling seven-year financial plan		Yes	
Fund school program through hard income		Yes	
Professional development 1.5% to 3.0% of operating budget		1.76 %	
▸ Enrolment Demand In Excess of Capacity			
Faculty salaries in top quartile of		No	
Consistent donor cultivation program		Yes	
▾ Personnel			
▸ Teaching staff		88.50 %	
▸ Average years at		5	
▸ Average years teaching experience			
% teachers IB certified			
% new teachers IB certified when hired		41.00 %	
▾ Advancement/Admissions			
▸ Enrolment		766	
▸ Annual Appeal /		46,597.42	
▸ Corporate Partnerships		57	

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Appendix M: Cash Reserves: Stability and

Cash Reserves: Stability and Opportunity!

Vol. 32 No. 4 17 years ago

It has been no statistical fluke that in all three iterations of the ISM Stability Markers™, the No. 1 or No. 2 marker has been cash reserves. While this item is a formulaic mix of cash reserves, debt, and endowment, the practical piece of this is the cash reserve itself – an amount of money equal to 15% of the operations budget and 2% of the replacement of the school facility to a maximum of 20%. This is neither a quasi-endowment (i.e., restricted by the Board for its own purposes) nor the seed money for a real endowment. It is cash in the bank that can be accessed at a moment's notice.

Building the Cash Reserve

ISM's 20% recommendation is composed of two parts:

- 15% for unanticipated expenditures and
- 5% for Physical Plant Replacement, Repairs, and Special Maintenance (PPRRSM) expenditures.

For example, Aegis Academy, I&P's fictional coed day school, with operating expenditures of \$2.6 million, should have a cash reserve of \$520,000 (cash and/or liquid securities). To achieve a comparable level through fiscal discipline in the operating budget, take the following actions.

1. In the quadrennial strategic planning process, ensure that any surpluses generated either intentionally (through foresight) or unintentionally (e.g., unanticipated increased enrollment or lower-than-budgeted expenses) are clearly designated by Board policy either to build or replenish the cash reserve. Such a Board policy might read: "Operating surpluses shall first be applied to cash reserves to ensure a maximum 20% operating expenditures level." This ensures that individual Trustees are not tempted to spend "extra" money on pet projects.
2. If there is no cash reserve or the reserve is less than 20% of the operating expenditures, the Board should, through the quadrennial strategic planning process, budget funds that will be designated to build cash reserves.
3. Through your quadrennial strategic financial planning process, continually enhance your score on Stability Marker No. 4 (hard income coverage of operating expenses). In due course, operating surpluses will be derived increasingly from tuition and auxiliary income (interest, summer program, etc.), and less from the combination of hard income and annual giving. This will increasingly release annual giving to serve its primary purpose of providing "enhancements" (supplementary items that add mission-related value to the student experience).

Unanticipated Expenditures

The following three major purposes for the use of cash reserves should also be designated in a Board spending policy.

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- **Shortfalls:** There will be years when enrollment falls short of the budgeted number. The school must weather such storms, preferably without cutting program or faculty. Imagine Aegis Academy with its \$2.6 million budget and 250 students (tuition of \$11,000 with unfunded financial aid of \$275,000) being short 20 full-pay students. The deficit would be \$345,000, fairly easily covered with its cash reserve of \$520,000, thus giving the school a year's grace to determine whether the student shortage is going to continue or it was an anomaly. Without the reserve, the school might have been forced to release three or more teachers or turn to a line of credit. For schools with significant endowment income in the operating budget, the same kind of scenario would hold true in years with a market downturn, i.e., a shortage of expected income. Another example might be the loss of significant summer program income in a year when new construction did not allow for a full program to be offered.
- **Firing Staff:** Consider this scenario. By October, you realize that a new faculty member is not working out – parents are irate, the culture in the faculty lounge has deteriorated, and this teacher's students are not performing to their potential. You have three options:
 - – firing the person without cause (because you haven't had time to lay a paper trail at this point in the year) may result in a lawsuit that you cannot win;
 - – keeping the person because you can't afford to fire him or her will almost certainly result in parent (and possibly student) dissatisfaction and the potential loss of students, both in retention and in recruitment, as bad word of mouth spreads in the community; or
 - – buying out the contract (or an agreed-upon portion), and hiring a replacement as quickly as possible to complete the school year.

It is this third scenario for which cash reserves are designed. Students, the prime beneficiaries of an optimal learning environment, are best served; legal woes are avoided; and parents feel they have been heard and that the school has been responsive to the needs of their children. These parents will become even more vocal advocates as a result.

- **Opportunity:** Aegis Academy is a landlocked school, hemmed in as a result of urban sprawl. A neighbor calls to say that she is placing her home on the market in two weeks. She has always had a soft spot for the school, and is willing to offer it to the school at its appraised value. The school has one week to decide. Fortunately, Aegis Academy has a master property/ facilities plan that has identified purchasing adjacent properties as a future dream. However, the school has just finished a capital campaign and there is no time to discuss the possible acquisition with major donors, so the Board of Trustees (or, if time demands, the Executive Committee) approves the use of cash reserves to cover the down payment for the property. This creative use of reserves to advance the long-term, strategic future of the school has been enabled by the Board's development of a reserve through excellent planning, strategic foresight, and clear policies.

Of course, the opportunity might be more mundane than that. Perhaps the choir is invited to sing in Washington, or a seventh-grader is a finalist in the National Spelling Bee, or the lacrosse team makes it to the finals in a regional or national tournament. Any of these unanticipated opportunities might have to be forgone or cause hardship without the creative use of cash reserves.

PPRRSM

Cash reserves are the way depreciation of occasional large-ticket items (e.g., roofs or HVAC systems) are taken care of in the normal course of doing business. The master property/ facilities plan, with the facilities audit as its cornerstone, determines decades into the future the "what" and "when" of these major expenditures. Trustees should use that plan as they do their strategic planning, considering:

- – the long-term consequences of the school's annual budgets,
- – the need to occasionally plan for more than ISM's recommended 5% if heavy expenditures are expected in a particular year, and
- – the requirement that the Building and Grounds Committee continually upgrade and review its plans.

The cash reserve is not a static sum of money that just resides in the bank. It is a critical part of the Board's fiduciary responsibility, ensuring the continued excellence of the school's programs and the delivery of the school's mission,

Appendix N: Strategic Financial Planning

Your Strategic Financial Plan: Hard Income P&L

As you, the School Head, move year by year through your strategic plan and its accompanying strategic financial plan, you may find your Board of Trustees focusing annually on the enrollment line (line 1A in the “Sample Strategic Financial Plan” on page 31 of this issue), the net tuition revenue line (line 2), the expense line (line 5), or other meaningful lines within the spreadsheet’s 13-line basic format. We suggest you be most proactive, however, in teaching and re-teaching the overriding importance of line 6 (hard income P&L), the line that tells the most comprehensive and accurate story regarding your success in moving the school forward in ways fully consonant with your six-year planning document.

Line 6 summarizes all the numbers that appear above it. It is the result of subtracting line 5 (operating expense) from line 4 (total hard income). The resulting number—always negative unless your school has reached 100% coverage of operations expense with hard income—tells the story of how well you and your Management Team have been able to “manage to the planning document.”

(Line 8 shows annual fundraising. Since fundraising is a joint responsibility involving management, Board, and the parent organization, that number is less under management’s direct control than the first five lines and the summary lines 6 and 7.)

In some years, you will have moved some planning-document items back to later years, and perhaps moved others forward, in the process of setting your annual administrative agenda (and the Board’s corresponding annual Board agenda). You will have adjusted the details of your expense and revenue lines accordingly.

No matter. Just “manage the planning document” by making line 6 conform to its original number, year by year, and your entire plan will remain workable.

Consider all that comprises line 6, including:

- tuition-setting at each of your varying tuition levels;
- unfunded tuition assistance decisions at each of those levels;
- total FTE enrollment;
- “other” hard income revenue streams; and
- all operating expenses, including your decisions on employee salaries, funding for employee benefits, funding for professional development, and other kinds of expenses, many of which are not under your direct control, e.g., inflation assumptions, service on your debt (principal and interest), utilities costs, supplies and equipment.

Layered into those numbers are other elements in your strategic documents that have been calculated to increase your expenses, e.g., additional noninstructional positions in several offices, or new equipment for some of your cocurricular programs. Educate your Trustees to the fact that, insofar as the strategic financial plan is concerned, the real questions center not on enrollment, tuition revenue, unfunded tuition assistance, expenses, and other high-profile numbers, but on the line that summarizes everything in the plan except fundraising (which, as noted, appears on line 8 on the spreadsheet, and is a shared responsibility).

Suppose, for example, that as you write the operations budget for Year 3 of your plan (refer again to the sample SFP), a charter

high school opens within easy range of your campus. Your enrollment—projected at 400 in the table—is now projected to fall to 380. This reduction in hard income of approximately \$275,000 (i.e., 20 students times the Year 3 average net tuition of \$13,706 shown on line 1B) can be expected to change your line 6 cash-negative figure of \$80,857 to a cash-negative figure of over \$350,000. This, in turn, after fundraising is added (line 8), changes your “bottom line” (line 9) from six-figure cash-positive to six-figure cash-negative.

If, however, with the help of your Business Manager and the Chair of your Finance Committee, you have successfully taught your Trustees to focus less on lines 1A (enrollment), 2 (net tuition revenue), and 5 (operating expense), and more on line 6 (hard income P&L), you have a more straightforward task in relating your decisions in the upcoming Board meetings. You may decide, for example, to announce the following.

- You will postpone the addition of noninstructional positions in two offices, thereby reducing planned new expense by \$80,000 in salary and benefits.
- You will postpone an increase in the equipment line(s) in support of three of the middle school cocurricular programs, thereby reducing new-program expense by another \$40,000.
- The net effects of these two steps will bring the line 6 negative figure to approximately \$235,000, which, coupled with the annually projected \$250,000 in non-capital-campaign fundraising, will bring the “bottom line” (line 9) figure back into the black by roughly \$15,000.
- As the Year 3 fall semester develops and projected enrollment figures for Year Four begin to harden, you will then make recommendations as part of the Year 4 operating budget proposal regarding further steps that may be needed to restore the approximately 3% bottom-line margin that is projected on the spreadsheet for Year Four (the line 9 figure of \$181,312 divided by the line 5 figure of \$6,216,252). If by December of Year 3 it appears that the Year 3 enrollment figure of 380 (versus the strategic plan’s projection of 400) will persist into Year 4 and perhaps beyond, then adjustments in the projected net tuition gradient, the employee salary increase gradient, and/or the total number of funded faculty/staff positions may need to change, and to change substantially. In any case, *your goal will be to restore the integrity of line 6, so that the overall operating budget will run the projected 3% margins, thereby, in turn, allowing cash reserves (line 11) to drive toward the ISM benchmark figure of 20% of the operations budget.*

Trustees naturally think in terms of “controlling expenses” (line 5 in the sample SFP). With your Business Manager and Finance Chair, help all Trustees to focus on the real strategic number—the number that expresses the relationship between expenses and total hard income. Expenses may run higher or lower than the numbers projected on the multiyear strategic financial spreadsheet. That is not in itself an issue, as long as expenses maintain a consistent relationship with total hard income. Line 6 expresses that relationship. **I&P**

Sample Strategic Financial Plan							
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Notes
1A FTE Enrollment	400	400	400	400	400	400	
1B Avg. Net Tuition	12,323	12,996	13,706	14,452	15, 237	16,050	Line 2/Line 1A
1C Tuition Increase		673	710	746	785	813	
1D Percent Increase		5.46%	5.46%	5.44%	5.43%	5.34%	
2 Net Tuition Revenue	4,929,230	5,198,430	5,482,379	5,780,737	6,094,837	6,419,931	Gross tuition less all forms of unfunded tuition assistance
3 Other Hard Income	333,266	344,097	355,280	366,827	378,749	391,058	Fees + net sales + useable interest from Line 13
4 Total Hard Income	5,262,496	5,542,527	5,837,659	6,147,564	6,473,586	6,810,989	Add Line 2 and 3
5 Operating Expense	5,364,546	5,634,482	5,918,516	6,216,252	6,528,966	6,851,847	Total operating expense, including debt service (interest and principal): i.e., all cash items
6 Hard Income P&L	(102,050)	(91,955)	(80,857)	(68,688)	(55,380)	(40,858)	Line 4 – Line 5
7 Percentage Coverage, 4 of 5	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%	99%	Line 4/Line 5
8 Annual Fundraising	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	250,000	All fundraising (not campaigns)
9 Overall P&L	147,950	158,045	169,143	181,312	194,620	209,142	Line 8 +/- Line 6
10 Annual to Cash Reserves	147,950	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	120,000	
11 Total Cash Reserves	750,000	870,000	990,000	1,110,000	1,230,000	1,350,000	Benchmark: 20% of budget
12 Annual to Endowment		38,045	49,143	61,312	74,620	89,142	
13 Total Endowment	1,500,000	1,538,045	1,587,188	1,648,500	1,723,120	1,812,262	
Sum, Annual Named Enhancements		Plus \$109K	Plus \$115K	Plus \$120,181	Plus \$126,226	Plus \$127,012	
Notes & Assumptions: Faculty Professional Development Budget = 50,000 Benchmark: 2% of budget Debt, Year 1 = 1,250,000 Debt Service = 100,000 Line 5 Floor Gradient 3.00% Lines 2 & 3 Floor Gradient 3.25%							

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Appendix O: Viability Indicators

Select Year: 2016/17									
AISA Scorecard									
Mission and Vision					Mission Vision				
Metric Name	BOY	MOY	EOY	Details	Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details
Leamers Inspiring					Revenue				
Leamers					Expense				
Inquisitive in Life					% Prof Dev				
Principled in Character					▲ Cash Availability and Cash Position				
Bold Vision					Operations	21.09%			
Academics					Development	0.30%			
Activities					Capital	23.44%			
Arts									
Leadership									
Service									
Strategic Plan					Admissions				
Metric Name	BOY	MOY	EOY	Details	Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details
Leadership					▲ All Schools				
Education Excellence					Enrollment	668			
Whole Child					% Capacity	100.00%			
Community Child					% Staff	9.00%			
Continuous Improve					% New	57.00%			
Survey Results					HR				
Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details	Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details
Parents	4				Teacher Turnover				
Teachers	4.10				Class Visits				
Students	4.36				Teacher Performance				
					% foreign hires				

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE					ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH					CLIMATE AND CULTURE				
Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details	Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details	Metric Name	Actual	Target	Status	Details
IB	2.00	2.8			% Staff with multi-country teaching experience					Staff attendance at social events increases by at least 5% each year		2.8		
Avg Diploma Points	31.96	33			Staff Diversity: % of staff with nationalities other than Panama & US					All students (100%) participate in at least one service project each year, as reflected in a school-wide database		2.8		
% Earning Diploma	82.76%	100.00%			Average tenure of Overseas Staff		2.8			ES - students participating in at least one service project				
% students at or above world avg	51.72%	60.00%			2 or less					MS - students participating in at least one service project				
% IB exams scoring >= 5	61.85%	60.00%			3 - 4					HS - students participating in at least one service project				
SAT (total)	2.00	2.8			4+					IB Learner Profile		2.8		
ACT Composite (mean)		2.8			Annual % local staff Turn-over rate					ES				
MAP Reading	2.22	2.8			Financial Plan					MS				
MAP Mathematics	2.11	61.85%			Revenue to Expenses Ratio					HS				
MAP Language	2.00	2.8			Debt to Equity Ratio					Communication	Yes			
MAP Growth Reading	2.57	2.8			"Clean" Financial Audit					Strategies				
MAP Growth Mathematics	1.86	2.8			Strategies					Survey Results				
MAP Growth Language	1.83	2.8			Staff: Compensation study					Parents				
Grade 3	-0.31	0.01			Staff: Staff retention					Academic Staff				
Grade 4	-0.16	0.01			Staff: Faculty diversity					Non Academic Staff				
Grade 5	-0.55	0.01			Finance: Enrolment study					Response rate				
Grade 6	0.05	0.01			Finance: Financial plan									
Grade 7	-0.12	0.01			Finance: Alternative income									
Grade 8	-0.14	0.01			Survey Results									
Survey Results														
Strategies														
Pending KPIs														

Appendix P: Sample Table of Contents for Personnel Manual

(LINCOLN COMMUNITY SCHOOL)

Section 1: Introduction

Mission

Vision Statement

Educational Aims Board Policy

IB Learner Profile

Section 2: Personnel

Recruitment, Selection and Hiring

Introduction

Permanent worker

- Fixed Term /Contract worker
- Non-permanent
- Consultants

Induction and Orientation

- Probation for Support and Maintenance Staff
- Staff Benefits and Conditions of Service
- Overseas Hire Teachers Handbook
- Local Hire Teachers Handbook
- Support Staff Handbook

Termination of Staff Contract

Teachers:

- According to Board Policy (6.609 Dismissal and Non-Renewal of Contract),

Support Staff:

- According to Board Policy (6.609 Dismissal and Non-Renewal of Contract)
- Please note the school may have a negotiated bargaining agreement that defines process and procedures for termination of contract

Staff Absences and Leave Procedures

Approval of Staff Absences

- Process for Granting Annual Leave for Support Staff
- Payment of Annual Leave Benefits
- Sickness Absence
- Procedure for Reporting Sickness Absence
- Maternity leave

Adoption leave

Other Types of Leave

- Personal Leave
- Compassionate Leave – Teachers
- Compassionate Leave- Support Staff
- Recruitment Leave - Teachers

Procedure for Requesting Types of Leave

Employee Payment and Payroll Procedures
Payment of Salaries and Employee Related Benefits
Payment for Other Contractual Employee Related Expenses/Costs
Evaluation and Assessment of Staff
Administrator Performance Appraisals
Performance Evaluation of Administrative Support and Maintenance Personnel
Performance Evaluation of Teaching Staff and Teaching Assistants
Code of conduct
Professional Conduct: belief statement
Behavior Expectations

Child Protection Policy.

- Insert School Child Protection Policy here
- For detailed information on the Convention on the Rights of Child see the following link:
http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30160.html
-
- Follow link to teachers child protection form
- Follow link to code of conduct and child protection for Casual workers
- Follow link to code of conduct and child protection for Contract workers

School Day
Dress Code

Section 3: Financial and Non-Financial Interests

Tutoring for pay
Additional “outside” employment
Hospitality and Gifts
Religious Beliefs and Holidays
Celebrations
Finance
Petty Cash Request Procedure
Payment System
Payment for In-budget Expenses

- Making the Request
- Approval
- Receiving Payment

Procurement/ Purchasing
Procedure for Local Non-Inventory Purchasing
Categories of Local Purchases
Procedures for General Purchasing
Forms and Vouchers

Section 4: Health

HIV/AIDS Policy
Communicable Disease Policy

Section 5: Facilities Procedures

Requesting maintenance work
Facilities and Maintenance Requests

- Procedure to Request for Work Order Maintenance
- Housing Requests for maintenance

Requesting materials, Supplies and Contracting for services
 Emergency Procedures reference emergency procedures manual
 Fire Drills Procedures
 Guidelines and Procedures for Access and Student Security

- General Expectations
- Arrival and Access
- Internal Access to campus

Facilities Usage Procedures
 Procedure for requesting to schedule an activity or to use school facilities
 Use of Facilities by Outsiders
 Procedure for requesting the Use of LCS Facilities by Outsiders

Policy on Using School Property and Equipment

- Use of School Property off Campus
- Responsible Use of School Property
- Loss or Damage of School Property
- Return of Borrowed Equipment
- Guidelines for Employees who are provided with a Vehicle to Use In the Course of Work
- Procedure for Request for Use of School Vehicles for Unofficial Purposes

Section 6: Instructional Technology Procedures (IT)

Technology Request Procedure
 Support Audio Visual Installations for Classrooms and School Sponsored Activities
 Requisition process for A. V. support.
 School Festivals such as the International Festival Day (IFD) and Community Bazaars

SECTION 7: Advancement/Admission Office

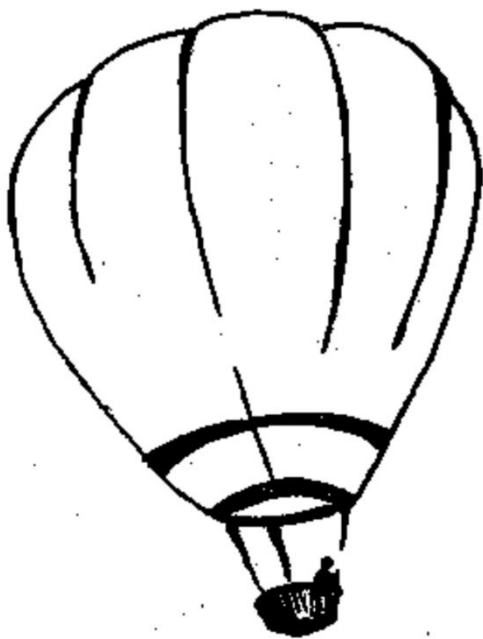
Admission

Admission process

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Applicants • Local Transfer Applicants • Re-enrolment process • Withdrawal/Recommendation process: • Submitting transcripts to other schools: • Admission annual events • Orientation Day for new families (August and January) • New Transition Family coffee morning (October) • Tours of Campus • Communication • Use of SMS notification • Protocol for teachers on sending out email announcements to parents • Photography on campus • Use of Student Images, Artwork, and Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol for submitting news stories to school on-line and hard copy publications • Social Media Guidelines • Protecting confidential information on Social Media • Handling press enquiries • Respecting the school brand, use of the logo • Personal vs official opinions • Corporate and Government Relations • Alumni Relations • Fundraising • General Fundraising policy • Student Fundraising • Annual Fundraising • Endorsement of outside businesses • PTO |
|---|--|

Appendix Q: AISA Multi-Disciplinary Team Handbook

Building & Using Multidisciplinary Teams for AISA Schools



Published by the Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA)

2016



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About AISA

The Association of International Schools in Africa (AISA), established in 1969, is a non-profit education association supporting the professional learning and school improvement strategies of international schools on the continent of Africa. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, AISA offers a professional learning programme specifically designed to meet the unique needs of our diverse member school community. AISA also offers a number of supplementary programmes, scholarships and facilitates collaboration among member schools to advance school effectiveness and improve student learning.

Introduction

International schools need to understand and adhere to laws and regulations of the host country in developing and implementing child protection procedures. Developing formal and informal working relationships at different levels with host country authorities are important steps that schools may have to take to implement an effective child protection program.

International schools are not islands. An optimal safe environment requires the cooperation, collaboration and support of the entire community, including the local governmental and non-governmental agencies in place to protect children and advocate for their needs. Furthermore, it may be obligatory and necessary to work with local statutory agencies to deal with child protection issues and problems. It will be important for international school administrators to be aware of and be in contact with, the agencies and institutions in their host country/city that have roles and responsibilities regarding children's issues. The following are some of the government and nongovernmental bodies that your school should contact and collaborate with in terms of developing and implementing school based child protection programs.

- The police
- Hospitals
- The courts and lawyers
- The Children's Department(s), Embassies and other Government agencies
- Nongovernmental agencies (UNICEF, ISPCAN, etc.)

Forming an MDT around your school can help remove the isolation, insularity and fear of the issue that often exists in our expatriate communities. Forming an MDT before you begin the process of designing your internal child protection policy and practices could guide you to:

1. Know the law and what it means for your community (such as age of responsibility, laws that conflict with laws in your country that might include freedom of speech, freedom of association or sexuality).
2. Know how to report when the law is broken (some common concerns include language, culture, economic issues (condition of government services vs home of parent offender), skills, process)
3. Know how to seek assistance from the law for suspected cases of child abuse and neglect (CAN) (have access to an English speaking third-party trained forensic investigator)
4. Know how each of the embassies of your foreign students could help or respond in cases of abuse or suspected abuse (get resources from these countries in case you need to report serious cases to the home-of-record, understand the limitations of diplomatic immunity)
5. Know how to seek assistance from child welfare authority (custody of child when abuse in the home, foster-care from expat community, authority to mandate counselling, oversight of the case (supporting and watching the offender))
6. Know what services are available for child victims of CAN and domestic violence (DV) (often other expat resources, yet must be willing to work with authority for relevant cases, know where are the boundaries between what your school counselor can and should do and what needs to be referred out)
7. Know medical sources for medico-legal concerns (certain hospitals could have trained medical forensic doctors or nurses)

The multidisciplinary team (MDT) is an advisory/consultative team that provides advice by meeting on a regularly scheduled basis or as needed. The multidisciplinary team will not provide direct services or face-to-face contact with families. They will offer support and advice to professionals who refer cases to them. The advisory team will note their advisory status in their appointing documents and descriptive literature. The multidisciplinary team is established to deal only with the specific issue of child abuse reported within affiliated

schools and must be authorized by the Head of School or Board to function in this capacity for the school community.

For schools in countries with strong child protection systems in place, the MDT helps local authority understand the unique characteristics of our expatriate community. For schools with weak or no child protection systems in place, the MDT can be a conduit to authority that does exist or be an alternative to legal or social authority to mandate help for children, parents and alleged offenders in difficult cases. The MDT aims to:

- Expand the school's resources in areas the school lacks resources (such as social workers, police officers, forensic interviewers)
- Engage qualified trained professionals in your host country who can assist you when you have a complicated case
- Help the school to consider what steps to take in a variety of cases
- Protect a child while they are in school and work with parents to help keep the child safe outside of school

Scenarios

Domestic violence. Foreign father and mother have physical fights. Children are traumatized. School insists that parents have counselling but this stops after 3 times. Children's traumatized behaviour returns. Now what?

Attempted suicide. School suspects sexual abuse by father. Now what?

Physical Abuse. A diplomatic mother whips her daughter and rubs chili powder into the wounds. The city's Social Services Department and the police were notified and the school called a meeting with them. Because the family had diplomatic passports, the parents were out of reach of the law. Now what?

Research Based Frameworks

For more information, see: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/pii_ttap_framework.pdf

<https://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/Resources/Documents/Policies%20and%20Frameworks/SignsOfSafetyFramework2011.pdf>

Using Save the Children framework, a national child protection system consists of:

- laws and policies that protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence and respond in the best interests of the child when violations occur,
- a central government coordination mechanism for child protection, which brings together central government departments, different provinces, central and local levels of government and civil society,
- effective regulation and monitoring at all levels, for example in childcare institutions and schools,
- a committed workforce with relevant competencies and mandates,
- mechanisms that bring perpetrators to justice.

In addition, a functioning child protection system should be informed by children's views and experiences and strengthens families in the care and protection of their children. It connects child and family support mechanisms in the community with child-friendly services at all levels. These are regulated by quality standards and delivered by the government or accredited social agencies.

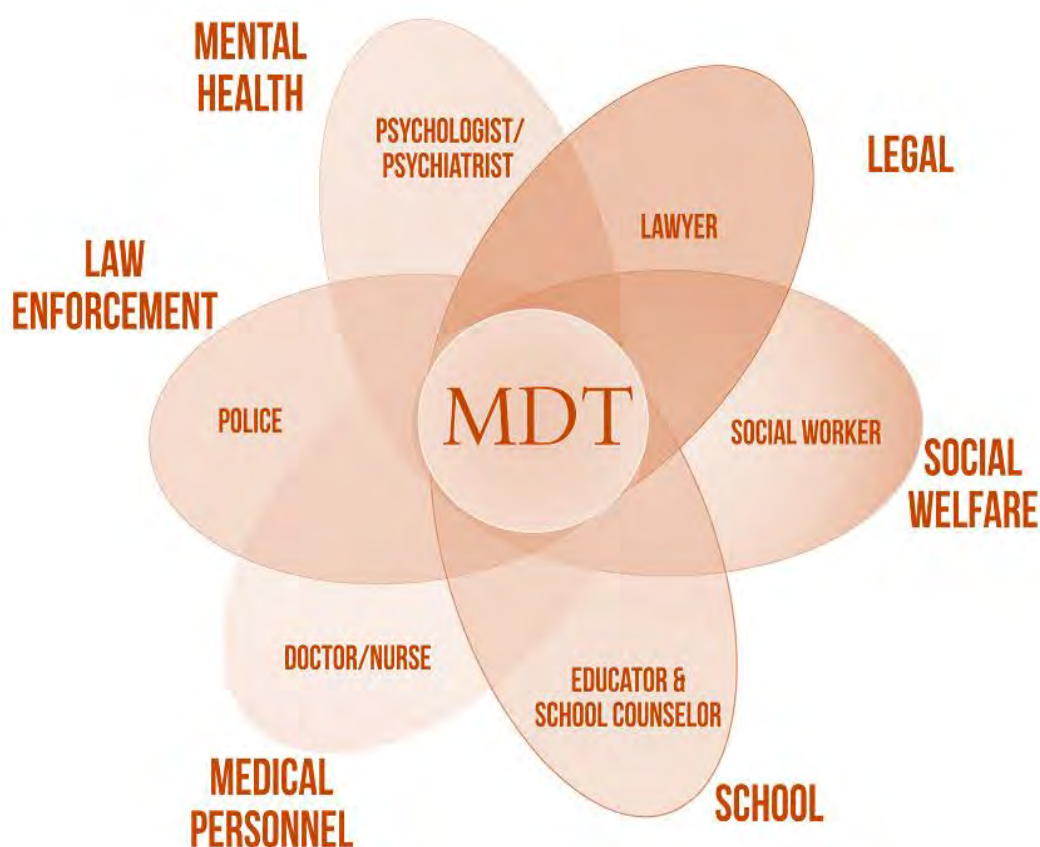
Members of an MDT

A detailed list of multidisciplinary team members and their roles can be found in the AISA Child Protection Handbook in Section 4.

Generally, a MDT consists of a medical representative, social worker / community counsellor representative, psychiatrist or psychologist, law enforcement representative, attorney, educator, school counsellor, and the school point person/facilitator. Team members must understand exactly what expertise they are expected to bring to the team process. They also need to understand the professional roles of other team members.

The facilitator, from your school, is the one to maintain relationships with individual members, and will schedule meetings, provide access to parking, food, snacks, and other possible assistance such as taxi fares for certain members.

All members of the MDT have to agree to a confidentiality statement and code of conduct that makes explicit what information will be shared regarding outcomes and actions.



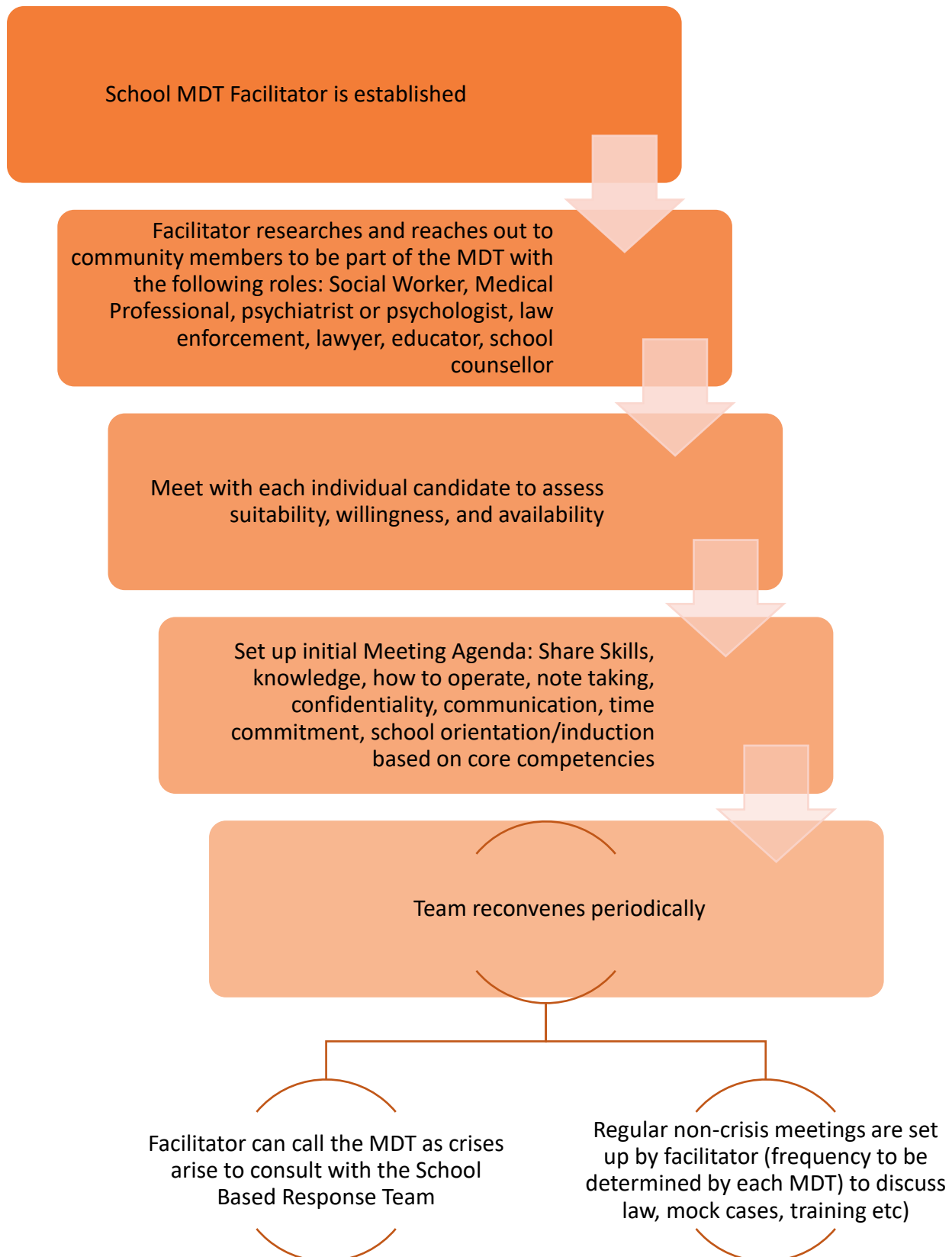
Khartoum International Community School has developed very good relations with UNICEF's Head of Child Protection in Khartoum who has invited the school's counsellor to join a Khartoum wide multidisciplinary child protection team who meet every other month. The team is made up of locals, expats, NGOs, UN and government agency representatives. KICS offered their facilities free of charge to host any child protection team meetings or events in the city in order to maximise our multidisciplinary team learning in the city and to raise our child protection profile at KICS.

Guidelines for Establishing an MDT

It is best to establish relationships in advance and in a proactive manner rather than have a first interaction with a host country agency occur during a time of crisis or need. School administrators and counsellors are well served to visit host country agencies and ministries as well as to host at your school courtesy “get acquainted” meetings with various host country resource personnel. Consider the MDT before even developing school policy so that they can advise in the creation of the school policy.

1. *Begin by finding someone from your school community to take the lead to establish the MDT.* This person is the facilitator of the meetings and maintains relationships. It is suggested that this “point person” ideally would be a host country national (i.e. parent, other school personnel), and/or partner with a counsellor or administrator. This would ensure stability and continuity in the transient nature of International Schools. The challenge when finding a facilitator is that this networking could take a great deal of time, which most school personnel don’t have outside of their classroom or regular tasks.
2. *To find possible MDT members, begin with your community.* Find people with appropriate skills or contacts to other professionals from the list above. Make as long a list as possible.
3. *Meet with each of the candidates personally to assess their willingness and suitability:*
 - a. do they have the time for periodic meetings, especially in cases of the unlikely emergency when the team must come together immediately;
 - b. do they have the appropriate professional skills and experience (do lawyers know local child protection laws; do social workers know local child protection policies and practices; do doctors know child abuse forensic issues; do counsellors have experience and expertise in child abuse and family counselling);
 - c. do they work well with groups to avoid hierarchy of professions; d) do they have an objective relationship with the schools and/or child and family.
4. *Set up an initial meeting.* The agenda for the initial meeting would include introductions, members sharing their skills and knowledge in child protection, how the MDT would operate, note-taking, confidentiality, venues for meetings, communication, and commitment for time and meetings. A mock-case could be used for discussion. Additionally, this meeting will serve as an orientation on school policies as per the core competencies below:
 - **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** - agree to collective and shared responsibility of the community.
 - **CHILD PROTECTION TEAM** - will know the school’s child protection team to include their roles and responsibilities;
 - **POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND REPORTING** - will understand the school’s child protection policies and procedures and each member’s requirement for reporting
 - **DEFINITIONS AND SIGNS** - share the school’s definitions and signs of child abuse and neglect;
 - **NATURE OF STUDENT COMMUNITY** - will have an understanding of the nature of local and expatriate children and their specific areas of *vulnerability*;
 - **EDUCATION** - share child protection education program at the school.

Establishing an MDT



Activating an MDT Meeting

The school-based Child Protection Team, together with the counsellor, will determine if a meeting needs to be called.

In our schools there are generally three types of categories of allegations. Only the serious cases, Category C, go to the MDT.

Category A –	Category B –	Category C –
Most cases will be handled by school counsellors:	Some cases will be referred to outside resources:	Cases reported for investigation and outside resources:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Student relationships with peers * Parenting skills related to disciplining children at home * Student-parent relationships * Mental health issues such as depression, low self-esteem, grieving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mental health issues such as depression, psychosis, dissociation, suicide ideation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Severe and ongoing physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect

When a case needs consultation, the school facilitator/point person will convene the team, inviting all members of the MDT to attend and discuss.

In cases of urgent, complex emergency, the school child protection team may decide to call individual members for consultation.

During the team meeting, the school will present their case based on their case study format. The case manager will be the person presenting the case (usually the school counsellor), who will document all recommendations and report back to the MDT for follow-up when needed. It is best to keep the meeting no longer than 90 minutes and provide snacks.

After the MDT gives advice:

- Schools can expect continued conversations between agencies and MDT members regarding the outcomes of decisions and action taken.
- School-based Child Protection Teams can decide on a case-by-case basis to follow the recommendation of the MDT. However, in cases of law, schools must follow what the law says.
-

Other considerations:

Many schools have strong connections to Embassies:

- understand the issue of diplomatic immunity, its limitations and boundaries
- know what services they can provide and to whom, how to report to them, how to access help, how to get feedback about action, could they be a part of the MDT
- establish the point person role at the embassy, such as the embassy doctor or regional security officer to maintain ongoing relationship
- Sometimes the child may do better when taken out of the home but local institutions in some countries are not good places for our students. The MDT could help guide your discussion, in particular to partner with the family to make agreements about where the child could stay. In these cases it is best for the

MDT to oversee the placement. However, sometimes the school has to let it go and turn the case over to local authority, dictated by the laws under which we are obligated to work.

Connecting with local authorities and reporting to law is a way to support parents to make behaviour change. Resistance, lack of empathy, cognitive distortions, levels of stress, and rationalization will block behaviour change counselling, thus maintaining and continuing their behaviour through increasing threats and other forms of manipulation. For the children of these parents, outside authority is needed to intervene through some form of law enforcement venue. It is important to remember that parents need to feel that they are befriended and supported from us in schools, rather than feeling punished. That is our role.

If you are still resisting basing your child protection policy and practices on local law and setting up a multidisciplinary team, here are the limitations if you do NOT use legal sources:

- Cannot report to other schools
- Cannot report to other countries
- Cannot report to licensing boards
- Cannot report to ISS
- Cannot protect other students

**WHO ARE THE RESOURCES IN MY SCHOOL'S COMMUNITY TO BUILD A
MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM?**

LEGAL

LAW ENFORCEMENT

SOCIAL WORK

MEDICAL

PSYCHOLOGIST/COUNSELOR

EDUCATOR

