



Minutes of Annual General Meeting May 20, 2020

PRESENT

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| ✓ Mrs Elena Molina | - President |
| ✓ Mrs Elizabeth Brogaard-Allen | - Vice-President |
| ✓ Mr Guillaume Dehem | - Treasurer |
| ✓ Mrs Eugenia Bhebhe | - Trustee |
| ✓ Ms Raluca Eddon | - Trustee |
| ✓ Mrs Saija MacArtney | - Secretary |
| ✓ Mr Stefan Weir | - Trustee/US Embassy Rep. |
| ✓ Mrs Adama Traoré-Wega | - Trustee |
| ✓ Mr Séamus Hennessy | - Director |

COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

The attendance was important in number for this special AGM zoom meeting. There were 132 requests to join the meeting (registered through the system “Eventbrite”), and up to approximately 95 participants during the AGM. Some Community members shared one computer, so attendance might have been higher.

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The President of the Board, Mrs. Elena Molina called the meeting to order at around 18.15 as she started by giving some basic rules to make the zoom meeting a successful one.

2.0 AGENDA

The President presented the agenda of the meeting as follows:

- ✓ Board Report
- ✓ Director Report
- ✓ Community Participation
- ✓ COVID - 19

3.0 BOARD REPORT

3.1 Board responsibilities

The President in her report listed out the Board’s main responsibilities and mode of operation. The objectives for the 2019-2020 academic year, set during the last AGM in October were highlighted. These are:

- ✓ ICSA Strategic plan for 2019-2020, 2020-2021: this plan, designed to guide the Board in decision making was approved at the last annual meeting and will be published shortly on the school website.
- ✓ Strategic Goals and intents defined for the plan
- ✓ ICSA Emergency – Contingency – Security Plan: this came in earlier than expected due to Covid 19 situation
- ✓ Secure Financial Position

There are two standing committees (Finance & Governance) and Ad Hoc Committee even though this year no Ad Hoc Committee was formed. This is because all matters to do with



facilities were handled by the Finance Committee, and Communication was covered by the whole Board as a team.

The President informed the meeting that there was revision of policies on personnel, administration, etc. The Board also revised the Facilities Master plan because the last revision was done in 2015.

Below is a sample of some of the decisions made by the Board this year:

<p><u>Governance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Endorsement of the use of procedures manual as presented by SLT ✓ Approval of 2020-2021 School Year Calendar ✓ School policies revision: Chapter 2 (Board Operations) ✓ Replacement of Skyward with Rediker ✓ Emergency –Safety-Security plan update ✓ Board Elections 	<p><u>Personnel</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New positions ✓ Teacher Goal Setting
<p><u>Finances</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Tuition and Capital fees for 2020-2021 ✓ COLA for 2020-2021 ✓ Audit firm (valid for 3 years) ✓ Facilities: 2 classrooms for LS French; corrections of buffer pool to maintain plumbing system as back-up in case of city water shortages, electricity works... ✓ Closure of BOA account ✓ Transfer of funds to TD account (looking for better rates) 	

The audience was informed that the contract for the extension of the campus lease was also signed.

3.2. Correspondence (sample)

Correspondences were received on IB Curriculum, Pandemic preparedness (health point of view), grading policy. These are operational questions and as such were forwarded to the Senior Leadership Team.

Other correspondences received concerned Tuition fees, PTO Funding, Covid-19 (mixed matter), and changes to contract policies.

3.3 Board communication

The Board communicates through the ICSA Flash newsletter, Board flashes, and monthly Board reports. On this, the President expressed her satisfaction on the improvement compared to past years.

Another means through which the Board communicates is the “Coffee/Cocktail with the Board”. On this, she informed the meeting that there is one coming up next week (May 27). More information will be sent out on this.



3.4 Strategic priorities for 2019-2021

The Vice-president, Mrs. Beth Brogaard-Allen in her intervention on the Strategic Plan, gave an overview of the document which was prepared with input from the community. The Strategic plan defines a Quality school as having the following four elements: “*Quality Staff*”, “*Quality facilities*”, “*Quality Academics*” and “*Secure Financial Position*”. There have been working sessions with the community on these key elements and the information gathered has helped the Board to craft the ICSA Strategic Plan.

Regarding the Board election, the Vice-president thanked those who responded to the survey sent out and said that, further to the survey results, the election is postponed till next academic year. The Board and the Nominating Committee will work on the timeline and the community will be duly informed. She encouraged those interested in joining the Board to express their interest as there are 4 positions opened.

3.5 Finance report

The Board Treasurer, Mr. Guillaume Dehem presented ICSA’s financial situation which is positive and secured. There is an increase in the number of students over the years and this means increased income. Being almost at breakeven last year (-27KUSD) the school projects to have a surplus of 258KUSD this year. This is below budget (675KUSD) but remains a projection which would still vary (depending on exchange rate variations, provisions, ...).

For the expenses, the Treasurer reminded that they are mostly staff related (salaries & benefits = 70% of total expenses), but also in amortization and provision which the Board is concerned about. Intermediate provision for doubtful debts indeed amounts to 152KUSD as there are still exceptional substantial outstanding tuition fees for 340KUSD which the school never experienced before.

On Capital cash reserves, in the TD Bank reserves account will amount to 4.2M USD after completing the closing of the Bank of America account. This is to serve future construction projects financing.

4.0 DIRECTOR’S REPORT

The Director, Mr. Hennessy reported on the following:

Academics

IB Diploma: there is improvement and better results; there are more choices for students and the number of students keep increasing (53 this year and next year they will be 75 in number).

CGC (Common Ground Collaboration): A global network of innovators, educators and partners who share common principles. Collectively creating smart, sustainable solutions that systematize learning and schools through connected conversations for education from KG to grade 10. Those involved in setting up the philosophy are also involved in PYP, IPC. CGC is involved in creating more worldwide units. ICSA is a founding member.

Online/Blended Learning

A full Blended Learning program will see us constantly using platforms like google classroom and SeeSaw during the regular school year. This will allow for a seamless transition should the



school ever need to switch suddenly to online only teaching. Another benefit of using blended learning is that it promotes much better parent involvement in their children's learning as they will also have access to these platforms.

Teaching spaces

Spaces are to reflect the kind of teaching going on there. In that view, work has begun on some spaces this year and will continue next year. The aim is to see how students work best in a given space.

Service Learning

It has been a focal point at ICSA and keeps growing every year. This year, the school hosted GISS in January. Students from international schools across Africa and other schools in Abidjan attended the event, working together they shared their ideas on a greener world, service learning and a better future. They worked on a painting project with Anono school that was a showcase of ICSA achievement.

Green Team

The team was actively involved in GISS and many other projects like recycling & reforestation, installation of composting machines in school, both traditional and modern. The team has also put in place a community garden on campus with an action plan for sustainability like growing mushrooms.

Athletics

- ✓ It has been a busy year, starting with the Leadership Conference organized in ICSA, which is a new event for WAISAL.
- ✓ The swimming gala was a fantastic event and the most successful and well organized swim meet in the region according to participants. This event saw the participation of the whole community. ICSA Swim Team came 2nd.

Other highlights

- ✓ The Girls Volleyball team won sportsmanship in Lagos
- ✓ The Girls Basketball team came 1st in Dakar
- ✓ All students were awarded with excellent participation and sportsmanship

Facilities

The swimming pool canopy is finished and it is a beautiful place not only for swimming, many other events can take place there.

Visiting architects

Two groups of architects visited the campus in the course of the year:

- ✓ Jonathan Holland Architects from UK
- ✓ Tec 4 from Spain

They both came up with the same needs for the school to: (1) rearrange the flow of existing spaces and (2) create an auditorium for 300 people.

The 3rd group will come when the crisis is over, after which all the suggestions will be presented to the community for input.



5.0 COVID-19 Overview

The President told the audience that teachers will teach no matter the situation and wherever they are. The following actions took place due to the pandemic:

- ✓ The school campus is closed since March 13,
- ✓ The online home learning is ensured to all ICSA grades,
- ✓ There was webinar on ensuring school stability by AAIE,
- ✓ Online learning continues until June 10,
- ✓ Campus remains closed until reopening in August.

Why not follow the Ivorian Government decision?

- ✓ The school provided online learning throughout the closure when compared to local schools
- ✓ For safety, security and public health reasons
- ✓ Twelve days remaining in the school year
- ✓ In August, safety protocols will be in place and school ready to welcome everybody

The President invited the Director to give more details on the arrangements being made to get the school ready for opening in August. The Director listed the various potential changes in terms of classroom organization, regular cleaning and disinfection protocols prior to opening, which might include a health declaration survey for staff and students.

6.0 Community Participation

All the questions and answers are summarized in the table below:

Questions	Answers
When is ICSA planning to re-open?	August 2020
What is the plan that ICSA will put in place once lockdown is lifted and school resumes? In terms of social distancing, cleanliness, PE & ASA etc.	The school is working in putting in place a system to allow safe return to the campus. For this the school shares best practices with other International schools in the region, follows the guidelines and suggestions from CDC, WHO and other sources of information to find the most suitable solutions for our students, staff and campus.
How to manage classrooms so that there are less children per class?	Use of 1 desk per student in addition to the use of special learning spaces
What is the school's contingency plan in the event that newly appointed or current teachers are not able to travel to Abidjan because of travel restrictions at the start of next academic year?	The school is in contact with teachers, visa will be worked out on time to enable them come in early so as to respect the quarantine requirements by the CI Gov't
How is the school planning to avoid crowded situations with families, drivers, and caretakers during school drop off and pick up?	Different entrances will be used to avoid crowded situations



Why should you be making provisions for bad debt? The school should hold back the transfer certificates or diplomas of students till their parents pay up. They should be formally informed right away.	It is a common standard accounting procedure and there is a system in place for that
The tax amount seems quite significant. Since the school is a not for profit organisation, is it not possible to negotiate with the authorities for an exemption. In any case, given the COVID situation, at least for the last two quarters it's worth making an effort.	Steps have been taken to try to pivot this situation. Bureaucratic procedures are slow, but the school is working on it.
Why are we so far relying on foreign architects and not local ones?	Two local institutions were contacted but none replied. It is also due to the type of the project, modifying learning space and that skill could not be found in Abidjan.
Opening of campus for children in Abidjan during summer break	This is still being looked into for safety reasons, hygiene etc. It could be done in June after school closes but by July, work will begin to prepare campus for next school year. Details will be sent out on the final decision before school closes.
Is it compulsory to be quarantined for 14 days before starting school in August?	It is mandatory by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire when coming from abroad. For now, that is the rule and we shall abide by it unless there is change in August.
In planning for future blended learning (Covid or upcoming election), how are you supporting practical implementation? For example items like webcams or other technology will be needed if teachers and some students are at school while others are abroad.	There is already a budget dedicated to the physical campus. Therefore, no additional budget will be made for technology apart from the one on one Chromebook being used. Other devices are coming in, which will allow Grade 5 use Chromebooks.
How are you planning to support staff with increased internet costs during times when teaching from home may be needed?	There is provision for internet for staff in Abidjan but not abroad due to budget constraint
What initiatives is the Board taking to help ICOSA provide better screening and support or diverse learners (gifted, 2 E)	Steps have been made in the last 2 years to improve in providing support, for example, 2 specialist teachers were hired. However, the school does not have the capacity to provide full support for all diverse learners.
Additional questions received through the Zoom Chat section: See Annex to these Minutes	

The President assured the audience that the Board will reflect and revert on all the questions that could not be attended to due to timing, as she thanked everyone for the massive participation.

7.0 Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.



International Community School of Abidjan

Learning and Leading in a Collaborative Culture

Recording Secretary: Mrs. Patricia Amouzou



ANNEX

Recap of the AGM questions, inclusive of those which could not be answered due to timing.

ONLINE LEARNING

So far in ICOSA, online learning seems limited in evaluating with timed exams. What's the plan on this?

Timed exams do not work with online learning. We need to look at grading differently. In English and Humanities teachers have been grading essays for years. These are not timed exams but are graded with a precise rubric which examines for original thought, knowledge and essay writing skills. With online work all subjects are graded in this more holistic manner.

Hi everyone. I thank the school for the efforts it is putting into online learning. However, it would appear that something needs to be done to improve this. I believe that only 2 subject teachers actually give students face time teaching beyond giving students presentations to read and figure things out for themselves and then series of assignments. Its more of an individual study..

There will always be differences in teaching styles whether online or in person.

It would also be good to organise webinars next year to help parents on how to supervise students online and home learning...

Blended learning will continue throughout the year. Parents can be fully involved in student learning while it is happening in class so there is a smooth transition if we need to revert to home learning again. The Principals have been engaging with parents on webinars about home learning since it began and will be happy to explain how any of our online programs work if people are struggling.

The current status of online learning for younger years of Lower School falls in contradiction with screen time recommendations (no more than 2 hours for a 6-7 years old). Any plans to re assess in the view of possible sustained blended/online learning?

There are mixed parental views on this - some people feel that there is too little and others too much. Please keep the teacher informed and lessons can be individualized for your child to ensure there is a good balance.

CAMPUS OPENING FOR RECREATIONAL USE (& CATCH UP DAYS)

Thank you, Board and School Team. Bravo for the good work. Following the mail sent to inform us of school not reopening for teaching, I have two requests/suggestions:



Allow parents/children still in Abidjan to use the school grounds for a short walk/run/ball playing, with admittance based on online registration to monitor number of people on the grounds (with full physical distance and wearing of PPE). This is more a way of allowing our children to get a 'physical' touch of their school, which they really miss.

A plan is in place to allow this from the end of school until the middle of July. Full details will be sent out before school ends.

We would love to get some English books from the library, either on loan or we can buy a few old books. It is hard to get English hard copy books in Abidjan. We can manage this again through an online registration basis and/or a limited contact interaction at the school entrance/porch, just as when we dropped books for the library a few days ago.

We suggest that people use the link given by the librarian for downloading books during the summer. We have not yet put in place the safety measures needed to open the library during the summer months.

Please also consider an option of opening swimming pools!

A plan is in place to allow this from the end of school until the middle of July. Full details will be sent out before school ends.

Fully agree with Clyde, and asking if the school could not reconsider on a voluntary basis catch up days with teachers and limited number of children.

Due to safety concerns we are not able to open the campus for classes during the summer. We will spend this time preparing to ensure that we can open fully in August.

FINANCE & CONSTRUCTION

Why should you be making provisions for bad debt? The school should hold back the transfer certificates or diplomas of students till their parents pay up. They should be formally informed right away.

For a variety of different reasons some fees are not paid. It is a common standard accounting procedure and there is a system in place for that. Before we arrive at a situation of bad debt we work with the parent to find a solution. Report cards are withheld and some students have been asked to leave the school. People are made aware when payments are overdue.



The tax amount seems quite significant. Since the school is a not for profit organisation, is it not possible to negotiate with the authorities for an exemption. In any case, given the COVID situation, at least for the last two quarters it's worth making an effort.

We do not pay taxes on surplus income only on salaries and goods. We pay lower taxes than most businesses in Ivory Coast. Steps have been taken to try to pivot this situation. Bureaucratic procedures are slow, but the school is working on it.

Comparing the Maintenance Budget versus Projection for 2019-2020, we seem to have a variation of over 40% of Projection over Budget. Kindly let us know the reason for this level of variation. Thank you.

Bills for work carried out at the end of the previous fiscal year came in during this year i.e. for example maintenance of running track. We also repaired extra items that were not in the regular budget but needed to be done- new roof on the canteen. The buildings in general are old and even a healthy maintenance budget will not be sufficient if we have a number of major facility failures at one time (roof leaks etc.)

Hi Board and all, I'm wondering why so far it has been relied on foreign architects. Were local ones also sounded?

We did contact some local architects but there was no interest in our project. We are looking not just for architects but educational architects who can ensure that all spaces are fit for learning.

Please elaborate on the COVID-19 impact and extra expenses on the financial projections shared?

The bulk of the financial impact has been on this year's budget. We have had to spend extra funds in a number of different areas to help get everyone online (faculty and office staff) and we also had to ensure that the campus would be maintained even when no-one was there. Putting people online required ensuring all the office staff and teaching staff, TA's included, had access to the internet at home (hardware and software). In order to ensure that maintenance staff and office staff without cars could come to campus when required we paid for individual taxis rather than allowing staff to use crowded buses. PPE was provided for all staff on campus. Some savings in electricity etc were offset by the school paying higher bills for individual apartments and houses (as required by contract). The school purchased a number of new software programs (such as SeeSaw) to allow us to better manage online schooling.

We have also begun to purchase new equipment to help us prepare for next year. A sample list is below;

- *Individual wipes - 3000 packages/50 wipes per package-(USD 6000 for 3 months)*



- *Alcohol based disinfectant*
- *Soap and touch free dispensers*
- *Washing hand buckets, pedal controlled (at least 20)*
- *Masks (ASAP, first 1500 already order)*
- *Gloves (Nurses to order)*
- *Standing Fans (50)*
- *Thermal camera and screen for entrance.*
- *Disinfectant mats for entrance.*
- *Tents/Canopy/shading - extra outdoor teaching spaces, queuing outside school, parent waiting area - pick up.*
- *A/C filters - regular changes after extra regular cleaning.*
- *Spraying equipment to disinfect corridors, lockers, outdoor equipment, etc.*
- *Extra cleaning equipment - mops, cloths etc cannot be used in more than one area.*
- *Industrial vacuum(s)*
- *Foot operated door handles - for classrooms and common areas*
- *Pexiglas screens - reception, business office*

Some of the items on this list are once off. Others will continue throughout the year and even though individually inexpensive they do add up. The first item is an example - it will cost \$6,000 for the first 3 months - after which we will see if there is a need to purchase more.

We don't have the full costs for this year yet as all bills are not in and will be in different budget lines. We believe it is around \$60,000. If we provide goods on the list for a full year that will come to between \$80,000 and \$100,000. Next year we want to provide a full service with all staff members, including all specialists, so there is no saving in the budget and we expect to have around 50 fewer students than we have this year.

COVID PREPAREDNESS

If ever need be, I can ask some of the startups I coach to help the school to devise and implement online tools and apps that may be used in our initiatives to tackle a new school year with the aftermath of COVID. They have a proven track record that can be demonstrated.

We currently work with the same companies that other international schools use. In this way when parents and students move school they will be familiar with these tools. Teacher training run by AISA and other organizations concentrate on the tools being used by the international school community.

Do we need to have a 14 days quarantine before sending kids to school in August?



Currently 14 days quarantine is the rule in Ivory Coast.

It's concerning to see that the use of masks will be mandatory at the school, since if not properly used they pose a greater risk of infection. Are these guidelines from CDC and WHO? Lower school especially might not benefit from this.

Both CDC and WHO approve of wearing masks. The main idea behind the mask is not to protect the wearer as much as to protect the other people in close proximity.

Could you share in detail the preventive measures taken or planned vis a vis covid19? washing hands, shoes, mask (???) during all time in school? distancing...etc etc. thanks

The school is working in putting in place a system to allow safe return to the campus. For this the school shares best practices with other International schools in the region, follows the guidelines and suggestions from CDC, WHO and other sources of information to find the most suitable solutions for our students, staff and campus. Currently that is a 5 page document. All details will be sent out to parents and students well before the beginning of the school year.

OTHER

A general question, what is the school's plan in terms of transition to MYP and PYP?

We do not intend to transition to PYP and MYP. CGC is superior to both these programmes. The main person behind CGC is one of the people who originally wrote the PYP and he now wants to be involved in an even better program. Other good schools around the world will soon begin transitioning to CGC.

Has ICSEA considered extending the school year?

We have completed the school year. Now we need to have staff relax a little before preparing for the more challenging year that lies ahead.

During the AGM, Tamu Tamu cuisine has been mentioned but nothing discussed. Will they be providing for the cafeteria? If Yes, what are the measures that will be taken to provide our children with food hygiene and safety?

A meeting is planned for in June to discuss - but it is envisaged as a paper bag lunch (if possible) which will be delivered to set eating places (in the classroom for many) - so there is no mixing of students outside the set group and no long queues for hot lunch. Home lunches might also have to be cold as we won't be using microwaves.