

Summary Report of the Discovery College School Council Thursday 10 March 2016

Present: Simon Wong, Catriona Tuimaka, Kitty Cheng, Margaret Burnett-Hinch, Mark Beach, Pat Romano, Paul McMaster, Vivian Cheung

Apologies: Chris Geary, Jason Edwards, Jennifer Ho, Stephen Peaker

1. Finance and Property sub-committee

The P&L accounts to 31 December 2015 were approved.

ICT purchase of 13 new iMacs for Design area (approved by sub-committee)

These new machines are to replace the ageing iMacs in the Design room that are up to 8 years old. These computers are used for Design and for connecting to the various machines in the design rooms.

School fees

Next year's forecast budget allows the school fee increase to remain at 6.6% as communicated to parents back in 2012. Break-even point for the College remains on track for 2019. The School Council endorsed this increase prior to it going to the ESL Directors and ESF Board on 21 March.

NBL (Non-refundable Building Levy)

A lengthy discussion was held around the NBL. This was introduced 4 years ago at \$5,900 per student per year and has not been adjusted since then. The School Council recently commissioned a 50-year Maintenance Plan from ECS Harris, which was adopted over the original ESF plan.

The latest figures show that the current NBL of \$5,900 is not sufficient to meet the school's immediate and long-term capital property needs. ESF presented a spreadsheet based on the ES Harris figures showing the impact of the NBL against these costs, assuming a 0%, 2.5% and 5% inflation in construction costs.

The School Council agreed that:

- The NBL will be increased from the coming 2016-17 academic year and adjusted annually
- The School Council would support a 2.5% inflation projection in our initial forecasts (to be reviewed annually)
- A revised capital works budget will be emailed to the SC for endorsement prior to it going to the ESL Directors and ESF Board on 21 March.

Discovery College Summer works June-July 2016 were approved

- Conversion of a shared area to a primary classroom to cater for increased student roll
- Combining current Apple Mac service center and ICT room
- Enlarging the staff room by enclosing the current balcony

Finance Procedures for Trips & Visits were approved

The Trips and Visits procedures have been reviewed and proposed changes passed before the Finance & Property sub-committee. The changes include decreasing the refund threshold to \$100 and introducing a \$500 admin fee for all overseas No Boundaries trips.

Hong Kong based trips and camps

- 50 percent of the total fee minus non-refundable items (such as flights, accommodation, transport) will be refunded if a student withdraws less than 48 hours prior to the event and the family provides notification to the school that is deemed reasonable.
- 100 percent of the total fee minus non-refundable items (such as flights, accommodation, transport) will be refunded if a student withdraws more than 48 hours prior to the event and the family provides notification to the school that is deemed reasonable.
- Refunds are to be requested in writing to the teacher supervising the activity, and must be accompanied with relevant medical certificates in the case of a student withdrawing from the activity due to illness.
- If a student gives no notification of withdrawal or non-attendance then no refund will be made.
- Refunds will not be made if a student is sent home from the activity due to illness or injury occurring at the activity.
- Refunds will not be made if a student is sent home from the activity due to disciplinary reasons
- Refunds based on absence due to family reasons will be decided upon on an individual basis by the school Principal.
- A contingency charge of 5% is applied against all HK based trips. Contingency monies are used to cover losses.
- Any surplus above \$100 per student will be refunded to parents. All surpluses are refunded into parents' ePayment accounts.

Overseas trips

- 50 percent of the total fee minus non-refundable items (such as flights, accommodation, transport) will be

refunded if a student withdraws less than 3 days prior to the event and the family provides notification to the school that is deemed reasonable.

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- If a student gives no notification of withdrawal or non-attendance then no refund will be made.
- Refunds will not be made if a student is sent home from the activity due to illness or injury occurring at the activity.
- Refunds will not be made if a student is sent home from the activity due to disciplinary reasons
- Refunds based on absence due to family reasons will be decided upon on an individual basis by the school Principal.
- A contingency charge of 7% is applied against all overseas-based trips. Contingency monies are used to cover losses, including such things as fluctuations in exchange rates.
- Any surplus above \$100 per student will be refunded to parents. All surpluses are refunded into parents' ePayment accounts.

No Boundaries overseas trips (Years 10, 11 & 12)

- Contingency monies for overseas No Boundaries trips are placed into a general pool, which is used to cover losses on any particular trip/s. Once this has been done, any surpluses above \$100 per student are refunded to parents on a pro-rata basis on the trips where there was no deficit.
- Discovery College applies an Administration Fee of \$500 per student for all No Boundaries trips, which covers:
 - Employment of administration personnel specifically for No Boundaries
 - Reconnaissance trips for following year's trips. Including flights, accommodation, transport, etc.
 - Printing and photocopy charges
 - First aid supplies and kits

2. Student Wellbeing sub-committee

Student pastoral care systems and policies

Aim of the meeting was to invite current students from different levels of the school to hear their voice in relation to student pastoral care systems and policies. All were relatively long term students of DC and members of the Student Council. The students covered a range of things happening at the school around the sense of Wellbeing.

3. Staff Wellbeing sub-committee

Recruitment has focused on replacing 10 teachers have chosen not to renew contracts for next year, plus one newly created position for Y6 and our vacant secondary teacher librarian role. Attrition this year is 9% of total teaching staff.

Head of Secondary

James Smith has been into DC on 5 occasions now and will continue to come and meet with stakeholder groups leading up to his commencement as Head of Secondary on 5 May. Lasscock (Deputy Head of College) is covering some of the HoS roles, in association with the 3 secondary VPs. No major issues have been identified thus far.

Tracey Chitty who heads the internal Staff Well-Being Committee gave a status update on the surveys. These surveys targeted the students, parents and staff in answer to the Flourishing School model that is being currently adopted by DC.

4. Principal's Report

Proposed wording changes to Financial Assistance Scheme were approved. The proposed new wording is:

The FAS is accessible to students of ESF Schools and Private Independent Schools (PIS) who have encountered sudden and unexpected changes of circumstances within the last 12 months. For Discovery College families, the funding is provided through the College's Scholarship Fund. Financial assistance is not normally granted in the first year of admission. The scheme is intended to ease parent's financial difficulties regarding both school fees and the Non-refundable Building Levy, and will make no reference to the academic achievement that the student has to attain.

ESF Branding

ESF has been engaged in an intentional rebranding exercise with external consultants for the last year. New logos for each school have been developed to reinforce the important connection to ESF and increase the visual brand awareness for all ESF schools. For DC, this means that our current logo will be discontinued and replaced with an



ESF Discovery College logo, and the reference to ESL will disappear. Over time, our web site, hard and soft publications, stationary and uniforms will move to the new logo.

