



## Minutes of the Banjul American International School (BAIS) Board of Directors Meeting

**Date:** 7 December 2018

**Location:** BAIS Library

1. Call to order 2:40pm

MA thanked all for coming to the last meeting of 2018

2. Roll Call

**BAIS Board Members Present:** Martin Antonio (MA), Cian O’Siochain (COS), Grzegorz Sadowski (GS), Stephane Banna (SB), Niania Touray (NDT)

**BAIS Staff Present:** Caleb Steindam (CS), Stephanie Budd (SJB), Madline Ashcroft (MNA)  
(Minutes)

**Apologies for Absence:** Caitlin Tumulty (CT)

3. Consent Calendar

<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting:</b> Approved without amendments.	CS
<b>Teacher Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 1</li> </ul>	SJB
<b>PTO Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appendix 2</li> </ul>	CT (read by MA)
<b>Director’s Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director’s Report: Appendix 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gambia Teachers Institute: Appendix 4</li> <li>○ Book Chapter Under Review: Appendix 5</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	CS
<b>Finance Report:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on Current Budget (CS)</li> </ul> <p>Summary of all bank balances as at December 6th 2018 are as follows:  TD Bank Operational account - \$52,920.05  TD Bank Reserve account - \$106,724.32  TD Bank Certificate of Deposit - \$200,000.00  Eco bank Dollar account - \$28,792.53  Total US dollars - \$188,436.90</p> <p>Eco bank Dalasi Operational account – D411,715.40  Dalasi Petty Cash - D14,140.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report on 2017-2018 Audit (NDT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Payce Consulting Limited has completed the financial audit for 2017-2018 school year. The following points were discussed during the exit meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Changing from cash-based to accrual-based accounting. Payce Consulting Ltd has offered to provide training to BAIS staff.</li> <li>— Update the system of tracking staff loans Payce Consulting Ltd has offered to provide a template for BAIS to use.</li> <li>— Updating the fixed asset register.</li> <li>— Issue with Social Security payments and late fee.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	CS & NDT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NDT and the Business Manager will follow up on this directly with contacts at SSHFC.</li> <li>— Need to update Strategic Plan</li> <li>— Need to consider strategy for ensuring robust, diverse, consistent enrollment of students.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Marketing Committee Report:</b>  <u>BAIS Website</u>  Pristine Consulting has pledged to provide services to transfer, update, and maintain website. The first step is to rewrite the content of the existing website to a new template hosted by Pristine Consulting. This will be completed by next Friday, December 14th, at which time there will be a demo for the Director to review.</p>	NDT
<p><b>Director's Search Committee Report:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An offer has been made to a candidate.</li> <li>• Awaiting the candidate's response</li> </ul>	COS
<p><b>Items for Discussion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Amendment of Child Safety Policy (already approved by email)  The decision to amend the child safety policy was approved by the board through e-mail. Hard copies were sent home and soft copies will also be sent home.   a.(i)the board decided that urgent decisions can be done via Whatsapp or e-mail and then brought to the next meeting for the records.</li> <li>b. School Vehicle: Set policy and way forward on purchase  The Board decided that a new vehicle is urgently needed, and should be relatively new and in excellent condition. SB and NDT will look for options of a vehicle to purchase, and also for selling current vehicle which is in unsuitable condition. If a vehicle is not purchased by January a car should be rented for the director. CS will draft a vehicle policy for the Board to review.</li> <li>c. Proposal to Change to Accrual-Based Accounting next year  The Auditors will train the staff to change to accrual-based accounting for 2019-2020.</li> <li>d. Tuition and Fees for 2019-2020  The marketing committee and SB will review the data provided by CS and provide recommendations to be considered at January board meeting.</li> </ol>	MA, CS and all
<p><b>Other business:</b> None</p>	
<p><b>Executive board meeting and decision:</b>  N/A</p>	

Next Board meeting will be decided through email

Meeting Adjourned at 16.48

## **Appendix 1: Teacher Report (Stephanie Budd)**

### Teacher UPDATES:

#### GAMBIA TEACHERS INSTITUTE – November 17th

- All BAIS teachers presented on a variety of topics, from first aid to improve activities to teaching phonics
- There was a wide array of positive comments and feedback

#### STAFF THANKSGIVING

- November 21<sup>st</sup> – Most staff members attended, some brought families

#### END OF TRIMESTER 1 –

- Trimester 1 ended on Nov 30<sup>th</sup>
- Teachers have been busy writing and editing reports

#### PORFOLIO CONFERENCES

- Conferences will be held on Wednesday December 12<sup>th</sup>
- Middle School will be using digital format

#### TEACHER DINNER PLANNED – December 12<sup>th</sup>

#### GROUND/SECURITY STAFF DINNER PLANNED – December 15<sup>th</sup>

#### SERVICE LEARNING –

- Two organizations have been identified as partners for the upcoming Service Learning Project
- Women's Initiative Gambia – attended GTI, upcycle trash materials to make new good for sale
- Gambia Ocean Heros – working hard to clean up the coast line of the Gambia

#### MY IDENTITY PROJECTS

- Pastoral Care – Middle School Presentations on their Identity
- They explored their own identities through classes focused on culture, learning preferences, technology influences, mental health, among others.

#### TWO NEW STUDENTS

- Middle School students – William and Sophia, children of Carla Cerami of MRC.
- Joined last week and will be here through this year

#### SCIENCE CELEBRATION OF LEARNING

- GRADE 5/6 – Exploration of matter, wore goggles and aprons – wowed the crowd
- GRADE 7/8 – Electromagnetic Spectrum, electric and magnetic fields
- Aina – Genetics Project for Nebraska program

**Appendix 2: PTO Report** (Caitlin Tumulty)

**BAIS Christmas Party**

BAIS Christmas held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 2018 from 3pm to 7pm was successful.  
Thanks to the BAIS community for making it a success

### **Appendix 3: Director's Report** (Caleb Steindam)

- **Current Enrollment: 55**
  - PreK: **14** (1 new)
  - Primary (K-4): **27**
    - *3 primary students about to leave Gambia*  
*(24 total primary students in January)*
  - Middle (5-8): **14** (2 new)
    - *1 Middle School student about to leave Gambia,*  
*2 more Middle School students arriving in January*  
*(15 total Middle School students in January)*
- **1st Trimester Reports**
  - Standards-based, narrative reports
    - Individual comments for each subject
  - Currently undergoing final proofreading
    - Will be sent home Monday, December 10th
- **Portfolio Conferences**
  - Wednesday, December 12th
  - Co-led (students and teachers)
    - Reflect and highlight on growth and learning so far, look ahead to learning goals for rest of school year
  - Final portfolio conference in June will review learning over course of year
- **Seussical KIDS musical**
  - Casting completed, first two after-school practices this past week
  - Final Performance: Saturday, March 2nd, 2018, at Ebunjan Theatre
  - All students in grades 2 & up performing in *Seussical*
  - Grades K-1: Green Eggs and Ham
  - Pre-K 1 & 2: The Grinch
    - Play Director: Mr. Caleb Steindam
    - Music Director: Mr. Daniel Twum
    - Choreography Director: Mr. Kelly McAllester
    - Artistic Director: Ms. Leah Woldman
    - Costume Team: Ms. Stephanie Budd, Ms. Beryl Metzger, Ms. Veronica
- **A/OS Annual Grant Request (GRASP) completed**
  - \$68,000 granted annually for each of previous three school years
    - Supports cost of educational materials, professional development, and salaries for US staff
- **Gambia Teachers Institute**
  - Summary Sheet attached
- **Book chapter accepted for publication**
  - Summary Sheet attached

**Appendix 4: Gambia Teachers Institute Report (Caleb Steindam)**

**GAMBIA TEACHERS INSTITUTE**

Evaluation Summary									
Gambia Teachers Institute									
17-Nov-18									
QuestionS									
Content	Peace Cops			Gambian Educator			Non		
	Yes	No	Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Sure	Yes	No	Not Su
Were the facilitators helpful and prepared?	17			106			19		
Was the material relevant and useful?	17			104	1	1	19		
Did you gain new ideas, knowledge, or understanding?	17			104		2	18	1	
Will this conference help you to be a better teacher?	17			104		2	18		
<b>Logistics</b>									
Was the conference well organized?	17			106			19		
Were the facilities, materials, and space used well?	17			104		1	19		
Was the food good, and was there enough?	17			103		3	18	1	
Was the per diem/transportation allowance enough?	15		2	90	4	12	18	1	
Will you use the Teacher Resources book and share it with your colleagues?	17			106			19		
Wouls you attaend a coference like this again?	17			106			19		

*Excerpt from blog by Susan Baldwin, Peace Corps Volunteer who participated in GTI:*

<https://www.peacecorpsvolunteerat70.com/gti-conference/>

# GTI CONFERENCE

December 2, 2018 Susan Baldwin



ATC Teachers – Gibbi, Ida, Kumba

I participated in the Gambia Teachers Institute (GTI) one day conference, with three teachers from my Senior Secondary School in Farafenni – the Agriculture Technical College (ATC). The event was hosted by the Banjul American International School (BAIS), and included various sessions focused on practices for effective teaching, and other skills applicable to Gambian educational contexts. The primary focus of the sessions was on

inquiry-based education, improving teaching methods, and promoting the increased use of student centered teaching techniques. GTI directly addresses the needs of Gambia's growing youth population, promoting inclusive and interactive educational opportunities.



Kumba – Gibbi – Ida Deciding Which Sessions to Attend

This was the third year the GTI conference was held at BAIS, and the first year that PCVs from all sectors (Education, Agriculture & Health) were invited to bring teachers from their schools. I brought Kumba Jobe, who teaches Science and Home Economics; Gibbi Dem, a Woodworking teacher; and Ida Thorpe, who teaches English and Science. There were 32 schools from all over the country represented, with 142 participants, of which 71 were affiliated with Peace Corps. The attendees from non-Peace Corps affiliated schools were invited because BAIS had a prior relationship with them, and felt they would benefit from the conference.



PCVs Leah, Jerusha, Baboucarr Flanked by 2 Gambian Teachers

There were fifteen sessions available and each teacher was able to attend three sessions during the day. Everyone received a comprehensive resource manual, that covered all fifteen sessions with detailed outlines, which included lesson plans and ideas for implementation. They also received T-Shirts, notebooks, pens, colored markers, other teaching supplies, in a tote bag. All conference participants are encouraged to return to their schools, and share what they have learned with their colleagues.

Caleb Steindam welcomed everyone to the conference, and expressed his gratitude to the [US Embassy](#) for providing the funding this event facilitated by GTI at BAIS. He said this conference is held to support, acknowledge, and celebrate the work of teachers. He believes that teaching is the most important job in the world, because teachers do more than impart knowledge. They nurture, protect, inspire, and empower children. Teachers shape the values of communities and offer hope and opportunities for a better world in the future.



Assessing Physical Education with Stephen Wright

All fifteen workshop sessions were very interactive, demonstrating how to engage the students with hands on activities. The lesson plans and ideas presented in the take home resource manual, describe how to translate the new concepts effectively. Since each teacher only had time to attend three sessions, the resource manual will be invaluable in expanding their knowledge of these new concepts and techniques.





Lab Science Basics Session

Presented Sessions included:

1. Interactive Modeling: Tools for Managing a Student-Centered Classroom
2. Improv for the Classroom: Theater Games to Teach Literacy Skills
3. Music Theory Made Easy
4. Using Music To Enhance Learning with Young Children
5. Reading Aloud to Children to Develop Reading
6. What is Phonics?
7. The Mysterious Egg – An Inspirational Way to Teach Writing
8. Growing into Graphs – Bringing Farming into a Lab
9. Lab Science Basics – Turn Your Classroom into a Lab
10. Number Talk and Mental Math Secrets
11. Assessing Physical Education – Wright from the Start
12. Curriculum & Community: Service Learning Can Help Your Students be Agents of Change
13. Making Children's Rights Real
14. HIV Prevention and Sexual Education
15. Emergency First Aid for the Classroom

As an Agriculture PCV, I wanted to interview Stephanie and discover how she uses gardening to complement her classroom curriculum. Since gardening and farming are a way of life for many Gambians, incorporating a garden into the classroom, is an opportunity to link course work with the real world. This is Stephanie's third year at BAIS, designing and teaching hands-on science lessons. She coordinates her classroom instruction with the after school program, and they have created a beautiful productive garden. The students are able to expand their scientific knowledge with practical skills, and then enjoy consuming the fruits of their labors.



School Garden

The GTI teacher training conference had a lot to offer Gambian teachers. They were able to observe how an American school is structured, and what is possible when resources are available. Unfortunately, a typical Gambian classroom will have a teacher with 25 to 30 students, no textbooks, or teaching materials provided by the school. Gambian schools are currently not well funded, teacher salaries are low, classrooms and outside play areas are not well maintained, and teachers are transferred regularly, making it difficult to establish roots in a community. Teachers spend a lot of time writing material on the blackboard (usually with their backs to the class), as the students copy the information into notebooks, to be memorized for their tests. Techniques like critical thinking, debating contrasting ideas, exploring new concepts by thinking outside the box, or having time for asking questions is difficult to work into the school day.

One goal of the GTI conference is to give the teachers who attended the workshop new tools to create innovative lessons. The distributed manuals clearly explain each session, with suggestions for using easy to acquire materials, so teachers can expand their teaching techniques. Below is a link to the complete 2018 Resource Packet.

[GTI Teacher Resource Packet 2018](#)

An additional goal is that teachers will return to their schools and share these new ideas and resources with other educators in their communities. The three teachers from ATC and myself are making plans to facilitate an Emergency First Aid workshop in Farafenni, and share some of the knowledge they received from this outstanding event.



**BAIS Staff & GTI Facilitators**

It is with gratitude and inspiration that I want to thank the BAIS staff and GTI facilitators for this outstanding conference. There will be more conferences of this type in the future, and I encourage all PCVs and Gambian educators to attend. Additionally, RPCVs with teaching qualifications are welcome to apply for positions at BAIS. There have been several former PCVs who have taught at BAIS in the past.

#### **Appendix 4: Report on Publication: Book Chapter** (Stephanie Budd & Caleb Steindam)

Book: *Bringing Innovative Practices to Your School: Lessons from International Schools*

- Edited by Jayson Richardson (University of Kentucky) & Scott McLeod  
(University of Colorado)

Publisher: Routledge

#### Editors' Update:

The book will contain five sections. To date, we tentatively have 20 chapters and 5 vignettes. While chapters are intended to go deeper into leadership innovations, the vignettes will portray additional snapshots of how innovations are put into practice. The vignettes will be short, engaging stories, possibly with pictures and quotes in a call-out box. Authors of these chapters serve primarily in leadership roles in international schools across the world. Nations represented include Botswana, Chile, Columbia, Gambia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, New Zealand, Shanghai, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, United States, and Vietnam. In each chapter, the editors will conclude with a call out box that will summarize lessons learned from each chapter. This call out will be short and summarize the lessons learned, takeaway strategies, and practical elements about that particular innovative practice. At the end of each section, the editors will write a longer commentary piece that pulls all of the elements from the chapters therein. This summary will be just a few pages but will serve as a synthesis for the reader that will provide practical applications for school leaders across the globe.

Chapter Title: “Women in Science: Real World Inquiry Leads to Community Engagement”

#### Abstract:

*In an exceptionally small school like the Banjul American International School (BAIS), every teacher has the opportunity and obligation to take on leadership roles. BAIS's science teacher devised the International Women in Science project to expose the middle school to issues around gender inequality while engaging with scientists in their community. For this project, students researched historical and present-day gender gaps in the sciences and barriers that women in the sciences typically face. Students then crafted interview questions exploring the experience of female scientists at the Medical Research Council the Gambia at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, which has a laboratory near the school. At a school-sponsored Women in Science luncheon, students and their families engaged in multi-generational dialogue with the scientists on their experiences in their respective fields of research. Students published their findings in a newsletter with articles discussing their subjects' strengths and struggles as female scientists in male-dominated careers. As an unanticipated outcome of this project, participants reported that their mentorship with BAIS students led them to new insights into their career paths and identities as female scientists. This chapter comments on how the unique leadership structure of small international schools can bring about innovative, student-centered educational practices.*

(Accepted for publication, draft currently under review)