

AFG Annual Report for the American International School of Zagreb
November 2007 - June 2009 and July 2009 – December 2009



AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL
**SCHOOL OF
ZAGREB**

Accreditation for Growth **Annual Report**

Report submitted to MSA: January 2010

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This annual report is written as one document to include the progress we have made in addressing areas of growth, which we identified in our self-study. This report covers the time period following the Validation Team's visit in November 2007 through December 2009.

It is broken down by the Middle States Standards listing the strengths and areas of improvement for AISZ compiled by the Planning Team during the 2006-2007 school year. Below each of these bullet points is a listing of our school's accomplishments and improvements. The blue section is for the time period of November 2007 to June 2009 while anything in green is for the time period of July 2009 to December 2009.

Also included in this annual report is a listing of various ways we have communicated our progress and focus on our Mission, Vision and learning objectives to all stakeholders; different celebrations of success and finally specific work we have done toward meeting our objectives of improvement in math and student responsibility.

Concerning Middle States Standards:

C.1 Philosophy, Mission, Beliefs, Objectives

The institution has clearly written statements of philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives that convey the general and specific purposes of the educational programs and that express expectations for quality. Stakeholders, including staff, parents, and governing body members, understand, accept, and give input into the development of the organization's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. These documents are appropriate for the groups served and are reviewed periodically.

Significant Strengths:

- The staff and administration believe that the vision, mission, beliefs, and objectives are ethical, demonstrate respect, and are appropriate for our community.
- The staff and administration actively gave input in the choice of *AFG* measurable student objectives.
- Faculty members with relevant expertise actively participated in creating the action plans for each objective.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Establish an ongoing process for reviewing of the vision, mission, beliefs, and objectives.
- Establish a regularly scheduled opportunity for dialogue throughout the school year to provide information and updates about our vision, mission, beliefs, and objectives with all stakeholders.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- The mission, vision, and belief statements have become an integral part of our professional development work with staff. Not only does every professional development in-service day revolve around some aspect of our mission and vision, but hardly a staff meeting goes by without their mention. These statements of who we are, what we believe, and what we strive to become have also become a tool for recruitment of staff.
- We use the *School to Home News (SHN)* as a venue to update the parent community regarding our vision, mission, beliefs, and objectives.
- AISZ went through a process of rebranding and designing a new school logo based upon our mission and vision. The logo and electronic signature have been integrated into our web site, stationary, e-mails, and promotional material which helps to make our mission and vision much more prominent.

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- During regular Tuesday staff and/or division meetings, we make an effort to connect our work, our professional development, and events with our vision, mission, and objectives.
- We have created an AISZ promotional school video which is on the home page of our web site.
- Also on our home page is the AISZ Mission and Vision.
- Beyond our home page, in the overviews section, the AISZ Beliefs can be found in English as well as a translation of the Beliefs into 25 different languages represented at our school.
- There is a special 'News' pull-down link on our web site which takes you to AISZ *AFG* information which includes the complete AISZ *Accreditation for Growth Planning Document*: <http://www.aisz.hr/AFG.html>.
- Problem-solving meetings/workshops with students/parents use direct connections with our vision, mission, and beliefs.

Progress July 2009 – December 2009

- We have formed a new technology committee, which is basing development of 3-5 year 'tech plan' on our mission and beliefs.

C.2 Governance and Leadership The governance and administration work in partnership to ensure the integrity, effectiveness, and reputation of the organization through the establishment of policy and oversight of leadership. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect and purposeful effort on behalf of students and their learning. The administration of the organization provides a productive work environment, timely and open communication, and the leadership necessary to plan both day-to-day operations and the long-term future of the institution. The school is chartered, licensed, or authorized by a state, nation, or authority, which operates in the public interest.

Significant Strengths:

- The director of the school is supportive of the staff.
- The Board and the administration maintain positive relationships with parents, students and the community.
- The administration creates a productive learning environment for students.
- The school and its programs comply with all applicable statutes and governmental regulations.

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- Stakeholders seek improvements in the general performance of the school in order to bring it to an even higher professional standard.
- Communication from the school is clear, accurate, and up-to-date.
- The administration stays well-informed of educational developments.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Review, revise and implement an effective supervision and evaluation system of faculty, administration and staff performance.
- Evaluate ways in which to create more continuity in the Board membership.
- Establish and communicate clear and equitable systems for the administration and enforcement of rules, discipline, rewards and benefits.
- Review, restructure and communicate the communication channels to ensure timely and effective communication with all stakeholders throughout AISZ.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- Our JK-12 Principal observes and does formal observations of each teacher.
- The three US Embassy appointees' time of expiration will no longer fall in the same year. To do that, their departures from Zagreb will be staggered.
- An overview of the monthly Board Meeting agendas and meeting summaries are included in the School-To-Home News prior to and following the meetings.
- Bambi Betts, Executive Director of Academy of International School Heads (AISH) and Director of Principal Training Center (PTC) conducted a Board Training Workshop with the Board and Director September 2007 and September 2008. We budget and will hold annual Board training workshops.
- We have revised the Family Handbook as well as the Code of Conduct which is signed annually by each student and family. The rules and process of discipline procedures are clearly articulated and equitably enforced.
- To restructure communication, we now have every family's e-mail address and send a copy of the SHN to each family electronically each week, we post the *SHN* on our web site, we post a hard copy of the *SHN* in the courtyard; accurate family directories are consistently updated to ensure smooth communication.
- We have communicated effectively the communication channels at our New Family Orientations each year, at the Open House meetings, at the Meet the Director meetings at the beginning of the school year, and at the first Director's Coffee.
- The Board has signed the Middle States Accreditation Statement of Commitment each year, November 2007, October 2008, October 2009.
- The Board holds orientation sessions for all parents interested in running for the school Board, prior to the May election.

Progress July 2009 – December 2009

- US Embassy appointees have been staggered to avoid complete turnover.
- Marilyn Wyatt conducted the annual Board retreat in November 2009.
- We've established an all-community SMS text messaging system to effectively communicate with family and faculty in a timely manner.
- Monthly Board meeting agendas, meeting minutes and Director's Reports are posted on the website for community access.

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C.3 Organizational Design and Staff

The organizational structure of the institution provides the vehicle for carrying out the established philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives of the educational program and support services. A clearly defined set of reporting relationships exists and administrative, instructional, and support staff are qualified, competent and sufficient in number to allow the effective delivery of quality education to students. Staff assessment procedures are in place, are clear to all involved, and are collaborative. On-going professional development, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and collegial relationships among staff and administration are evident and conducive to cooperative action.

Significant Strengths:

- Students and parents believe that teachers are qualified and competent. The administration and staff commented that the administrative, instructional, and support staff possess the qualifications of education, preparation, experience, and commitment that contribute to effective learning.
- The teacher evaluation system is clearly defined and communicated.
- There are high levels of cooperation among all staff members to provide a quality educational learning experience.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Make all staff aware of where they can find various documents on the server or in hard copy.
- Update the Faculty Handbook to reflect current personnel policies and regulations.
- Create and implement procedures to determine adequate compensation, equitable workloads, and acceptable work conditions.
- Create a clearly articulated and equitable professional development plan ensuring that necessary funds and time are allocated.
- Provide adequate support staff for the lower elementary school grades.
- Update the Administrative Regulations Manual and post on the server.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- A group of staff members worked together to reorganize the folders of information and documents on the school's server.
- Necessary forms are found in a wall file organizer outside the Administrative Assistant's Office, next to staff mailboxes.
- All staff mailboxes are now centrally located in the administrative office area.
- The Administrative Regulations Manual is updated and posted on the server.
- Full-time instructional assistants have been hired for the JK and SK classrooms and two to four additional instructional assistants were employed to work with teachers in Grades 1-5, as well as in the library.
- Professional development is tied to our student objectives and curricular goals for the year. More emphasis has been placed on bringing consultants in and there is a clear process and form for staff to complete for attending professional development opportunities.

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- A professional development matrix indicating who has attended what, when, and where as well as the goals achieved from the professional development has been developed. This is posted on the server.
- The Director seeks input from staff through the Director's Advisory Committee regarding issues concerning compensation for staff. Salary and benefits/compensation is compared with local and regional international schools. Adjustments have been made to the salary scale. A one-time currency adjustment payment was given to all returning faculty as a result of devaluation of the US dollar. We changed to a Euro based salary in an attempt to provide more stability. Adjustments for overseas hires were made so that AISZ could be competitive in its recruiting.
- We charted our face-to-face teaching time (in minutes) in order to create a standard expectation for teaching loads. To create more equitable teaching loads, we split classrooms when funds were available and instructional assistants were hired.
- We hired an additional IT teacher to work with students and staff.
- We reorganized the structural design for foreign language in order to provide for leveling in Grades 4-12.
- A K-12 Learning Resource Specialist was hired in August 2008 to support students and staff.

Progress July 2009 – December 2009

- The Faculty handbook has been updated to reflect current personnel policies and regulations.
- We re-evaluated and made adjustments in leveling Foreign Language classes for students in Grades 5-12.

C.4 Educational Programs

The educational programs consist of both carefully planned and well executed curriculum programs that include appropriate standards, solid instructional pedagogy, and appropriate assessment based on research and best practices. The educational programs are sufficiently financed, periodically reviewed, and mission-appropriate. They are developed to meet and address the needs of students and are designed to produce student learning at all levels. Effective policies and practices are in place, along with instructional materials, technology, and equipment that are appropriate, functional, and well maintained.

Significant Strengths:

- In addition to the core subject areas, AISZ offers a wide variety of "specials" classes (e.g. foreign languages, wellness, library skills, information technology, music, art, P.E., drama).
- "Specials" classes are offered to students in Senior Kindergarten-Grade 12.
- Instruction is designed to meet the needs of students with different abilities.
- AISZ has a strong early childhood program.
- Teachers use a variety of strategies to meet the needs of different learners (e.g. quiet time, active time, large and small group work, child-initiated activities, teacher initiated activities, lecture, etc.).

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- The educational programs promote creative thinking, critical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- The educational programs provide a smooth transition from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school.
- Course syllabi and learning outcomes, modeled from the AERO standards, are available to the school community.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Review and revise the curriculum so it is horizontally and vertically aligned.
- Update all curriculum guides.
- Differentiate the curriculum and instruction so all children are challenged academically.
- Evaluate ways in which to expand the scope and sequence of the physical education program which is limited by the current facilities.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- **JK-6 Math Program:** We have adopted the *Everyday Math* JK-6 Math program. Curricular revision/improvement in this area is one component of our action plan to fulfill the *AFG* accreditation school-wide learning objective, which addresses improvement of our math program and student learning in the math area.
- **SK-10 Social Studies Program:** We have adopted the SK-5 *Social Studies Alive* curriculum and program, the 6-8 *History Alive* curriculum and program, and in grades 9 and 10 new texts with a new focus on our curriculum on the 20th century and modern history (*20th Century World History and Human Legacy*).
- **6-9 Language Arts/English:** We have adopted the Grades 6-9 McDougall Little *Literature* curriculum and program which has strengthened our writing, reading and critical analysis emphasis in grades 6-9. The implementation of this literature series/program has brought a consistency and strength to our language arts/English program.
- **SK-12 Writing (6+1 Writing Traits):** We have adopted the *6+1 Trait Writing* curriculum and program in grades SK-12. This program has helped strengthen our writing across all subject areas in all grade levels. The implementation of the *6+1 Trait Writing* program has brought a consistency and strength to our instruction and assessment of writing in all grade levels, SK-12.
- **SK-12 ELL:** We have purchased new ELL entrance and exit tests/assessments. We have purchased the literature series from McDougall Little for grades 6-9 that parallels the mainstream classroom's new literature series. We have also purchased the appropriate level of *ELL 6+1 Trait Writing* materials for the students and teachers.
- **6-12 Science:** We have updated and purchased lab equipment and materials to more adequately support our entire science program. Specifically, we have purchased 10 HS quality microscopes, lab equipment to support our physics courses, and textbooks to support the grade 10 Introduction to Chemistry and Physics course.

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- **K-12 Testing Materials:** We added another standardized assessment - MAP (Measures of Academic Progress). The immediate results are used by teachers to measure student growth and inform the teaching and learning at AISZ.
- **After School Activities:** We have reviewed and made adjustments to our after school activities program. There is no longer an additional fee charged for school-run after school activities, except in cases where additional materials must be purchased (i.e. cooking class). Also, there are now two sessions of nine weeks each as opposed to three sessions of six weeks each.
- **SK-5 Science Program:** We have adopted the Science & Technology for Children (STC) Science program.
- **ES Library Books to Support ES Math Program:** We have purchased literature related to the *Everyday Math* program.
- **11-12 Social Studies Program:** We have adopted new texts and support materials to supplement our IB history and IB psychology curriculum.
- **10-12 English:** We have purchased novel sets and materials for a complete resource library in our HS English department to successfully implement our HS English curriculum.
- **SK-12 Learning Resource Support Materials and Tests:** We have purchased new Learning Resource support materials and diagnostic assessments.
- **K-12 Testing Materials:** In order to continue to assess student learning needs, we will continue with our current battery of tests: MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), WrAP, PSAT, DRA.
- There is time allotted each month for curriculum work.
- Curriculum overviews and unit plans are in the process of being updated to reflect current curriculum.

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- We have made physical renovations to the HS science lab and added IB chemistry to our program.
- **6-8 Science:** We have purchased a new series of texts, Prentice Hall Science Explorer to enhance and raise the level of academic challenge throughout our MS science program.
- We are using MAP results to assist teachers in differentiating instruction and we are blending our instruction with online programs - Rosetta Stone in Foreign Language and ALEKS in math.
- **Grade 10 Language Arts/English:** We have adopted the Grade 10 McDougall Little *Literature* curriculum and program; the same program which has strengthened our writing, reading and critical analysis emphasis in grades 6-9.

C.5 Learning Media Services and Technology

Learning media services and technology function as important tools to enhance classroom instruction and other school activities as grade level appropriate. Well-organized information resources reinforce knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned in other program areas and broaden minds by providing opportunities to conduct research and interact with information.

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Significant Strengths:

- The curriculum supports student research and information literacy skills.
- The quantity and quality of available informational technology resources are adequate and support the total educational experience of the students and staff.
- Significant improvements have been made to the library services such as a computerized library system and increased quantity and quality of books.
- Materials for the library are ordered based upon the expressed needs of teachers and students as well as informed evaluations by the librarian.
- Since September 2006 the AISZ library uses the Follett computerized library management system.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Provide adequate orientation to media and technology services.
- Adequately fund information technology and media services.
- Create a formal Technology Planning Team to develop short and long term goals that are in line with approved budget.
- Provide textbooks and materials to support and enhance the implementation of the curriculum.

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- **Tech Tuesdays** are scheduled monthly during which teachers focus on a variety of technology skills appropriate to their needs and desires (MAP, Mimio, Powerschool, Moodle.)
- The PTA matched the school's purchase of projectors so that every classroom has a projector connected to the computer and internet.
- Turnitin.com, brainpop.com, enchantedlearning.com, and the full EBSCO host from the library (online database and resources) are available for all teachers to use. Monthly newsletters, online resources, articles and ways online resources can be used are shared regularly by all staff members.
- We have standardized the use of school e-mail to promote effective communication among staff and throughout the parent community.
- We have updated our computer labs (hardware) for the labs and all teachers.
- Teachers are able to sign up for classroom computer lab use through googlecalendar.com.
- The budgets for both library and media services have increased in the past two years to provide funding for new hardware, software, and online databases as well as print materials.
- We have purchased textbooks and materials in all curricular areas.
- We have purchased a number of ES library books to support the ES Math Program adding a critical literature component to support the teachers (and parents) in integrating literature and math.
- Our web site is updated weekly with new information as well as photographs reflecting student activities and assemblies.

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- Staff members are taking online Mimio courses.

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- The PTA purchased 6 tablet PC's for technology integration use in the middle school classrooms; this purchase was based upon a grant proposal submitted by two MS teachers following their attendance at a MS professional development workshop, ELMLE.
- We have purchased two document cameras and our tech assistant has educated staff members on the use of these cameras.
- The library site is consistently updated and includes resource and program links directly from the school's web site: Destiny Quest, library catalogue, EBSCO, and present and past reading promotions. All staff/students have usernames and passwords for personal access.
- Teachers have been taught how to use Diigo for saving/sharing web resources.
- We have an Amazon Kindle available for check-out.
- Book titles available in the library have been updated from 8000 to about 9500.
- We have purchased and are piloting 6 TeacherMates in Grade 2; these are handheld personal computers with language arts and math curricular programs, designed to meet and enhance each child's level in these areas.
- We have purchased an additional 12 netbooks to enhance technology integration in classrooms.
- We have established a Technology Planning committee, which is tasked with developing a 3-5 year technology plan.

C.6 Student Services

The school provides services to students that optimize their preparation for learning. Chief among these services are health services and, at appropriate levels, guidance including academic and personal counseling. Preventive and emergency health care services are provided and health and safety policies are clear and well understood. Other services that may be provided include transportation, food service, services for special needs students, and admissions and placement.

Significant Strengths:

- The health services provided at AISZ meet the needs of the student body and the Nurse is able to address minor medical emergencies.
- The Nurse provides information to faculty and parents (*School to Home News*) about serious health or physical needs that may exist within the student body.
- Working relationships with local authorities/health service providers are positive.
- The instructional program (Wellness) includes opportunities for students to develop knowledge, attitudes, and practices necessary to address questions and issues concerning health education, which may be raised by the students.
- There is a nurse available to students and staff.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Review the quality and nutritional value of the food provided by the food service program.
- Establish a system and process to conduct follow-up studies on graduates and former students; share the data collected with the staff in order to determine the effectiveness of school programs.

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- Train the staff in CPR and first aid on a regular basis.
- Revise and make available written procedures for faculty members so they can handle accidents/illnesses.
- Continue to develop ways to do graduate follow-up studies.
- Review the need for more psychological and social support services for students (e.g. make counseling services more available for students in the elementary school and career counseling more available for high school students).
- Gather and update health records for all students.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- We have staffed a full time Learning Resource Specialist for Grades K-12. Students with special needs are now met with our specialist instead of being integrated in the *ELL* program.
- We staffed our school nurse position with a medical doctor and have changed the title to school medical officer
- Each year our medical officer works with the food service provider to improve the nutritional value of the meals.
- We have revised our emergency manual, posted emergency signs, have had discussions with students regarding hygiene.
- Our counselor is in classrooms on a more regular basis, in particular JK-2 and Grades 6-12. She taught Wellness to Grades 9 and 10 focusing on social and emotional wellness and discussing career planning during the 2008-09 school year.
- We purchased an Earscan Audiometer and the nurse does hearing screening tests in every other grade annually.
- Vision tests are given annually.
- Scoliosis pre-screening was done for students in grades 5-8.
- Students' medical records are continually updated.
- We hold seven emergency drills throughout the year including: fire drills, fire emergency exit drills, earthquake drills, lockdown drills (to safe haven areas).

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- Our school medical officer communicates regularly with other CEESA school nurses/medical officers thus keeping current and inline with the practices of other international schools in the region.
- We've established a Facebook page for AISZ alumni to increase contact with alumni.
- We have several universities visiting AISZ throughout the year to discuss career options.

C.7 Student Life and Student Activities

A healthy atmosphere exists for all students. At all levels, nondiscriminatory, appropriate student activities that supplement classroom experiences or community life are provided. An appropriate student activities program fosters a positive intellectual, cultural, and social climate, promotes growth in student leadership and social interaction skills, and encourages students' special interests.

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Significant Strengths:

- Relationships between staff and students demonstrate a mutual respect, fairness and understanding.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Review and provide adequate financial support for the student activities program.
- Review the need and desire for additional activities for Middle School and High School students.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- We increased the budget significantly and redesigned it to support and provide a wider range of additional after school activities. Parents no longer pay additional fees and the number of students participating has almost doubled.
- We reorganized our after school activities program into two nine-week sessions from three six-week sessions to provide for more in-depth activities.
- We have increased the number of options for students in middle and high school to take part in both after school and CEESA activities (MS Speech and Debate, MS Boys Soccer, HS Boys Soccer, MS Girls Basketball, MS and HS Knowledge Bowl, MS Math Counts, HS HOSIC, HS MUN, MS Girls Volleyball, HS Boys and Girls Tennis, HS Boys and Girls Basketball, MS Boys and Girls Cross Country).
- One of our middle school students was selected to be on the US State Department National Math Counts team and compete in the National Math Counts competition in Florida in May, 2009.
- We have held MS and HS Unity Days, based upon student requests.
- Our HS Student Council has been more active in sponsoring school events – movie night, winter dance, and the World Hunger Banquet.
- MS Student Council has taken on more service learning projects, has helped to organize pep rallies, and MS parties/dances.
- The MS students were involved in a two-day workshop on social and emotional intelligence.
- We have also established friendly sports competitions with schools within driving distance.
- We have created an AISZ promotional school video which is on the home page of our web site.
- We annually hold a school-wide United Nations Day Assembly.
- We annually provide a Thanksgiving Lunch and hold an all-school assembly.
- We annually hold a whole School Holiday Sing-Along (celebrations of all cultures).
- The PTA organizes at least two Passport Days annually.
- Teachers and students participate annually in the AISZ Talent 4 Giving Show; funds from this event are used to support local organizations with a variety of needs.

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- The Director has given High School students the opportunity to meet once a month to discuss concerns, raise questions, etc. through a Student Advisory Committee. The HS students have taken advantage of this opportunity only once.
- We have expanded our HS and MS Unity days to include a focus on leadership and service. The HS students go on a hike on Mt. Sljeme at the beginning of the year, which is a common activity of students in Croatian high schools
- We have added an additional HS unity day at the end of the first semester.

C.8 Facilities

The school facilities, consisting of the site, building(s), and equipment, provide a safe, well-maintained physical environment that supports optimal student development and achievement. The school facilities are appropriate to implement the stated philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives of the school.

Significant Strengths:

- The present location of the school offers easy access to public transportation, public services and sports facilities.
- The school has access to playground facilities, including a basketball court, playground, soccer field and tennis courts, although the use of these is limited, due both to weather conditions and Seminary use of these facilities.
- Small classes provide for individualized teacher attention.
- The equipment in the computer labs and fitness room is new and adequate.
- Land has been purchased by an investor and plans for a purpose-built school facility are being developed.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Investigate alternatives to the current PE facilities.
- Improve the safety procedures in the science lab.
- Pursue the feasibility of hiring cleaning service personnel rather than outsourcing this service.
- Ensure that the sizes of classrooms are adequate for the number of students in a class.
- Establish a system for effectively supervising the contracted cleaning service personnel.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- We redesigned existing space to create five new learning environments.
- We have painted a number of classrooms and/or offices, including the medical officer's room.
- We purchased cubbies for the lower grades.
- We rent tennis courts to increase physical education units/options for MS and HS students.
- We have increased the security components throughout the school (safe haven, cameras, shadow resistant films, MYLAR), new emergency/fire escape from Art Room.

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- We have enhanced and enlarged the Security Guard area.
- We created a separate MS Science Room with sinks and stations for labs.
- We have made improvements to the courtyard and utilize all of the area now.
- We created a Supply Room.
- The Facilities Committee, which consists of the Director, two Board members, our Facilities Manager, a local construction contractor, and our Quality Control manager, meet monthly to discuss and plan for the building of the new school.

Progress July 2009 – December 2009

- Air conditioners were added to the school's Multi-Purpose Room.
- New flooring (linoleum replacing carpeting) was put in to the Multi-Purpose Room.
- We renovated the HS science lab and purchased a fume hood; we are now able to offer IB chemistry as a science class.

C.9 Health and Safety

A safe and healthy environment for teaching and learning is provided. Both preventive and emergency health and safety procedures are clear and well documented. The school environment is productive and orderly.

Significant Strengths:

- The school provides a safe learning environment.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Conduct regular emergency drills.
- Post emergency procedures plans in every classroom and hallway.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- We regularly hold emergency drills (7 times per year).
- We have safe haven rooms designated on each floor.
- There is an increased camera security system.
- The Director participates in monthly radio checks with US Embassy.
- We follow revised Emergency Plans to include alternative scenarios.
- We have designed emergency phone and contact trees including announcements on web site.
- We have enlarged and redesigned our guard station giving a more advanced and extended ability to review security cameras.
- Annual vision checks are conducted.
- Annual hearing checks are conducted.
- Medical records and immunization records are continually monitored and updated.
- Our medical officer communicates with families on a regular basis through our School-to-Home news letter, regarding suggestions for keeping children healthy and nutrition suggestions.

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- Information has been communicated regularly to the AISZ community regarding the H1N1 virus while the medical officer keeps in direct contact with the US

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Embassy and other CEESA schools in the region to keep abreast of latest information.

C.10 Finance

Financial resources are sufficient to provide the educational opportunities defined in the school's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. The business practices of the institution promote confidence in the organization's ability to manage fiscal and material resources in a responsible manner and to follow prescribed budgeting and accounting principles. The majority of resources raised for school purposes must be dedicated to school operations.

Significant Strengths:

- Former fiscal problems are being addressed.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Establish systems and procedures to ensure that the school does not experience another financial crisis.
- Involve faculty in the budget process, especially as it relates to specific educational programs.
- Establish a process for long term financial planning.
- Ensure the transparency of the budgeting process through effective communication.
- Communicate the overall budget expenditures and balances on a regular basis.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- Faculty is involved in the budget process by determining needs for texts and materials and supplies.
- We have created a three to five year business plan.
- Time is used at full faculty meetings once a month to discuss budget and staffing updates.
- Overall expenditures and balances are reported openly at the monthly Board meetings.
- We have healthy capital and operational reserve funds.
- The Finance Committee meets monthly to ensure that we are achieving a balanced budget. The Committee consists of the Director, Business Manager, Board Treasurer, and three parents who have expertise in banking and financial planning.
- The Finance Committee participates in the discussions and planning and meetings with banks in order to secure financing of the building for the new school.
- The annual budget process begins in December, with final budget approval for the next school year taking place in April.
- As a result of staff suggestion to centralize and reduce duplication of spending and purchasing of materials, we have now centralized and standardized the process for budgeting and ordering general classroom supplies.

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- Monthly Board meeting agendas, meeting minutes and Director's Reports are posted on the website for community access.

C.11 Assessment of Student Learning

The assessment of student learning outcomes enables students to monitor their own learning progress and allows teachers to adapt their instruction to the specific learning needs of students. The school's effectiveness is assessed by examining areas such as student learning and performance, program evaluation, performance results for support services, graduate success, and client satisfaction. Results are used to develop strategies for improving service and program quality. Assessment results are communicated appropriately to parents/guardians, students, staff, and school community.

Significant Strengths:

- The reporting of a student's progress is regular and detailed.
- Individual class assessments are conducted through a variety of teacher-made authentic assessments and internal assessments that enhance teaching and learning strategies.
- A variety of external assessments are conducted regularly. (e.g. WrAP, ISA, PSAT, SAT, IB)
- Communication between the school and parents is open and regular.
- A significant number of the faculty is trained in teaching strategies that address a wide variety of learning styles and they implement these effective strategies throughout their curriculum.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Develop a standardized process of preparing and issuing progress reports.
- Link assessment results with the identification of appropriate and effective educational and professional development programs and support this type of professional development financially.
- Gather current and longitudinal data about student results on standardized testing.
- Develop a monitoring system to gather, analyze and distribute current and longitudinal data on student performance in order to determine ways in which data can be used to enhance the curriculum.
- Collect accurate and longitudinal data to ensure the valid interpretation of the ISA results.
- Include the school's assessment policy and strategies in the Faculty Handbook.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) has replaced the International Schools Assessment (ISA) starting in the fall of 2008. This assessment is administered three times annually. Faculty and administration have received professional development in using the results of this assessment regularly.
- Individual and full faculty professional development is based upon our student growth objectives. Professional development, specifically in the area of

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differentiation, has been identified through the need for various assessments used and is supported financially.

- Current data about student results through MAP and WrAP are readily accessible and used by faculty.
- SK-12 Learning Resource Support Materials and Tests: We have purchased new Learning Resource support materials and diagnostic assessments.
- Testing Materials: In order to continue to assess student learning needs, we continue with our current battery of tests: MAP (Measures of Academic Progress), WrAP, PSAT, DRA.
- Staff members have been trained to use the results of MAP. As a result, we are not only making adjustments and improvements to meet individual students' needs but also make adjustments to improve our overall curriculum.
- The counselor meets with each family that schedules an appointment to go over the MAP results. The counselor provides an overview of what is being done to meet the needs of the student, as well as provide suggestions for the parents to follow-up on regarding support for their child.
- Students take the individual IB Exams in May.
- We are the center at which students can take the SAT and TOEFL.

Progress July 2009 – December 2009

- More staff members were sent to the regional MAP training workshops in Warsaw in September.

C.12 Planning

The school makes use of strategic, long-range, and operational planning to continuously improve its educational programs and services. Improvement plans focus on student performance and organizational growth and engender continuous improvement across all aspects of the school organization. Externally validated processes for evaluation, strategic planning, and school/district improvement are continuously maintained. Systematic analysis regarding student performance and organizational growth is coupled with analyses of instructional and organizational practices to ensure alignment with the school's philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives. Trends in outcomes and results are projected and goals of demonstrated strategic merit are identified.

Significant Strengths:

- Students and parents perceive that AISZ strives to improve student learning and performance.
- Planning has occurred (e.g. the school's move to the current facility (seven years ago), expansion of that facility, the awarding of accreditation for the high school, the addition and expansion of a preschool program, the organization of an on-site Master's degree program as part of professional development and a means for teachers to acquire a U.S. degree, the authorization of the IB diploma program, and the addition of new faculty positions.
- AISZ's Facilities Development Committee has worked with an investor and a development company, H2L2, to ensure the purchase of land and plans for the development of a new purpose-built facility.

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- A Marketing committee has been established to develop strategies to attract more students.
- A policy and process are in place for awarding financial aid to families in need.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Make the AISZ School Improvement Plan available to staff and administration; post on the server.
- Establish regular Board training sessions to focus the Board's decision-making on strategic and planning initiatives.
- Secure and publish (where appropriate) planning documents (e.g. technology, financial, staff development).
- Clearly identify and articulate how input from students, faculty, staff, and parents is used to set Board goals and school objectives.

Progress November 2007 to June 2009

- We have annual Board training sessions which have helped to improve the working ethos of the Board; the Board focuses on strategic aspects and does not micromanage.
- We have a three to five year Financial Business Plan and we have a staff development process.
- We seek input from parents, students, and staff annually through the NSSE opinion inventories. We use the results from these inventories, feedback from Director Coffees, Parent Information meetings, student council suggestions, Director's Advisory Committee, and full staff meetings to set Board and Director goals aimed at improving the programs and services offered at AISZ.
- The Finance and Facilities Committees each meet regularly to discuss and plan for the construction and move to the new school.

Communication to Stakeholders/Parents/Community

- Throughout the year, the weekly *School to Home News (SHN)* has highlighted and informed parents of various activities, events, and progress on specific areas of improvement.
- The new format of the *SHN* makes it more reader friendly.
- Director's Coffees with parents, which take place once a month, continue to focus on areas of concern such as the food service program, assessment of health and safety issues, and are also used to provide more detailed information about certain programs and aspects of communication with parents, such as report cards and our learning resource center.
- Special parent workshops have been offered to help the parents develop an understanding about the MAP assessment, transition issues, differentiation, etc.
- Guest speakers and presenters are invited to talk at assemblies. These presentations focus on a variety of topics including career planning for older students.

Celebrations of our Successes

- Pep rallies – academic/athletic

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- Large trophy case near entrance of school
- Fill-Me-Up Fridays / Moms in Touch
- *Congratulations to* and *Thank you to....* at all staff meetings
- PA Announcements
- Recognition at assemblies
- Regularly updated pictures on web site
- PTA recognizes student councils, staff, and room parents
- 4 TGIF's per year, at least one at the Director's Residence
- Marc Levitt, author, visited AISZ for writing workshops with students and adults. Submissions of student work have been posted on his web site <http://www.thirdculturestories.com/kids.php> and his book, Putting Everyday Life on the Page, is in our school library.

Work towards our objectives in relationship to action plans:

Objective 1 – Responsibility

- Developed the Student Responsibility Assessment for Elementary and Secondary students and teachers 2007
- Scheduled first and second semester survey time for students and teachers 2007
- Implementation team formed 2007
- Study Skills class taught to grades 9 and 10 2007
- Baseline data analyzed by Implementation team 2007
- Revision of survey 2008
- Analyzed data for areas that need improvement 2008
- Study skills class for grade 9 and 10 integrated into language arts classes
- Survey completed May 2009
- Student tardiness still a problem in the secondary school - use of Power School, computer assistance for reporting and tracking tardiness and absences make the issue more apparent 2009
- Implementation Team met with faculty and administration to develop accountability strategies to be implemented in August 2009
- Results to be distributed August 2009
- Integration of responsibility activities integrated into the curriculum shared with faculty 2009
- Ongoing orientation for teachers August 2009
- Discussion of the need for teachers to be clear about the instructional/classroom expectations for which students will be held accountable
- Improvement noted in student responsibility in the areas of preparation for classes such as bringing supplies and completing homework
- Improvement in student responsibility to seek additional help from teachers
- In the following years continue the survey in October and move the second semester survey to April for more comprehensive results.
- Staff members have attended Service Learning workshops

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Objective 2 - Mathematics

- As the school has adopted *Everyday Mathematics* K – 6, data collected for End of Year tests in 2008-9 will form the baseline data for End of Year exit assessments.
- A format for recording End of Year exit assessment results has been agreed upon
- All data will be stored in the *AFG* folder on the server.
- ISA standardized assessments have been replaced with *Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)*.
- MAP results will be accessed, and recorded by the administrative staff.
- Online math programs offered through ALEKS have been and will continue to be used to support individual needs in either extension or reinforcement of mathematical knowledge.
- Middle School has begun after school math labs twice a week in order to provide students with extra support.
- Differentiated instruction has been strengthened with the appointment of a Learning Resource Teacher.
- Students in elementary classes are pre-tested on concepts taught in various chapters. According to the results they either join whole class lessons or they participate in extension activities. Some class teachers have been able to provide students with extra lessons at selected times during the school week.
- The Math Implementation Team including the Math teachers regularly meets throughout the year to discuss progress. Minutes of these meetings are stored in the *AFG* folder.
- SMART GOALS to achieve facility with math facts were devised and implemented in Grades 1-6.
- Professional Development:
 - High School teacher attended a *Best Practices* workshop.
 - Three elementary teachers attended an *Everyday Mathematics* workshop in the States during the summer of 2008.
 - The Learning Resource Teacher attended a course focusing on supporting students in mathematics learning.
 - September 2008 - a consultant conducted an “Everyday Mathematics” introductory workshop.