

**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS  
WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

HOKKAIDO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL  
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Sapporo 062-0935  
Japan  
6-11 May 2018

ACS WASC FOL 2014 International Edition

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## Chapter 1: Student/Community Profile

For almost sixty years, Hokkaido International School has served the city of Sapporo, offering families a private, co-educational day/boarding international school experience. It has two campuses: Sapporo (Early Years –Grade 12) and Niseko (early Years to Grade 6). The Sapporo campus is located approximately 5 kilometers from the city center on a 6,879 square-meter (0.69 hectare, 1.7 acre) plot of land in the Hiragishi neighborhood of Sapporo. The Niseko campus, which opened in January 2012, is a 2-hour drive from Sapporo. The school purchased the current Sapporo site in 2010 through its Capital Investment and Development Fund (CIDF), with full repayment being made in 2020.

HIS is governed by a nine-member, self-appointing Executive Board, which is in turn, supported by a 25-member Board of Councilors. The Executive Board includes the Head of School, a representative from the US Consulate, and either current HIS parents, parents of alumni, or other community stakeholders including 4 members from the Board of Councilors. The Board of Councilors is chosen from members of the international community who have an interest in the existence of an international school in Hokkaido and Sapporo. The school is incorporated in Portland, Oregon, USA and is recognized by the Office of Overseas Schools of the US Department of State. The school received initial WASC accreditation in 1994 and has maintained full accreditation since then.

### Students

The school year consists of two semesters beginning in mid-August through to mid-June. At present the school enrolls a total of 227 students (including 27 students at the Niseko campus). HIS elementary school students currently represent 13 nationalities with many of these students coming from *bicultural* families. Students with parents who are both Japanese are the largest demographic group in elementary at 39% (roughly unchanged since 2015 when that group accounted for 40% of the elementary population). Bicultural students (with one Japanese parent) represent the second largest grouping within the elementary at 27%. HIS, like an increasing number of international schools in Japan, has a student population which is predominantly Japanese or part-Japanese. In recent years, HIS has seen a growth in the number of returnees i.e. students with Japanese citizenship who have been partially or mainly raised abroad, but have returned to Japan. HIS recognizes the importance of Japanese and bicultural families to the growth of the school. At HIS, both of these groups are above the Japan Council of International Schools (JCIS) averages. The school reports that approximately 32% of its student population is classified as ELL. The school's boarding facilities support a total of 27 students (24 boys and 3 girls). The minimum grade level for boarding is grade 6.

#### Elementary School

Total Students 79

13 nationalities

39% classified as Japanese (both parents)

27% classified as bicultural (one Japanese parent)

34% - students classified as foreign

66% - Japanese heritage

#### Secondary School (Sapporo)

Total Students 121

28 nationalities

28% are classified Japanese (both parents)

36% are classified as bicultural (one parent is Japanese)

35% - students classified as foreign

64% - Japanese heritage

The school has included in the self-study a list of graduate admissions since 2007. The self-study states that historically, HIS graduates go on to 4-year university and college programs in the US, as well as internationally to countries that include Canada, Australia and the UK. However, anecdotal evidence

suggests that domestic undergraduate programs are an increasingly attractive option for parents, both for academic and financial reasons.

## **Parents**

The school's community data shows parents at HIS include: businesspeople, diplomats, language teachers, university professors, professional athletes, and missionaries amongst others. Noting that Sapporo has not been a major site of overseas investment compared to cities such as Tokyo, HIS recognizes there is limited corporate support in the payment of tuition. Therefore, tuition is typically paid by the parents and not by employers. Although HIS families are more affluent in relative terms to the average family in Hokkaido, they do not represent the wealthiest demographic within the city or prefecture. This is the major reason why HIS has maintained markedly lower tuition fees in comparison to other international schools in Japan and in the region.

## **Teachers**

There are currently 30 teachers in the HIS faculty. The faculty is internationally diverse with teachers from the US, Japan, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Peru, Bulgaria and Argentina. All teachers are qualified in their field with 27 out of 30 holding teaching certification. A total of 16 out of 30 teachers have completed master's degrees

The self-study notes that there are currently 3 members of the faculty who do not have a full teacher credential. HIS requires teachers to be 'qualified by experience'. In cases where teachers are hired without a full teaching certificate, it is because they bring experiences or skills that are needed (foreign language, language instruction or technology). In these cases, teachers work to gain their teaching certificates, particularly if they are hired full time. In some cases, teachers listed as having held certification, are in the process of updating their credentials.

The majority of teachers have had experience in other international schools. At present a total of 12 teachers have worked in their home country's national system, and 4 teachers have had experience within the Japanese national system. There is a broad range of teaching experience across the faculty. The data provided by the school in its Community Profile indicates that over the past 4 years there has been a larger number of teachers with 1-5 years' experience and 11+ years, compared to teachers in the 6-10 years' range.

When hiring teachers, HIS consciously seeks teachers who will fit with the school's unique setting. As part of the recruitment process the school uses a document called HIS Curricular Commitments which defines HIS expectations and requirements for curricular principles and practices. The school recognizes the importance of building a cohesive staff, and has a number of strategies to support new teachers. This includes an orientation for new teachers, initial goal setting, and pairing with a mentor teacher. HIS emphasizes schoolwide professional development as a means to build a professionally cohesive staff.

## **Program Outline**

HIS operates an Early Years - Grade 12 curriculum with curricular commitments to multi-age instruction, common instructional strategies, differentiation, ELL inclusion in the mainstream, and collaborative planning within and across both campuses. The curriculum is structured accordingly:

<b>Early Years</b>	Reggio Emilia Inspired
<b>Elementary School (K-5)</b>	International Primary Curriculum (IPC)
<b>Middle School (G6-8)</b>	International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC)
<b>Lower High School (G9-10)</b>	Emphasis on in-house pre-AP program
<b>Upper High School (G11-12)</b>	Emphasis on AP & AP Capstone programs

Through the adoption of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) the school has access to an integrated curricular program that allows the school to bring together science, social studies, and the arts in multi-age classrooms. In addition, the elementary school has adopted Common Core standards for English Language Arts and Math and utilizes *Singapore Math* to address the areas not covered by the IPC. Lucy Calkins' Reading and Writing Workshop was introduced to align with the IPC program in 2012. Singapore Math was introduced 2013-14.

At the secondary level, the school delivers multi-age instruction at the middle school and high school levels. In middle school, the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) provides access to comprehensively developed units of study in language arts, social studies, science, and visual art. There is currently no middle school program at Niseko campus. Each unit also provides instructional connections for integrating aspects of music, physical education, and mathematics (note that mathematics is not multi-aged). Singapore Math was also adopted for the middle school in the 2013-2014 school year. Individual subject teachers collaborate together with other subject area teachers to deliver each unit of study.

Students are offered the challenge of *honors*-level work within their multi-age classes as well as *developing*-level work to better support those students who are in need of greater English language support. At present, a variety of AP Courses are offered either on an annual basis or a two-year rotation. AP Capstone (Seminar) was added to the high school program in 2017-18 with AP Capstone (Research) being added in 2018-19.

Beyond the academic program, outdoor education and leadership development are established parts of the curriculum at HIS. The Outdoor Leadership Program consists of 6 components with a 7<sup>th</sup> component being added in the 2017-18 academic year. As an extension of the school's outdoor education program, students, teachers and parents participate in a variety of AdHoc Club (Adventure Hokkaido) trips and activities across the year. HIS is also proud of its music program and in particular its annual involvement in a 2-hour musical concert at Sapporo's Kitara Concert Hall. There is also a long-standing commitment to service learning, which includes a Junior service trip (most often involving Habitat for Humanity), beach clean-ups (high school), snow shoveling in the neighbourhood (middle school/high school), visiting Amenity Nishioka Elderly Centre (MP1) 4 times a year, and various in-school service experiences. In 2015 and 2016 all HIS teachers, and 2 student representatives, took part in service learning professional development workshops. As a result, in Spring 2017, the school's Curriculum Committee made a decision to work toward the integration of service learning across the school program. The school also offers a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities including a number of sports for secondary students. In the elementary school, extracurricular activities typically depend on options from teachers and parent volunteers, with occasional options from outside vendors.

HIS has identified a growing population of students which it classifies as English Language Learners (ELL) although this classification is not applied to students in the Early Years program. According to the self-

study, as of February 2017, English Language Learners represented 21% percent of the total population at HIS, or 42 out of 197 students. Recently exited students (i.e. students who have exited within the last two years and are tracked by the program) represent another 11% percent; that is, current and recently exited students comprise 32%, or one third, of the student body. In 2015 the school increased the number of ELL teachers to two 0.5 FTE in the elementary school and one 0.8 FTE in the secondary program. In 2016-17 the school decided to adopt the WIDA English Language Proficiency Standards - a set of proficiency assessment tools as well as a differentiation framework outlining five distinct contexts for English language development. Informed by this framework, the ELL Program is pursuing a more integrated approach to ELL support. The WIDA framework supports teachers to differentiate within a range of proficiency levels to assist students achieve grade-level standards. The school also uses a co-teaching approach to support ELL students, but recognizes there are challenges to its effectiveness, including the time needed for collaboration between ELL and classroom teachers. The school has also used sheltered instruction to support ELL students. This was piloted in 2016-2017 and implemented in 2017-2018 for beginner-level ELL students in Middle School Language Arts. The self-study notes that commencing in 2018-2019, HIS will no longer charge ELL program fees to participating families.

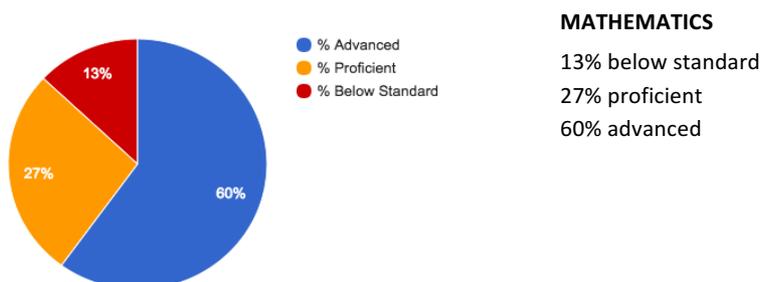
### Analysis of Student Achievement Data

Student achievement data, which includes average GPA scores for grades 6-12, is generated through the following tests and examinations: MAP, PSAT, SAT, AP.

### MAP

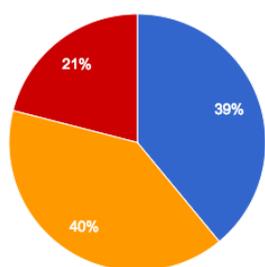
The school initiated MAP testing in 2009 to provide additional academic data. All students from grade 4 through grade 11 take MAP tests twice a year: once in the fall and once in spring. MAP tests are given for 1) Mathematics, 2) Reading and 3) Language Usage. Scores for the previous three academic years (2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17) provide some degree of insight into the progress and growth of students, but due to the small number of students who are taking the tests, data trends are difficult to determine. The school's analysis of the data indicated 87% of students are proficient/ advanced in Mathematics, 79% are proficient/advanced in Reading and 86% are proficient/advanced in Language Usage.

### MAP Proficiency Report Data - MATH - Fall 2016



Gr	**	Fall 2016			Spring 2017			% Students who met or exceeded projected growth
		HIS RIT mean score	US International norm mean score (Begin-Year)	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	HIS RIT mean score	US International norm mean score (Mid-Year)	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	
4	12	215	201	100%	222	208	91%	0%
5	10	226	211	88%	227	217	77%	16%
6	10	228	217	81%	226	225	66%	11%
7	19	232	222	62%	238	228	76%	42%
8	14	244	226	100%	244	230	91%	33%
9	27	242	230	77%	246	233	81%	53%
10	20	255	230	100%	256	232	94%	52%
11	17	246	233	78%	243	235	56%	n/a

### MAP Proficiency Report Data - READING - Fall 2016



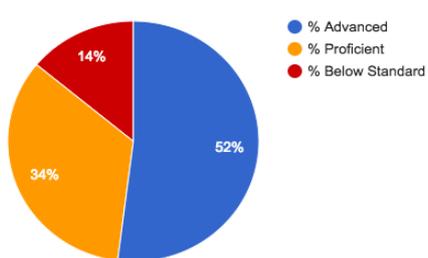
- % Advanced
- % Proficient
- % Below Standard

#### READING

21% below standard  
 40% proficient  
 39% advanced

Gr	**	Fall 2016			Spring 2017			% Students who met or exceeded projected growth
		HIS RIT mean score	US International norm mean score	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	HIS RIT mean score	US International norm mean score	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	
4	12	199	198	50%	210	203	42%	28%
5	10	210	205	66%	214	209	100%	33%
6	10	211	211	53%	211	215	33%	22%
7	19	215	214	50%	216	218	47%	42%
8	14	225	217	66%	225	220	81%	55%
9	27	227	220	73%	228	221	66%	53%
10	20	229	220	72%	234	221	89%	52%
11	17	231	222	78%	224	222	55%	n/a

## MAP Proficiency Report Data - LANGUAGE USAGE - Fall 2016



### LANGUAGE USAGE

14% below standard  
34% Proficient  
52% Advanced

Gr	**	Fall 2016			Spring 2017			% Students who met or exceeded projected growth
		HIS mean score	RIT US International norm mean score	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	HIS mean score	RIT US International norm mean score	and HIS students at or above US and International norms	
4	12	207	198	87%	210	204	71%	14%
5	10	211	205	77%	215	209	83%	16%
6	10	210	210	54%	214	215	44%	55%
7	19	217	214	56%	219	217	58%	35%
8	14	226	216	77%	223	219	75%	33%
9	27	227	218	80%	229	221	85%	69%
10	20	234	218	100%	231	220	84%	42%
11	17	228	221	78%	226	222	68%	n/a

Analysis of MAP-based Lexile Levels indicates a wide range of levels across middle school and high school student groups. The most recent data shows the following ranges in Lexile Levels:

#### Middle School G6-G8

285-1499

#### High School G9-G10

300-1600

#### High School G11

411-1533

### PSAT

Beginning in 2016-17, HIS required all students in grade 11 to take the PSAT/NMSQT each year in order to strengthen the reliability of data for year on year analysis, and to provide students with better feedback in support of their preparations for the SAT. Data is provided for the past three years PSAT scores comparing HIS Grade 11 students with worldwide average scores.

#### HIS Junior Class 2017-2018

Mean Score - **1103**

Met both benchmarks - **56%**

Met ERW - **83%**

Met Math - **62%**

Met None - **11%**

#### Worldwide 11th Grade

Mean Score - **1015**

Met both benchmarks - **44%**

Met ERW - **68%**

Met Math - **46%**

Met None - **30%**

**HIS Junior Class 2016-2017**

Mean Score - **1017**  
 Met both benchmarks - **56%**  
 Met ERW - **72%**  
 Met Math - **56%**  
 Met None - **26%**

**Worldwide 11th Grade**

Mean Score - **1018**  
 Met both benchmarks - **45%**  
 Met ERW - **69%**  
 Met Math - **48%**  
 Met None - **29%**

**HIS Junior Class 2015-2016 (Only 7 test-takers)**

Mean Score - **1031**  
 Met both benchmarks - **57%**  
 Met ERW - **57%**  
 Met Math - **100%**  
 Met None - **0%**

**Worldwide 11th Grade**

Mean Score - **1009**  
 Met both benchmarks - **42%**  
 Met ERW - **67%**  
 Met Math - **45%**  
 Met None - **30%**

The school's PSAT results indicate students are achieving above worldwide averages. They noted that college readiness is indicated by the number of students at or above benchmarks for their grade. By this standard, 56% of the current seniors were "college ready" (exceeding in both benchmarks) last year in their junior year compared to 45% worldwide. The school has interpreted these results as an indication that the academic program at HIS is rigorous and is preparing students for university. The school states that the challenge is now to build on the success of the PSAT and achieve higher scores on the SAT.

**SAT**

The school included comparative SAT scores for the following tests:

**2015-16**

October & November 2015

January & June 2016,

**2016-17**

October & November 2016

January & May 2017

**2017-18**

October & December 2017

The data indicates that currently more students are taking SAT tests compared to previous years. Mean scores are provided for ERW and Math as well as a Total Mean Score. These scores have been used to indicate what % of the students taking the tests met the respective benchmark scores. As noted previously, the relatively small number of students taking these tests means it is difficult to draw any meaningful trend/longitudinal data.

**Advanced Placement (AP)**

<b>Annually</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>
AP Studio Art	AP Physics	AP Biology
AP World History	AP Chemistry	AP Environmental Science
AP Japanese	AP European History	AP US History
AP Calculus		
AP English Literature		
AP English Language		
AP Capstone (Seminar) - New in 2017-2018		
AP Capstone (Research) - New in 2018-2019		

## AP Scores

The school presents AP scores for the past 5 academic years up to 2017, comparing the number of HIS students scoring 3 or above with the global average. The highest number of students taking AP courses was 37 in 2015. The average number for the past 3 years 2014-17 is 33 students per year. The highest number of AP examinations taken at HIS was 58 in 2015, with the average number of AP examinations over the past 3 years numbered at 54. Between 2015 and 2017 the % of total AP students with scores of 3+ has increased from 59.5% to 69%.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>Hokkaido International School (680175)</b>					
Total AP Students	19	30	37	33	29
Number of Exams	29	50	58	53	53
AP Students with Scores 3+	13	21	22	20	20
 % of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	68.4	70.0	59.5	60.6	69.0
<b>Global</b>					
Total AP Students	2,225,625	2,352,026	2,497,164	2,625,319	2,760,890
Number of Exams	3,955,410	4,199,454	4,516,044	4,741,566	5,003,642
AP Students with Scores 3+	1,354,800	1,442,136	1,515,264	1,583,115	1,665,316
 % of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	60.9	61.3	60.7	60.3	60.3

### Hokkaido International School (680175)

Total AP Students in Your School: **29**

School Totals for this View	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Number of Exams	12	8	17	10	6	53
Percentage of Total Exams	23	15	32	19	11	100
Number of AP Students	10	5	15	9	6	

Subject Totals	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio	1		2			3
English Language and Composition		1	2			3
Macroeconomics	1	1				2
Microeconomics	1	1				2
Psychology	1					1
United States History		1	1	1	2	5
World History			2			2
Calculus AB	4		2	1	1	8
Biology		1	7	5		13
Environmental Science		3		2	3	8
Physics 2			1			1
Physics C: Mechanics				1		1
Japanese Language and Culture	4					4

Hokkaido International School (680175)

Total AP Students in Your School: 33

School Totals for this View	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Number of Exams	6	6	19	13	9	53
Percentage of Total Exams	11	11	36	25	17	100
Number of AP Students	6	5	14	11	7	

Subject Totals	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio	1	2			1	4
Studio Art: Drawing Portfolio			1			1
English Literature and Composition			1	3		4
European History		1	3	4		8
Psychology					1	1
World History			5	4		9
Calculus AB	1	2		1	2	6
Chemistry			5		4	9
Physics 1		1	3	1	1	6
French Language and Culture			1			1
Japanese Language and Culture	4					4

Hokkaido International School (680175)

Total AP Students in Your School: 37

School Totals for this View	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Number of Exams	13	8	13	14	10	58
Percentage of Total Exams	22	14	22	24	17	100
Number of AP Students	12	7	11	12	9	

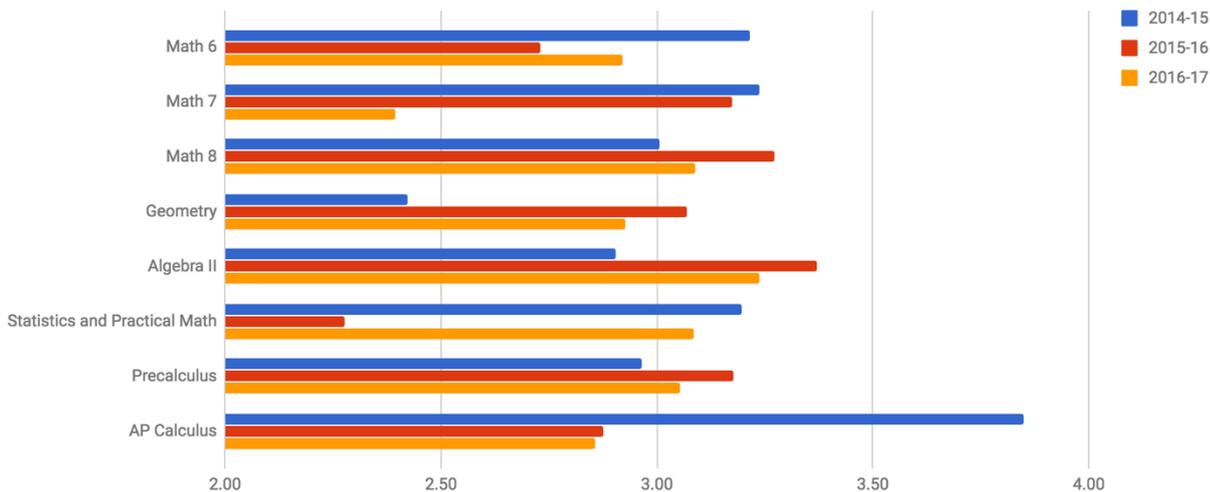
Subject Totals	5	4	3	2	1	Total Exams
Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio	1	1				2
Studio Art: 3-D Design Portfolio			1			1
Studio Art: Drawing Portfolio			1			1
English Literature and Composition		1		2		3
European History			1	1		2
Psychology	1	2	1			4
United States History			1	1	1	3
World History	1		4	5	5	15
Calculus AB	2			1		3
Calculus BC	1					1
Biology		2	4			6
Environmental Science	1	2		4	4	11
Physics C: Mechanics	1					1
Japanese Language and Culture	5					5

From analyzing the data, the school recognizes the challenges of running academically rigorous AP courses for a growing population of students with ELL needs. This growing population has forced the school to strengthen its commitment to differentiation, increase resources for ELL support, and explore timetabling solutions that include separating AP and mainstream classes.

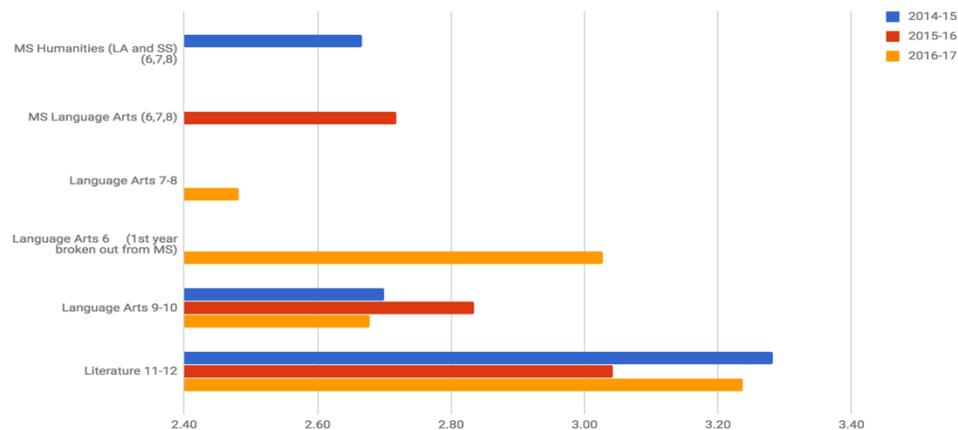
## Average GPA Scores

The school provides high school grades distribution analysis for the past 3 academic years up to 2017. The school recognizes that while this type of data provides some insight into student achievement, the actual data is unreliable due to inconsistencies in grading and assessment practices, which they have identified through the self-study process.

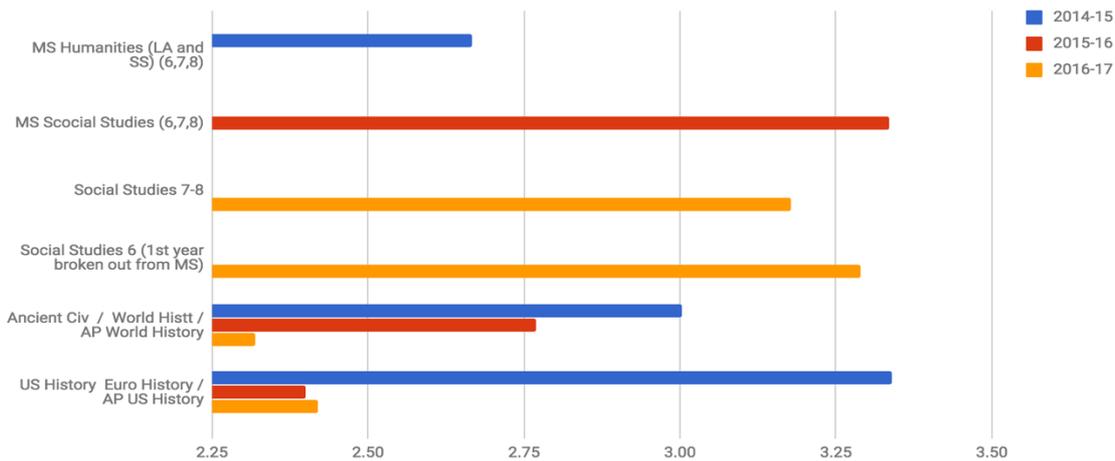
AVERAGE GPA SCORES MATH 2014 - 2017



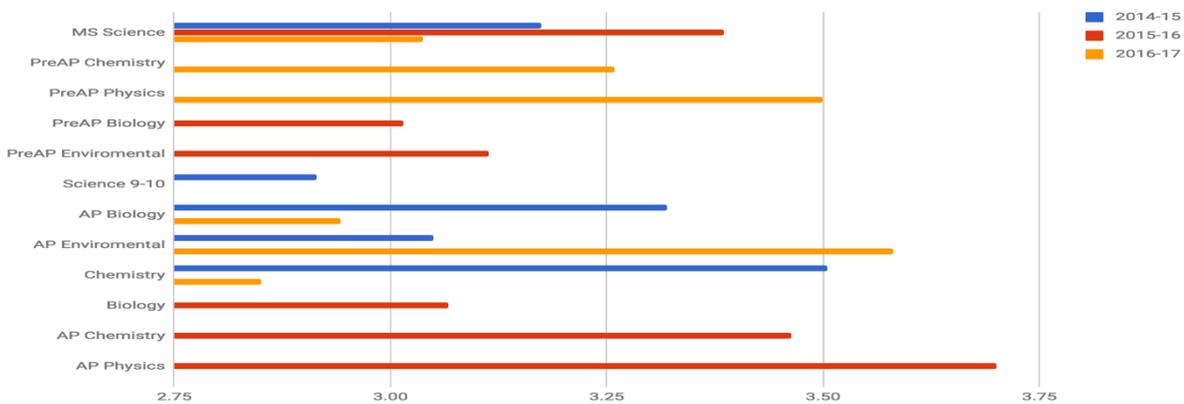
AVERAGE GPA SCORES LANGUAGE ARTS 2014 - 2017



### AVERAGE GPA SCORES SOCIAL STUDIES 2014 - 2017



### AVERAGE GPA SCORES SCIENCE 2014 - 2017



### Comments on significant findings revealed by the profile and/or pertinent items that were not included in the profile

As a consequence of developing the student/community profile the HIS community has taken the opportunity to reflect on this data, noting the following:

#### Assessment & Grading Practices

Student learning data indicated general inconsistencies and inflated grading across the secondary program. There was also evidence of students failing due to incomplete and late work. While staff turnover over the years may have contributed to weaker grading practices across departments, the school notes that disproportionate penalties for late work were also distorting a true reflection of student abilities. The school believes its decision to move towards standards-based grading will enable it to reset grading practices and achieve more accurate and consistent learning data.

#### Low Reading Levels

MAP data revealed low reading scores and wide ranges of Lexile levels across all grade levels. This has significant implications for these particular students as they pursue academic courses with high reading

content. The school also recognizes the need for teachers to better understand MAP data so they can use this to improve instruction.

### **Static AP Results**

The self-study indicates that AP scores, whilst remaining above global averages, have remained static for a number of years. The school believes there is inconsistency in the delivery of AP courses, as well as possible issues connected to scheduling, and instructional time for AP classes.

### **Further Integration of HUSKIES**

The school notes that further work needs to be done to integrate the HUSKIES into the curriculum, and raising their profile across the school. Survey data suggests that both students and teachers are not yet fully cognizant of what the HUSKIES mean.

### **Impact of Increasing Number of ELL Students**

There is increasing pressure on teachers and the existing ELL program to support the growing number of students enrolled in the school with ELL needs.

### **Identification of Critical Learner Needs**

Based on insights achieved through analyzing the student/community profile data the school identified the following **Critical Learner Needs**:

1. Priorities increased reading fluency and comprehension across the school.
2. Increase student critical thinking and the ability for students to transfer skills from one discipline to another.
3. Build more appreciation and understanding of the skills outlined in the HUSKIES, integrating these in to the curriculum and the fabric of the school.

In addition, the school identified the following 9 questions raised by their analysis of student performance, demographic and perception data:

1. As secondary grows (especially after the addition of the new dorm) how will HIS address needs to expand programs if we cannot build more instructional space?
2. What changes to the school schedule will be required in order to better meet the needs of existing (and desired) school programs (AP classes most notably)?
3. How do we improve reading comprehension and fluency across the school?
4. How do we make the HUSKIES (and the virtues contained in them) more part of the fabric of the school? Put another way, how do we go about transforming the school culture?
5. Consider the implications of community misconceptions about the role of the Executive Board. How can we better educate the community about this role?
6. Given the inherent constraints of a small school, where can we improve student support in the school (guidance counselling and college counselling)?
7. What can we do to grow our elementary section of the school which has remained rather stagnant in numbers whereas secondary has continued to grow.
8. How can we retain elementary students into secondary?
9. Are we adequately supporting our students in ELL? What added "stress" to ELL support is added by students (who do not meet the minimum English proficiency requirements) who are nevertheless admitted for various reasons?

The Visiting Committee can confirm that the HIS community has completed a reasonably thorough self-reflection process supported by a range of quantitative and qualitative data, which they have used to focus

on improving aspects of student learning. Although the three critical learner needs articulated by the school are somewhat relevant to the overall findings of the self-study and can be justified, the additional 9 questions are also strong indicators that the school community has looked objectively at its student and community profile in order to identify potential areas for future growth across the school.

## **Chapter II: Progress Report**

In compliance with WASC protocols, the school completed its mid-cycle report and hosted a WASC Visiting Team to the school in the spring of 2015. The school commenced its next self-study in the spring of 2017. The self-study notes a number of changes that have occurred since the last self-study visit (2012) and mid-cycle visit (2015).

### **Major Changes since the last WASC Visit**

#### **Long Term Positioning and Strategic Communications Project**

In 2014 a branding consultant was engaged by the school to develop a new marketing strategy and the development of a positioning statement. In the spring of 2015 this new position statement was vetted and ratified by the school's executive board and formally adopted by the school. The statement is as follows:

*“Hokkaido International School stands as a center for leadership development, complementing academic rigor with character enrichment to prepare young minds for global engagement and lifelong personal achievement.”*

Over the 2015-16 academic year, the staff developed an action plan to address the most pressing and obvious changes that the school could make toward achieving its branding goals. As a result, the following goals were presented to the HIS community at the beginning of the 2016-17 academic year:

1. Build a website that packages curriculum with professionalism and precision emphasizing academic rigor in order to drive interest and increase understanding.
2. Expand the implementation of the HUSKIES across all grades and throughout the school.
3. Develop and formalize service learning and community engagement programming across the grades to complement existing leadership programming (i.e., Outdoor Leadership).
4. Develop a robust, professional after-school program aimed to better meet student interest and needs through both fee-based and volunteer-run offerings.

The Visiting Committee understands that while some initial steps were taken in response to these goals, the process of developing a positioning statement has stalled due to the branding expert leaving the school's community. As things stand, the future of branding work at HIS rests with the Strategic Planning Committee. The Visiting Committee understands that while the Strategic Planning Committee was established for the 2017-18 academic year, it is yet to convene. An attempt has been made to incorporate the branding action plan goals into the WASC schoolwide action plan for 2018-2024.

#### **New Assessment Policy & Standards Based Grading**

In August 2015, the Head of School announced firstly, that the school's existing assessment policy needed to be revised and that secondly, the school would priorities a move towards standards based grading in the secondary division. An Assessment Review Committee was subsequently convened to research and draft a new assessment policy and guide the secondary school in its transition to standards based grading. Throughout 2015-16 secondary and elementary teachers participated in professional development reading

groups to learn more about assessment and standards based grading. In 2016-17, the Assessment Review Committee began developing a new secondary school standards-based report card template.

### **Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP)**

Commencing 2016-17 students in the HIS secondary school must complete a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP) with evidence of their own character growth in relation to a set of 28 school defined character standards. Each student over 4 years at high school is required to achieve a minimum of 14 standards from the total of 28. HUSKIES standards are reflected in the report card as two behavior targets. HUSKIES are assessed and reported twice a year in the elementary school.

### **New Building Plans**

#### **a) Expanding the Sapporo Campus Building**

Since the last self-study and visit the school has seen a growth in student enrolment in the secondary program. This has placed additional stresses on the capacity of the current school building (Sapporo). A process to expand the building to a point where it would double the school's size was initiated by the school with input from various stakeholders. Initial plans to locate the building on the north side of the campus had to be reconsidered when it became apparent that the shadow such a structure would cast would be in violation of local laws. Relocating an expansion to the opposite side of the campus has run into an access problem due to neighboring properties that the school would have to negotiate purchase of in order to receive approval to build. Plans are currently on hold until negotiations can be initiated by the school's lawyer.

#### **b) New Dormitory Building**

The school's original dormitory building was built by the Government of Hokkaido as a home for students needing an international education but who lived beyond commuting distance to Sapporo. The dorm is restricted to students from grades 6-12, with priority given to students attending HIS Niseko. In February 2015, the HIS Executive Board considered the benefits of initially renting an additional dorm building to support the growth of the secondary program. In August 2015, the school added a second (off-campus, rented) dormitory to allow for a large number of new male student applicants. This enabled HIS to maintain a dormitory population of 20 - despite the fact that the number of female boarders had dropped to 6 residents. The benefits of adding the second dorm were fully realized in 2016-2017 when the total dorm population reached 30 - again with only 6 female students. As the original dormitory, could only accommodate a maximum of 10 boys, the new dorm allowed the school to accept 13 students who would otherwise have been turned away. The growth in the number of boarders prompted the administration and Executive Board to initiate a dormitory building expansion project to double the on-campus residential program to 40 students. Again, a number of stakeholders were involved in the conceptual design. The building project began construction in January 2018 and will conclude before the reopening of school in August 2018. The school's investments will be drawn upon to cover the costs of the project.

In addition, the school notes a number of facilities improvements it has undertaken to ensure the buildings are operational and safe. They also note a number of technology upgrades including the installation of hallway security cameras and the purchase of the Alma Student Information System to replace PowerSchool.

**Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.**

The school completed its previous self-study and visit in April 2012, with a total of 7 identified **critical areas for follow-up** that included a revised action plan. The school subsequently formalized a more detailed action plan in order to address each of the following critical areas identified by the WASC Visiting Committee in 2012.

**1: Further develop, articulate and communicate a vertically aligned, standards based P-12 curriculum to inform assessment and instruction building on existing curriculum.**

The school has taken some steps to address the articulation, communication and vertical alignment of the curriculum. This includes the adoption of various standards, learning targets, the development of a new assessment policy and revised report cards for both elementary and secondary schools that reflect the school's declared intention and initial steps towards standards-based grading. The decision to adopt a Reggio inspired Early Years program for the 2017-18 academic year has been supported through focused professional development and recruitment, and offers general alignment to the requirements of the IPC. However, the Visiting Committee notes that the school has yet to complete a vertical alignment and articulation of the taught curriculum from Early Years through Grade 12, which was identified as a critical area for follow up in 2012.

**2: Systematic analysis of assessment data to inform curriculum development and instructional practices.**

The school has implemented a process and designated individuals that include the school's Curriculum Committee, IPC Coordinator, IMYC Coordinator, and the Principal to systematically collect student learning data through its PSAT and MAP testing and present this information to faculty and parents.

**3: Develop and implement a clear set of expected instructional practices based on research and the needs of students at Hokkaido International School.**

The school has implemented Lesson Study professional development training, facilitated some peer learning observations and encouraged teachers to identify and share effective instructional practices. There has been school-sponsored professional development in Singapore Math as well as Reading and Writing/Units of Study. Two documents listing best instructional practices for teachers have been produced.

**4: Provide a coordinated system of student support services that address all student needs in support of student learning.**

The switch to the WIDA framework for assessing ELL needs in 2016-17 is intended to foster consistency in instructional practices for ELL students. Furthermore, the school continues to support all new teachers with an abridged version of ELL in the Mainstream training. An Academic Coaching program has been introduced 3 days a week in the secondary school to support students manage their workloads and maintain progress. The Visiting Committee notes the issue of not having an appropriate counsellor to provide college guidance and socio-emotional support for all students, has been consistently raised by students, parents and teachers.

## **5: Develop systems for assessing and reporting the HUSKIES (formerly called the Transdisciplinary Skills and Dispositions (TADS)).**

The school has a set of 28 standards for character development known as the HUSKIES. At the secondary level, students are required to complete a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP) with evidence of meeting a minimum of 14 of these standards. Special HUSKIES days have been introduced to support student-understanding and use of the HUSKIES. There are HUSKIES behavior standards, which are assessed by each subject teacher on new report cards.

## **6: Enhance communication systems, inclusive of all stakeholders, to support student learning and more broadly the curricular and co-curricular programs, and other community information.**

Building off the branding project initiated in 2013, the school has reorganized its website and developed stronger communication/information systems with parents. This includes both a daily and a weekly online newsletter, and promotional videos that highlight i) the school experience and ii) celebrate the school's upcoming 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There has been a determined effort on behalf of the school's administration to ensure important decisions are made with teacher input. The expanded Curriculum Committee, and its work on developing a new schoolwide assessment policy, is one example of this. The work of the Child Protection Committee who developed a new annual Code of Conduct is another.

## **7: Ensure an adequate strategy for redrafting the Action Plan and developing structures for monitoring progress in a systematic, timely manner.**

The Visiting Committee for the 2015 Mid-Cycle report recommended the school to address the pace and scope of school changes by extending the timeline for the implementation of action plan items and associated initiatives. The school was also required to add further detail to the action plan initiatives to include ongoing training, support and reflection. The Visiting Committee identified the need for the school to take the necessary time to thoughtfully and collaboratively implement new programs. This included setting manageable timelines, ongoing support and the clear communication of rationales. To this end, the Curriculum Action Plan was linked directly to 2015 mid-cycle visit recommendations and the 2018-24 action plan purposely built with several check-in points for reflection and redrafting. There is evidence of data gathering and reflection regarding differentiation, multi-age instruction and ELL strategies.

## **Chapter III: Self-Study Process**

### **The involvement and collaboration of all staff and other stakeholders to support student achievement**

HIS initially began this self-study in the fall of 2016 with the student and community profile. Further work took place during a full-day retreat in April 2017 with the Curriculum Committee, which was also the WASC Leadership team. This enabled WASC focus group chairs to be identified and a self-study timeline to be developed. In August 2017, the self-study home and focus groups began meeting. The self-study was completed at the end of March 2018 in preparation for the visit scheduled 6-11 May 2018. The Visiting Committee notes that the shorter than normal timeframe for the Focus Groups and Home Groups to carry out the a fuller investigation may have impacted the quality of self-reflection.

The school followed the protocols and guidelines of the WASC Focus on Learning (International) 2014. A WASC Self-Study Coordinator was appointed and subsequently managed the self-study. The school's Curriculum Committee along with the school's Executive Board Chair assumed the role of the WASC

Leadership Team. A detailed timeline for the self-study was produced and documentation created and stored using Google Drive. In spring 2017 chairs were selected from the curriculum/leadership team to lead the following self-study home groups: Curriculum Team, Executive Board, Elementary Team, Secondary team, Dormitory Team, Parent Teacher Association, and Office Staff. In the fall of 2017 focus groups were established for (A) Organization for Student Learning, (B) Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, (C) Support for Personal and Academic Growth, and (D) Resource Management and Development. Again, members of the school's curriculum/leadership team took on the roles of chair and chief writer. Drawing on the work of the focus groups, the following action plan groups were formed in January 2018 to draft the respective sections of the school's next action plan: (1) School Systems Processes, (2) Schoolwide Resource Plan, (3) Character/Leadership Service, (4) Academic Rigor.

It is clear to the visiting committee that the school's Self-Study Coordinator has used the WASC self-study manual to structure and complete the self-study process and report. There is evidence to suggest the school has sought the involvement of various stakeholders at certain points during the process.

**The clarification and measurement of what all students should know, understand, and be able to do through schoolwide learner outcomes and academic standards**

HIS has an established set of Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (ESLRs), which they refer to as HUSKIES. There are 7 designated elements to the HUSKIES, each of which has 4 descriptors. It was clear to the Visiting Committee that the HUSKIES are evident across the school and frequently referenced by teachers and students in all divisions. They are clearly visible in promotional posters, school publications including the community handbook and the weekly Husky Express Newsletter, as well as the school's website. The HUSKIES are also incorporated into unit planning templates, assessment practices and report cards.

In the secondary school, students are required to complete a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP), which includes the curation of artefacts from their personal and educational lives combined with a series of self-reflections. Over the course of 4 years in the secondary school each student is required to demonstrate their character growth through the accomplishment of a minimum of 14 HUSKIES standards. In the elementary school the HUSKIES are assessed twice yearly on semester report cards.

**Honest Learners and Leaders who**

- Manage their lives with integrity
- Make ethical and moral choices
- Are self-motivated and self-directed
- Set high standards

**Understanding Collaborators who**

- Contribute to the betterment of groups
- Analyze, evaluate and synthesize information
- Work well with diverse individuals and situations
- Actively participate in service

**Solution Creators who**

- Persevere
- Self-reflect
- Demonstrate resilience and flexibility
- Strive for innovation

**Knowledgeable Thinkers who**

- Show curiosity and interest in their world
- Are confident and explore new experiences
- Demonstrate purposeful creativity
- Use multiple resources for research

**Internationally Minded Citizens who**

Display courtesy and respect for themselves and others  
 Transfer knowledge and skills to real world situations  
 Are caring stewards of their own and the global environment  
 Understand cultural and personal differences

**Effective communicators who**

Actively and empathetically listen, speak, and discuss  
 Read and write critically and effectively  
 Purposefully use technology  
 Express themselves through the arts

**Socially and Personally Responsible Individuals who**

Take ownership for their identity and actions  
 Demonstrate reliability and commitment  
 Manage personal resources  
 Pursue physical and mental health

**The analysis of data about students and student achievement**

The self-study report indicates that HIS has collected a variety of student achievement data from the past 3 years. Appropriate steps to disaggregate this data have been taken. However, the Visiting Committee recognizes that general trend data over an extended period of time can be a challenge in small schools, particularly where student retention rates fluctuate. The HIS community has attempted to collect and present a range of data points in order to better understand its community and the learning landscape across the school. Parent and teacher survey data generally triangulated with the self-study insights.

**The assessment of the entire school program and its impact on student learning in relation to the schoolwide learner outcomes, academic standards, and ACS WASC criteria**

The HIS community has completed the self-study process and produced a comprehensive report in compliance with the WASC guidelines and requirements. There is a detailed and well-organized inventory of artefacts, documents and data to suggest the school has undertaken a sufficient assessment of its programs. The school has worked towards a comprehensive assessment of its program relative to student learning, its schoolwide learning results, academic standards and the WASC criteria. Accordingly, the school has identified appropriate areas of strength and areas for growth across the full school program.

**The alignment of a long-range action plan to the school's areas of need; the capacity to implement and monitor the accomplishment of the plan.**

The self-study process began in October 2016. The first curriculum team 'home group' work took place at an all-day workshop on Saturday 1 April 2017 followed by a second all-day home-group workshop in August. Focus Groups did not commence work until late November 2017. In terms of compliance, the school has produced a structured action plan with an appropriate amount of content. It includes 4 broad areas for growth: (1) School Systems Processes, (2) Schoolwide Resource Plan, (3) Character/Leadership Service, (4) Academic Rigor. From the Visiting Committee's perspective, there is some uncertainty in terms of the action plan's alignment and congruence with the findings of the self-study.

The Visiting Committee remains uncertain about the school's capacity to effectively implement and monitor the accomplishment of the action plan. This is due to a lack of clear and agreed upon decision-making structures across the school. Nevertheless, the school's action plan is appropriately structured, sufficiently

detailed and includes the identification not only of responsibilities and resources, but also the mechanisms needed to monitor progress and accomplishment.

## **Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program - What Currently Exists?**

### **Category A: Organization for Student Learning**

#### **A1. School Purpose**

A key issue identified in the 2012 WASC accreditation visit was the need for the school's vision statement to be revised and promoted. HIS has taken this further and developed Foundational School Statements that clearly define the mission, vision and learning statements. The school has further developed a 'purpose statement' following on from the WASC accreditation process in 2012. The school's purpose statement was included in 2015 with the intention to help 'guide future school improvement and strategic planning.' It was developed as part of a rebranding exercise begun by an external contractor. The purpose statement is evident in the school's proposed Action Plan 2018-2024. All Foundational Statements are readily available to the community through the school website, publications such as the Husky Express, and parent coffee mornings.

In response to a further key issue identified in the previous WASC visit, HIS reviewed its Transdisciplinary Dispositions and Skills (TADS) approach to student learning outcomes and replaced these with a new set of learner outcomes called HUSKIES. The development of the HUSKIES has been embraced by the school and is a driving force towards enhancing global competencies and strengthening the school's educational program. The school's inclusion of the Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP), based on the HUSKIES, continues to reflect its commitment to a school profile centered on global citizenship with real world experience. The HUSKIES address the previous WASC visiting team recommendation to have student learning outcomes assessed and reported.

The HIS Executive Board (EB) and staff, through a number of committees, have been integral in developing the school's foundational statements and embedding these in the school curriculum. Input from the parent community is based on a yearly survey (2017), and a follow up survey for parents wanting to be involved in the WASC process. The EB has amended its strategic policies to align with the WASC accreditation process.

#### **A2. Governance**

HIS is incorporated in Portland, Oregon, USA and registered in Japan under *Gakkohoujin* (Educational Corporation) status. The Educational Corporation requires HIS to have two boards, being the Executive Board (EB) and the Board of Councilors (BoC). HIS is a nonprofit school and its board members volunteer their services to the school. Both boards operate by a clearly defined set of Articles of Incorporation By-Laws. However, the Visiting Committee notes there is no published organizational chart.

The EB has nine members, one of whom is the elected Chairperson and two auditors. The Head of School is a member of the EB. The BoC has up to 24 members from the Hokkaido community. There are four members who serve on both committees. The makeup of the boards is required as part of the Education Corporation status.

The EB has received varying degrees of training so its members can effectively contribute as member of

the board. Staff members have been invited, on occasion, to join board training in an effort to clarify the role of the EB. During discussions with board members it was established that previously the EB attended a board retreat. This has not happened in the last two years.

The EB meets regularly and the minutes are available to the public via the school website. There is a structure in place for school initiatives to be reported to the EB via Head of School Reports and Principal Reports. From this the EB has been able to support many of the school initiatives to support learner outcomes. The EB is responsible for hiring the Head of School (HoS).

Through interviews and reviewing documentation it has been established the BoC role is to oversee the running of the school. The BoC meets twice yearly. It will review budgets, capital expenses and major school initiatives. Whilst it currently has right of veto over the EB, this is being reviewed along with the structure of both the boards to create more consistency in school governance .

In the Spring of 2017 a new Labor-Management agreement was signed between Hokkaido International School and HIS Labor, after a group of HIS teachers took steps to establish a labor union in the school. The dichotomy of the relationship between the union and the school has added an layer of organization and potential governance that impacts the management of the school. The formal establishment of this labor union means the school is now required to comply with certain union protocols, including a collective bargaining process. During the visit the visiting team noted that union information was posted clearly in the staff room. This included the names of the union representatives as well as information on upcoming events, meetings and agenda items such as employment contracts, financial documentation and power harassment. The visiting team spoke with the union to get clarity on its purpose and how it was established. The union representatives explained clearly their process as well as confirming the union is classified as a Majority Union as more than 50% of those eligible to join it had done so. Union membership is not compulsory. Union members pay a monthly fee.

The EB issues a parent and staff survey regarding their role in the school. In responding to the statement “The community understands the executive board's role in governance (as it relates to WASC criteria and expectations).” 48% of staff stated that they disagreed with the statement, 17% strongly disagreed. This is an area the board is targeting to improve. It is in the process of developing initiatives to make explicit and clear to the HIS community the function and role of the EB and BoC. It is planned to send out each year an updated role statement for the EB to the school community and to highlight the role of the EB at the schools opening ceremony and make the community aware of the Governance page on the school website.

HIS has a Communication and Conflict Resolution Protocol that is not yet published in a school handbook. The school identifies this as a work in progress. The protocol was passed by the EB in Spring 2014.

There is an Executive Board Self Evaluation process.

### **A3. School Leadership**

HIS has an identified structure of leadership to support the Foundational Statements of the school. The school leadership is identified as the Head of School, the Principal (Sapporo Campus) and the teaching administrator (Niseko Campus). The Chair of the EB is also recognized. Although members of the Curriculum Committee are also members of the WASC leadership team, a clearly structured Senior Leadership Team could not be identified.

The school leadership and staff can call upon a number handbooks, guidelines and policies to support and guide decision making. As a process of the WASC Self Study a leadership team was identified from which

committees overseeing elements of the Self Study was formed. Meeting schedules, agenda and minutes were unavailable for the leadership team. In many circumstances there are references in the Self Study to the 'curriculum/ leadership team'. The school Curriculum Committee comprises the Principal, Niseko Campus Administrator and teacher representatives from the three sections of the school. The Self Study defined one role of the curriculum team to provide for reflection time to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative groups in promoting global competencies. The Curriculum Committee has identified a five year plan from which the direction of teaching and learning is guided. The further creation of nine teaching and learning goals that are based in current research and identify successful implementation through student and teacher outcomes, supports the five year plan.

The school is in the process of developing an employment handbook that should assist in centralizing all defined responsibilities and practices. HIS has identified developing job descriptions as a defined goal. The school uses a number of communication platforms. The leadership publishes both weekly and daily updates to keep staff informed and current about school operations and events. The school calendar is published on the website as well as being available in static form in the Parent and Student Community Handbook.

The HIS leadership is committed to participation and accountability to student learning within an environment of collaboration. The introduction of Lesson Study is a good example of this commitment. The Lesson Study protocol builds learning networks within HIS based on 'improving teaching skills and the academic performance of students.' Another significant factor indicating the commitment of HIS leadership to shared accountability is the allocated time in the school timetable on Wednesdays to work in various collaborative groupings. These are calendared for the entire school year. From this structure staff have had access to numerous committees such as curriculum, student safety, and buildings and grounds. The extent of some staff collaboration is evident when reviewing the HIS Collaboration document. There is inconsistency in the recording or meeting of some curriculum groups. All HIS staff in 2015-16 were given the opportunity for professional development in assessment and standards based learning. From which an Assessment Review Committee was formed. In 2017-18 the Assessment Review Committee published the template for standards based reporting.

Whilst the school has developed its WASC Action Plan, a Curriculum Committee 5 year plan, and proposed a Strategic Planning committee, there is no evidence to indicate individuals who are responsible for the overall direction of the school, aligning policies and procedures to assist in guiding continuity and the level of sustainability needed to benefit student learning.

#### **A4. Staff**

The school currently employ 30 teachers, 27 of which hold full teaching credentials. 16 of 30 staff hold Master degrees; and 3 staff are classified as qualified in their field. From the focus group meetings staff reported situations where they have been required to teach in subject areas where they are not certified and without additional professional development or training.

HIS has identified employment descriptors that are available through the school website. Hiring guidelines have been drafted and adopted in December 2017. These have not been included in the self-study. The current (2015-16) staff profiles are published via the school website. The school has indicated the level of expertise of staff as part of these staff profiles, for each division. The school uses The International Educator (TIE) online and the school website for recruitment.

All incoming teachers are required to submit a background check (when coming from countries where these are available) or sign off on a background check through the McDowell Agency, an agency that has a

contract with the Japan Council of International Schools. Incoming teachers who cannot provide the school with an equivalent child protection certificated experience, are required to undergo online child protection training through the *Darkness to Light* organization, which provides a two-hour training session on child protection. Certificates are issued electronically upon completion. The school's recruitment and hiring process requires all new employees to supply a letter of clearance (criminal/ child protection) from the current employer.

Each year all new employees to HIS are provided with an orientation program and the New Teacher Orientation Handbook. Teaching staff who are joining the AP program can access PD specifically the program they are teaching. The recruitment process and on boarding to HIS is guided by the Hiring Checklists that confirms each staff is qualified and appropriate for their assigned position. HIS has a Code of Conduct and a HIS Student & Staff Protection Policy & Protocol.

The professional development program as reflected in the Professional Development Experiences document reflects the school leadership's commitment in this area. Highlighting this commitment are initiatives such as the introduction of Lesson Study; and training all new staff 'Teaching ELL in the Mainstream', and attendance at the annual EARCOS leadership conference.

The school has in place the HIS Professional Observation and Evaluation process to promote professional growth of staff in 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and thinking. The observation and evaluation process is based on the Danielson Framework. Teachers establish personal growth goals in teaching and learning that 'best support individuals and the overall faculty in professional growth.' Further reference to specifically reflect the development of global competencies in the students would align with the WASC criteria and the schools Foundational Statements.

## **A5. School Environment**

The school building and grounds are kept clean and hygienic and school cleaners were visible throughout the school day.

The school has in place some systems to focus on child protection and has taken steps towards strengthening the campuses' safety and security. There has been an increased focus on Child Protection, which is consistent with the WASC Focus on Learning (2017). For example, the school has identified student and staff toilets on the first and second floors at the Sapporo Campus. The handicap toilet is the identified staff toilet on the Niseko campus.

The school has an Emergency Handbook that was recently updated to include 'Missile Attack'. There are guidelines and responsibilities for all listed and appropriate scenarios. The handbook does not include any evacuation maps or diagrams to assist the emergency management process. Some signage at the Sapporo Campus was evident to direct evacuation procedures.

From interviews with staff it was established that training in first aid at both campuses has been provided for some staff, particularly those on the Niseko Campus. Those staff involved in the outdoor education program maintain their own qualifications. A register of who is trained and to what level could not be established. There is no nurse on site at either campus.

The school introduced Virtues Project (2013-14) as its character development program. This then lead to the development of the HUSKIES student outcomes and the integration of the CDGP in the high school. HIS has set high expectations that are measurable. Within the ES, the school is measuring twice yearly the

HUSKIES to ensure the commitment to high expectations is school wide. The high school offers Academic Coaching sessions throughout the school year on a regular basis.

There exists multiple opportunities for student recognition across the school. The ES has both a monthly student run assembly, in which student learning is highlighted and a weekly Virtues Award. The MS HS has a yearly Student Awards program that honors exemplary students. The awards are nominated and voted on by staff. The Virtues program is still very evident in the school, especially in the elementary division.

## **A6. Reporting Student Progress**

Referring to the Self Study the school identifies the use of data to support change in the organization, professional development and resource allocation. In 2017 HIS implemented standards based reporting in the secondary school. The use of the Alma reporting platform was introduced in secondary school to support the standards based reporting, replacing the previous PowerSchool platform. This reporting system is linked to the HUSKIES student learning outcomes. The system was introduced to staff in May 2017 and rolled out for August 2017. ES introduced the Common Core standards for Literacy and Mathematics, (NGSS) Science and (AERO) Social Studies for reporting in 2015. This current reporting format will be maintained and no indication has been given for the move to the Alma system. In the Early Years (EY) division reports are issued twice yearly. The first semester is based on the HUSKIES and the second semester is based on the British Association of Early Childhood Education categories.

HIS has an Assessment Policy which provides a philosophy statement for assessment. The policy includes 'Monitoring of Assessment' though there is no supporting information in this section. In 2017 HIS implemented standards based reporting in the high school. A reporting system is linked to the HUSKIES for ES and MSHS though in different formats and reporting systems. The reports are semester based for the whole school. An EY portfolio is part of the assessment process and cited in the Self Study. HIS has utilized a number of standardized tests to support a results driven process. The MAP assessment scores to guide further learning support purchases (e.g. noredink.com). This has allowed the focus in MSHS to be on individualized reading, writing and grammar skills. The AP results are identified as guiding teacher professional development, and supporting student study skills. In the ES, DRA and Running Records are used to monitor reading growth. All ES students are individually assessed each spring in these two formats. HIS has introduced WIDA testing this academic year. The ELL teachers are very positive about the benefits to student learning this will provide. WIDA is assessed for the ELL students twice yearly.

## **A7. School Improvement Process**

HIS has developed the WASC aligned school wide 6 year Action Plan (2018-2024). The Action plan identifies four key areas to facilitate school improvement at HIS (School Systems and Processes, Academic Rigor, Character/ Leadership/ Service and a School Wide Resource Plan). The key areas are consistent with the schools Purpose Statement that was developed in 2015. The inclusion of School Systems and Processes is seen as key to the 'trickle down' effect that is intended to contribute consistency, clarity and unified direction in the organization.

The School Wide Resource Plan is focused on a very diverse range of key areas that include both human resources and the physical resources of the school. Whilst success is stated as a plan in place, breaking the School Wide Resource Plan into more specific sections will assist in more manageable metrics to assess effectiveness.

HIS has a number of planning structures in place and between the strategic plan of the EB and the Curriculum Committee, Branding Committee the focus of the school is based on enhancing quality learning for all students.

The HIS Curriculum Committee Action Plan is founded on student learning outcomes as identified for the student population. The ten (10) goals are though not based on the analysis of student achievement data about critical learner needs, appear to fit the current needs of students. Goal Five is focused upon making more data informed decisions more effective at HIS.

The introduction of the AP Capstone Program in 2017-18 is reflective of the school supporting an increasingly rigorous academic program. The program is aligned with the HIS Vision Statement and was introduced based on data from the Self Study. During the process the need for increased independent, critical thinking was identified in the self-study process and the Capstone Program provides this student centered focus.

The Self Study stated the school has an existing collaborative planning process to guide school improvement. Evidence suggests that whilst some planning is evident, a collaborative planning process to guide school improvement is not visible.

### **Areas of Strength – Section A: Organization for Student Learning**

1. HIS has developed a strong philosophy for the school through its Foundational School statements. These have been developed around a changing educational environment and focused on improving student learning and developing global citizens.
2. The Visiting Committee has been impressed by how embedded the HUSKIES have become as a definition of student learning outcomes at HIS. These have been taken up across the school and are integral in much of the schools day to day life.
3. The staff at HIS has a shown a strong commitment to introducing initiatives to school, based on improving student learning. The staff are active in supporting professional development aligned with these initiatives. The school's commitment to collaboration is a further example of this.
4. HIS, through the focus on student voice and student agency, has developed an environment whereby the student body feel valued and safe to express themselves. Through interviews, conversations and the Student Council focus group, it has been made obvious HIS students are thoughtful and independent.
5. HIS - Niseko is building a strong community. The school is staffed by committed and enthusiastic teachers who are building the school's brand. Niseko has been able to increase student numbers in the last three years from increased positive exposure and interaction with the local community.
6. HIS has been proactive in beginning to address the requirements for Child Protection in Focus on Learning (2017). The establishment of a Child Protection Team and reviewing of new indicators will support a safe school environment for students and staff.

### **Areas of growth – Section A: Organization for Student Learning**

1. The 2012 Visiting Committee Report identified as a key area to follow up the progress to streamline governance at HIS. In the current Self Study this has again appeared as an area of focus for teachers, parents, and board members. The lack of alignment and clarity of roles and responsibilities has been established from the respective surveys; the parent focus group; and interviews with current staff and Executive Board (EB) members. It is recommended that the Head of School and Executive Board develop a whole school organizational chart that includes governance, teaching and administration staff; and a clearly defined set of key responsibilities for all governance. It is recommended that this document be made available to the HIS community.
2. HIS has identified in the Action Plan 2018-2024 (School Wide Resource Plan) the task to develop a school wide Strategic Plan that emanates from the Foundational Statements. Currently the Strategic Plan is tasked to a committee from the EB. The Visiting Committee recommends the Head of School lead the Strategic Plan committee, to develop a school wide Strategic Plan, including input from all representative of the whole HIS community.
3. As HIS moves into its next WASC Accreditation cycle it will be required to have an increased focus on and alignment to Child Protection with the guidelines of WASC Focus On Learning (2017). The HIS Child Protection committee is recommended to develop a handbook to support student and staff safety that includes policy; identify procedures; provide consistent yearly training for all employees and new teachers at orientation; strengthen recruitment process for external, internal and contract employees; and conduct a risk assessment of the school campuses.
4. HIS could benefit from putting into place a Senior Leadership Team from which the work of committees; professional development opportunities and initiatives; and continual school improvement would be aligned with student learning needs.

## **Evidence Reviewed**

Teacher interviews, student interviews, parent interviews, board member interviews, focus group meetings, lesson observations, List of Things Done (2011-2018), End of Year Awards, HIS Reads Rubrics, CDGP Student Example, Communication and Conflict Resolution Protocol, Communications Protocol, Daily Updates, Emailing Best Practices, Husky Express, Monday Memo, Parent Coffee Mornings, Action Plan (Curriculum Committee) 2015-2018, HIS Curricular Commitments, Executive Board Minutes, Executive Board Parent Survey, Executive Board Strategic Policies, Executive Board Teacher Survey, Community Handbook 2017-2018, Emergency Handbook, PD Handbook, School website, Teacher Orientation Handbook (2017), Articles of Incorporation Assessment Policy change in 2016-2017 Budget Planning Process at HIS, By-Laws, Code of Conduct, Conflict Resolution at HIS, Conflict Resolution Protocol, Documentation - transition from TADS to HUSKIES, Guidelines, Office, Parent, Parent Follow-up Survey Results January 2018, Student Survey Results June 2017, Lesson Study Adaptations, Curriculum Committee 2017~2018, Curriculum Committee 2016~2017, Curriculum Committee Action Plan 2015~2018, Executive Board Minutes, Full Faculty Team Meetings, Hisses Monday Meeting Minutes, Secondary Team Meetings, Wednesday Collaboration Planning

## **Category B: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**

### **B1. What Students Learn**

## **Current Educational Research and Thinking**

HIS is making progress towards providing students with a standards-based curriculum based upon externally developed research based standards from a variety of sources, including the International Primary Curriculum, the International Middle Years Curriculum, the AERO/Common Core standards, ACTFL, and ICHPER. Evidence from the self-study indicates that HIS staff regularly participate in PD.

Faculty regularly engage in professional reading, collaboration, and PD to address areas of need within the student population.

The visiting committee advises the school to clearly define their approach to the use of professional development funds through identifying key initiatives or goals for faculty learning and PD to address the greatest areas of need in addressing student growth.

## **Academic Standards for Each Area**

As noted in the self-study, HIS has made significant progress in identifying what students learn through developing a standards based reporting system PreK-12. The new reporting system includes revised report cards which began to be distributed each semester during the 2017-18 school year and differ from Elementary to Secondary based on the focus of the content and grade level.

It was evident to the visiting committee that the students at HIS have a clear understanding of the learning expectations and value their teachers and community. HIS has made significant progress in the communicating and reporting of what students learn, however there is still work to be completed in the articulation of a vertically aligned, standards based preK-12 curriculum to inform assessment and instruction. The current documentation is incomplete and does not fully align and spiral prek-12 due to inconsistent adoption of standards in Social Studies, Science, and in some of the specialist courses including modern languages and the arts. The vertical alignment is difficult to determine as HIS has not established a centralized curriculum mapping structure.

The WASC visiting committee observed some evidence of academic standards defined through learning targets in the classroom, these are displayed through posters on the walls and/or notations on the board. This is an area of focus at HIS, faculty would benefit from additional training, support, and planning time to ensure vertical and horizontal alignment. Support from administration should follow to organize and map the curriculum into one coherent reference document.

## **Embedded Global Perspectives**

Since the last WASC Self Study HIS has placed an emphasis on the integration of service learning and global perspectives into the expectations for its students through their student learner outcomes, the HUSKIES. These expectations and experiences are reported through the revised report cards in ES, MS, and HS.

In addition to reporting on the HUSKIES in the report card, HS students are required to complete a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP), which consists of a web-based portfolio that highlights their growth in 28 character standards. For each standard, a student writes an introduction, displays artifacts as evidence of achievement, and writes a goal-setting reflection. HIS Graduation Requirements stipulates that each student must complete 14 of the 28 HUSKIES standards as part of their CDGP.

Although these policies and programs are in place there is an identified inconsistency regarding the integration of global perspectives within all the curricular areas. The integration of global perspectives are valued and reported on in the core areas, yet there is still work to be completed in specialist courses.

The visiting committee was impressed with the level of knowledge students, parents, and teachers had with regard to the HUSKIES. Students are able to speak confidently about the relevancy of the HUSKIES and their work towards achieving them. Observation in classes, discussions with students and parents, and print evidence suggests a high level of understanding of the ways in which students achieve these expected outcomes. The CDGP, HIS Reads, and the Ado programs are key examples of such understanding.

Evidence, both in the self-study and observed on site, confirms significant student participation in service and leadership learning that provides students real world opportunities that reflect an understanding of global perspectives and issues. This is an identified strength that is evidenced clearly in the community.

### **Congruence**

HIS has developed standard based report cards that report on the core curricular content and makes the connection between the adopted standards, the skills, and the learning outcomes. In addition, HIS has included a Commitment Target and two Character Targets into their reporting system to separate the behavior from the academics. The Curriculum Committee is advised to evaluate the effectiveness of the new reporting system, as although HIS has separated the behavioral expectations from the academic expectations for the report cards these grades are still combined to form one grade in the official transcript. Further research on this topic will enable faculty to determine if this an effective and accurate reflection of achievement. The school recognizes that there is further work to be completed for incorporating standards based reporting into the reporting for specialist classes.

In addition to reporting on academics HS students are required to complete a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP), which consists of a web-based portfolio that highlights their growth in 28 character standards. For each standard, a student writes an introduction, displays artifacts as evidence of achievement, and writes a goal-setting reflection. HIS Graduation Requirements stipulates that each student must complete 14 of the 28 HUSKIES standards as part of their CDGP.

As stated in the previous criteria, the visiting committee was impressed with the level of knowledge students, parents, and teachers had with regard to the HUSKIES. Students are able to speak confidently about the relevancy of the HUSKIES and their work towards achieving them. Observation in classes, discussions with students and parents, and print evidence suggests a high level of understanding of the ways in which students achieve these expected outcomes. The CDGP and HIS Reads programs are key examples of such understanding.

In 2017-18, HIS began using ALMA Student Information System to replace PowerSchool. HIS utilizes Alma to track both student standards-based grades and attendance. This has been an adjustment for both students and parents, these stakeholders express an understanding of the implementation learning curve.

### **Student Work — Engagement in Learning**

HIS has implemented a standards-based assessment approach to both teaching and reporting, including the addition of reporting on the schools HUSKIES. This implementation was completed in an attempt to

directly link classroom expectations to report card statements. Emphasis has been placed on professional development for faculty to ensure the alignment of assessment and reporting. There is some evidence of the link between expectations and reporting through the development of rubrics for both content area standards and the HUSKIES. Although SBA and SBR has been implemented through Alma and report cards, this implementation does not guarantee student engagement in their learning. Further research and observation should be pursued to provide evidence of the effectiveness of SBR in increasing engagement.

Student engagement is most clearly evidenced through student participation in service and leadership development trips that take place throughout students' co-curricular activities. Students are engaged in service learning trips through the Outdoor Education Program and the Adventure Hokkaido (AdHoc), as well through opportunities to explore areas of interest in Sports, After School Activities, and a wide variety of clubs.

Although the visiting committee observed some evidence of student engagement in learning that demonstrates effective communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and real world application of knowledge, inconsistencies remain in the implementation of such expectations. The school administration is advised to continue professional development to support and expand teacher training in this area.

### **Accessibility of All Students to Curriculum**

The school offers all students curriculum that includes essential instructional strategies, differentiation, ELL inclusion in the mainstream, and online coursework to address individual student interests and needs. HIS offers a variety of arts (Visual Arts and Performing Arts) and cultural programs to all levels of the school through art, music, Japanese, and PE/movement coursework. In High School all students have access to Honors level coursework, as well as the opportunity to take a variety of AP courses.

The middle school and high school offers learning activities at tiered-levels: honors, standard, developing, and ELL. Students voluntarily choose which level they would like to pursue within their courses based on the stated expectations for each tier.

The visiting committee commends the school for its work towards addressing student needs through the tiered level approach and recommends the school furthers the exploration of addressing student needs through a differentiated approach to classroom learning in place of the tiered level system.

The visiting committee suggests the Curriculum Committee further investigate the appropriateness of the AP courses on offer given the needs and interests of the HIS student population.

In elementary school a workshop model approach is utilized in teaching reading and writing, allowing for differentiation based on individual student progress. The After School Activities program provides ES students with the opportunity to explore their interests outside of school. In Middle School and High School there are a great deal of opportunities for students to pursue curricular and co-curricular pursuits based on their own individual interests and needs.

In High School students with interests outside the courses offered at HIS are permitted to study online (up to two credits toward graduation in grades 11 and 12). In addition, students engaged in outside athletics and/or careers are able to apply for an "Aspiring Athletes and Careers Agreement". This agreement allows students to pursue activities that take them out of class for more than the allowed 20% absence policy.

Generally, After School Activities and the sports offered are provided free of charge to HIS families. This is popular amongst families and the school has noted this preference in the Self Study. The WASC visiting

committee observed, through parent and student interaction with the committee, general satisfaction with the After School Activities and sports programs offered.

The school has stated a commitment to teaching and learning for all students. In high school this includes an established process for intervening when students struggle. This intervention plan is evidenced by a defined Academic Support Plan where teachers refer students of concern to Academic Coaching during office hours or with the Academic Coach. In addition to this process students of concern are discussed at team meetings to gain some consensus on what the needs are. Although this process responds to student needs as they occur, evidence during the visit suggests a more proactive approach to addressing student learning support be employed.

In regard to mental health needs of students the school has identified the need to establish resourcing for and scheduling of support. HIS has identified their desire to have a counselor on staff at the school, through student and parent interactions the visiting committee concurs that this is an identified need that should be addressed for welfare of the student population.

It is evident from the self-study that professional development opportunities for all faculty to ensure the needs of all students are being addressed. The school is moving to adopt the WIDA framework to further refine their policies and procedures for entrance and exiting of ELL students.

### **Acceptable Student Achievement**

Student Achievement at HIS is measured through formative, summative, and external assessments. The divisions work within grade levels, departments, commonly taught courses, or Lesson Study groups in their collaborative Wednesday morning meetings to examine either student learning, or educational issues or approaches.

External assessments include MAP, SAT, PSAT, and AP exams. Given student performance on external assessments and their success in post graduate pursuits indicates a high level of student achievement and success. MAP Scores at HIS in Language Usage and Math generally show HIS students are outperforming the global mean and achieving their anticipated growth. The MAP Reading assessment has been identified as an area for growth given the MAP scores compared to the MAP scores in Language Usage and Math.

Particularly given the ELL population and the wide variety of identified Lexile levels the school intends to include reading instruction as a priority moving forward. The school has also identified that further PD will focus the use of the MAP data to guide differentiation and general classroom instruction to address particular areas of identified need.

SAT scores at HIS have consistently been within the average range of performance based on worldwide expectations. Beginning in the 2015-16 school year HIS will require all 11th grade students to sit for the PSAT exam as a precursor to taking the SAT exam. Given the PSAT was only implemented recently there is not enough evidence to provide conclusions regarding student performance. HIS has identified an interest in introducing the PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10 into their testing regime to increase student familiarity with the assessment structure and to identify areas for growth and student focus.

HIS students generally have performed above the global mean in AP exams, yet scores have maintained relatively flat over the years. The school has identified in the self-study a desire to examine the possibility of reworking the school schedule to allow for more time for AP coursework, as currently AP classes meet the same amount of minutes as standard level courses. In addition, the school noted in the self-study

consideration of limiting enrollment into AP classes to include only those students who are planning on taking the exam.

### **Integration Among Disciplines**

HIS has adopted the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) in the Elementary School and the International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) in the Middle School. There is still work to be completed to align the IPC and IMYC to the adopted Common Core standards. In the Early Years (EY) of the ES HIS has implemented a Reggio approach to student learning, currently there is ongoing consideration to layering the approach into the greater ES curriculum. Through an examination of the Reggio approach and how it connects to the IPC the EY teacher and the MP1 team are satisfied that the two approaches are aligned.

The IPC and IMYC encourages cross curricular connections through thematic units in both the ES and MS. An area of growth in this integration is to document the scope and sequence for the units in ES and MS, linking these units of study to the adopted standards. The HIS high school social studies and literature classes have been developed around common themes. These themes include reading choices in literature that reinforce and/or address the common themes, eras, and geography of the culture being studied in social studies. The integration between the social studies and literature classes is well documented and clearly defined in the units of study for Grades 9 and 10.

HIS has implemented a Wednesday morning collaborative time for teachers of common subjects to plan and support each other in curriculum matters, including sharing of new approaches to enhance student learning.

### **Curricular Review, Revision, and Evaluation**

Currently HIS does not have a curriculum review cycle defined. The lack of such a review cycle, combined with the absence of curriculum mapping adds difficulty to maintaining consistency in the review, revision, and evaluation of curriculum. The Curriculum Committee is aware of this and has identified the need to establish a curriculum review cycle in the Self Study documentation.

### **Collaborative Work**

HIS has created a variety of times for focusing on collaborative work. Every Wednesday morning there is collaborative meeting time scheduled for teams to meet to plan. In the Elementary school this collaboration takes place through the Milepost 1, 2, and 3 structure as defined with the IPC. In the Middle School teams meet in collaboration with the ELL staff to revise and plan their curriculum and assessments. In the HS the meeting time is not as clearly defined as the other divisions given the subject area specifics of the courses and the subject specific nature of the courses with only one teacher often teaching in a department.

HIS provided in-house PD and introduced the Lesson Study practice to increase collaborative planning, this practice includes teams in the Middle School and Elementary School that meet to design units and assessments.

### **Policies — Rigorous, Relevant, Coherent Curriculum**

HIS Policies regarding course completion, credits, grades, homework, that guide student progression through the program are clearly defined in the school's Assessment Policy and the Community Handbook,

as well as in course syllabi provided by individual teachers. Continuing work is still to be completed on defining common standards based rubrics and assessments to ensure clear expectations and guidelines about curriculum, instruction, and assessment can be provided to students.

The administration provides annual reports detailing the key indicators of student success in the identified curriculum, this data includes: university matriculation data, AP score data, PSAT scores, SAT scores, MAP scores, co-curricular involvement, as well as ELL reports to the executive board and publishes this information to the community through the school's website.

Although the administration provides reports to the parent community it was clear to the visiting committee through discussions with the parent community that there is a general lack of knowledge of curriculum expectations, how and why changes to the curriculum are made, and the role of the executive board in school governance.

Evidence observed indicates there is a lack of clarity around the role and purpose of the executive board. The school is advised to consider how to increase communication with parents regarding the governance structure of HIS, and reasoning and justification behind changes implemented at HIS.

### **Articulation and Follow-up Studies**

HIS does not have data from student follow-up studies to provide insight to the effectiveness of the instruction in the preparation of students for pursuing further education, entering the workforce, or meeting their personal goals. This is an area of growth the school has identified in the self-study report. HIS plans to implement alumni follow-up surveys and outreach to begin with the 2018-2024 Action Plan.

## **B2. How Students Learn**

### **Research-based Knowledge**

HIS provides faculty and staff PD specific to school identified programs and initiatives in instructional methodology that are research-based. This is evidenced through the adoption of and training in Reggio Emilia, Singapore Math, Literacy, Metacognition, Lesson Study, standards-based grading, ELL in the mainstream, essential instructional practices, IPC, IMYC, and service learning.

As part of implementation of research-based instructional methods HIS will begin using WIDA testing and framework for ELL students and programming. A 3-day WIDA workshop will be held to train all faculty during Orientation Week to ensure a viable, successful implementation process.

Ongoing PD is offered to sustain adopted programs and initiatives. This is evidenced through PD days scheduled into the school calendar to support Lesson Study, ELL in the mainstream (TESMC), and Google Apps training; as well as providing external PD in Singapore Math, Reggio Emilia, Reading and Writing, Service Learning, Metacognition, IPC, and IMYC training.

In addition, HIS has implemented AP coursework to offer additional options for students to pursue higher level coursework. This is evidence by subject specific training is provided to all AP teachers prior to them teaching the AP courses they are assigned to teach. This included the adoption of the AP Capstone courses and the training of the teachers to teach the coursework.

Moving forward the evidence observed and discussed during the visit suggests a need for clarification of priorities and focused funding for PD to support school wide initiatives or goals that address the needs of

all students. This is an area the school administration should clarify moving forward to guarantee continued teacher success in meeting student needs.

## **Planning Processes**

Through the planning processes at HIS, students are presented with a curriculum and program of study which seeks to engage all students in their learning by effectively assessing the academic standards and the HUSKIES.

As part of the planning process teachers are expected to use formative assessment to provide students feedback on their progress and identify areas that they need to improve on before completing the summative assessment.

The Curriculum Committee and grade level teams develop scope and sequence for grade clusters. Teachers meet collaboratively in Mileposts in elementary or in like-subject areas in secondary to work together with the intent to map the curriculum in scope and sequence, plan formative assignments, rubrics, and assessments. Teacher teams are continuing to develop rubrics.

The WASC visiting team advises that the mapping of the curriculum be extended vertically, in addition to horizontally and in grade clusters, to ensure the scope and sequence goes beyond the individual teams. In addition, further and continuing articulation of consistent p-12 standards is needed to ensure proper scaffolding of skills and content is in place.

## **Professional Collaboration**

HIS administrators and teachers collaborate to examine curriculum and student work during their Lesson Study groups which were initiated during the 2016-17 school year. HIS Lesson Study groups investigate ways to improve teaching and learning through regular meetings. This is evidenced through the Wednesday Collaborative Meeting schedule. The school administration is advised to structure opportunities for curriculum teams to meet periodically in vertical teams to examine the scope and sequence, as well as the articulation of standards p-12.

## **Professional Development**

HIS provides faculty and staff PD specific to school identified programs and initiatives in instructional methodology that are research-based. HIS provides a yearly professional development stipends for all faculty to use on professional learning.

This is evidenced through the adoption of and training in Reggio Emilia, Singapore Math, Literacy, Metacognition, Lesson Study, standards-based grading, ELL in the mainstream, essential instructional practices, IPC, IMYC, and service learning.

As part of implementation of research-based instructional methods HIS will begin using WIDA testing and framework for ELL students and programming. A 3-day WIDA workshop will be held to train all faculty during Orientation Week to ensure a viable, successful implementation process.

Ongoing PD is offered to sustain adopted programs and initiatives. This is evidenced through PD days scheduled into the school calendar to support Lesson Study, ELL in the mainstream (TESMC), and Google Apps training; as well as providing external PD in Singapore Math, Reggio Emilia, Reading and Writing, Service Learning, Metacognition, IPC, and IMYC training.

In addition, HIS has implemented AP coursework, faculty are sent to subject specific training prior to them teaching the AP courses they are assigned to teach. This most recently has included AP Capstone training.

Although much PD is offered and pursued, the visiting committee advises the school to clearly define their approach to the use of professional development funds through identifying key multi-year initiatives or goals for faculty learning and PD to address the greatest areas of need in addressing student growth. Further, the decisions for what is funded and who attends PD should be driven by its relevance to the school wide identified initiatives and the needs of the students.

### **Challenging and Varied Instructional Strategies**

The school is working towards further integration a variety of instructional strategies into their practice to engage students in critical thinking, problem solving, knowledge acquisition, application of learning, technological skills.

HIS teachers report using a variety of instructional strategies to assess students based on Honors, Standard, or Developing levels. This tiered level of assessment does not allow for proper differentiation. The self-study indicates teachers also report utilizing technology through teaching tools such as Google Docs, NoRedInk, Albert.io in order to engage students in group writing, group interaction, and peer review. As well, as promoting digital literacy in student learning and applying what they learn in authentic situations. In Elementary school the focus is on developing technological literacy in the core subjects. In Secondary school students apply the use of technology to projects and participate in online learning platforms.

Although there is evidence of the use of technology teaching tools, evidence of a variety of instructional techniques and engagement were not consistently demonstrated in classroom observations by the visiting committee. Continued focus on increasing the repertoire of teaching strategies and approaches is advised to more actively engage students in their learning.

### **Technological Integration**

HIS values the use of technology integration with the classroom and has implemented a Bring Your Own Device program in the Middle School and High School to assist in student development of a wide range of technological skills. In the Elementary School students have access to iPads and laptop carts as needed for instruction.

In the secondary school, classes use the Google Classroom platform, as well as other elements of the Google Suite for coursework. Students use a variety of applications, including Keynote, website development programs, iMovie and photo editing software, SketchUp, Sketch.io, Albert.io, Canva, and NoRed Ink to demonstrate their learning. In Elementary school students use a variety of applications to enhance their learning, including iMovie, Keynote, Pages, Toon Talk, Mathletics, and BrainPop.

The visiting committee commends the widespread integration of technology, yet the skill development of students in the use of technology is not consistently evidenced through the visiting committee's observations.

### **Evidence of Results based upon Challenging Learning Experiences**

HIS students demonstrate their critical and creative thinking, problem solving, knowledge attainment, and application skills through a variety of methods depending on the division.

In the Elementary School students in the Early Years is based on a constructivist approach utilizing the Reggio Emilia approach. In the EY students are provided a holistic, child originated approach to the curriculum. The Elementary School had adopted the readers' and writers' workshop approach to literacy, the workshop model challenges students to work independently, develop confidence, and to advocate for themselves. Further, the IPC approach in Social Studies and Science requires individual critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving to address the interdisciplinary themed units of the curriculum.

In the Middle School students demonstrate their knowledge through the IMYC units in critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and applying their knowledge through cultural presentations and projects, MS Science Fair, and HUSKIES-guided trips.

In the High School students are expected to demonstrate their knowledge through critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, and applying their knowledge through cultural presentations and projects, Student Council meetings, AP Coursework, and HUSKIES-guided trips.

On a schoolwide basis HIS students participate in the leadership of the Kitara Concert, the Sports Day, and Pep Rallies. With regard to the Kitara Concert HIS students lead out in all aspects of the production and meet every Wednesday to complete the planning and preparation.

Evidence from visiting committee classroom visits in the secondary classrooms reflects inconsistency in the use of higher order questioning to promote critical thinking and problem solving. The school is encouraged to pursue additional focus on expanding instructional practices to create more opportunities for deeper thinking in addressing the curriculum standards. This area would be further strengthened through regular data collection and analysis.

### **Student Understanding of Performance Levels**

HIS has defined the standards and expected performance levels for the core subjects through performance indicators within rubrics used both by students and teachers. Teachers are expected to examine and assess student knowledge based on the standards to determine how to move forward in their curriculum. These standards and expected performance levels are provided to students through course syllabi provided to students at the beginning of the coursework. The IPC and IMYC structures incorporate performance expectations in the form of learning targets and rubrics, these align with a standards based reporting system that defines performance levels.

The move to standards based reporting provides teachers, students, and parents with relevant information and access to expected performance levels through the ALMA information management system.

Through observations and discussions with students the visiting committee found clear evidence of student understanding of the performance levels within their courses. Students offered clear descriptions of the expectations of and use of the Honors, Standard, and Developing performance levels in their course work.

### **Student Perceptions**

In the self-study the school cites this as an area for further growth, currently there is no data being formally gathered to evaluate the effective of student-teacher interaction. The visiting committee advises the creation of a formalized tool to gather such data, as the student population is an untapped resource for guiding the school in moving forward with their assessment and grading policies and procedures.

### **Student Needs**

HIS teachers are expected to differentiate for their diverse student population through facilitating increased student involvement in discussions, student self and peer reflection, instructional groupings, collaborative projects, and through using a variety of formative and summative assessments.

The visiting committee observed some evidence of these instructional practices, in addition IMYC and IPC unit plans in the middle school and elementary school defines such practices within their planning. The extent to which this planning carries forward into classroom practice is inconsistent. HIS administration is encouraged to provide support in this area to expand the instructional approaches throughout the school to address the needs of all students.

### **Student Use of Resources**

HIS students are instructed in the use of a variety of technology, collaborative activities, and community resources to extend their learning. Instruction at HIS goes beyond the textbook and class lecture. HIS students are provided opportunities outside the textbook through the following approaches:

#### ***Collaborative Activities:***

- Students collaborate in a variety of groupings in language arts classes
- School wide student collaboration for school events
- Multicultural fair; Performance Art (“Kitara”); HS students help ES students; Exit Points; Student-organized Snow Festival Classic and the Sports Award Banquet.
- Outdoor Education (OE) trips, class camping overnights, PE ski days, IMYC entry and exit points, IPC local area walks
- MP1/MP3 students participate through a reading buddies program; Middle School students collaborate with MP3 through their writing curriculum.

#### ***Technology:***

- Use of online and library resources to facilitate research and project work
- Lab work in Science classes
- Google Classroom: news readings, blog posts, websites, videos - YouTube
- Brainpop, SketchUp, Mathletics, IMYC website links, NoRedInk, Albert
- Software for creating presentations, including Keynote, iMovie, Toon Talk, Pages
- Google suite of tools for collaboration
- Use of iPads for manipulation skills

#### ***Community Resources:***

- Field trips and community experiences
- Use of the natural environment on campus as part of the curriculum
- Japanese classes use resources from the local community
- The PE department uses neighboring facilities for various sports
- Outdoor Education department uses neighboring facilities.
- HIS art department uses community facilities to create and display their artwork
- HIS sports teams compete with local Japanese school teams, building relationships and language opportunities
- Nature walks in the community
- Noh instruction
- Local high school exchange
- Visiting local factories and facilities
- Use of Ishikawa baseball diamonds
- Makomanai and Tsukisamu Ice Rinks, Nakajima Park cross country skiing facilities, Nishioka Park, Fu’s and Bankei Ski Area

- NAC rock climbing gym, Rainbow Cliffs rock climbing gym, NAC kayaking facilities.
- Hokkaido Modern Museum of Art, Art Park

**Other Resources:**

- Maps, books, arts & craft materials, games, globes, charts, musical instruments, puzzles, simulations, MacBook pro, iPad (apps), trade books, DVD, concrete materials, manipulative, apple TV, pictures cards
- Variety of instructional materials, tools, and tasks

There is clear evidence, observed by the visiting committee and documented within the self-study of student learning being extended beyond the school walls and curriculum. HIS is to be commended for its commitment to outdoor education, the use of community resources, and the collaborative nature of its student and teacher population. The connection between secondary school students and elementary students is evident and vibrant, these relationships have helped create a vibrant and strong community atmosphere that is noted by parents, students, and teachers.

**B3. How Assessment is Used Criterion**

**Appropriate Assessment Strategies**

Assessment strategies at HIS are frequent and integrated into the teaching and learning process, thus measuring student progress toward academic standards and the HUSKIES.

Evidence within the self-study notes the appropriate use of assessment strategies through the following: assessments in the teaching of Writing and Reading; unit plan templates HIS utilizes, the IPC and IMYC programs, specific learning target focused assessments in the High School history courses, the CDGP, and the introduction of standards based reporting school wide.

With regard to writing HIS has implemented the use of Writer’s Workshop and Pathways Assessments in Elementary and cross-disciplinary commonly developed writing rubrics in the Secondary division. In the Elementary school reading is assessed through the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), through this assessment teachers assess the growth of their students and how to differentiate to provide support. The Unit Planning Template HIS has developed includes suggested appropriate assessment strategies for faculty to choose in addressing their unit outcomes. Through the IPC and IMYC HIS focuses on the use of common rubrics to assess skill development and learning goals. In the High School history classes model assessment types using the AP exam format have been created based on addressing identified learning targets. These classes have also incorporated a Socratic Seminar approach, as well as a wide variety of performance based assessments. To measure the progress of students towards the HUSKIES HIS has implemented a Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP) that requires student reflection on their character growth through their experiences at HIS. The overall move to Standards Based grading and reporting has created a more appropriate assessment system that focused on student achievement of Academic Standards and Character Development.

**Basis for Determination of Performance Levels**

The school implemented a new assessment policy during the 2017-18 school year that established a common philosophy in assessing student achievement. The intended outcome of the new assessment policy will help to create consistency across all subjects and increase the reliability and validity of assessment practices. The assessment policy separates out behaviors from academics, defines specifics

regarding formative and summative assessments, and establishes clearly communicated expectations for grading and reporting.

The evidence reflects that assessment practices at HIS set the expectation that teachers will use formative assessments to give students feedback on their progress and identify areas that they need to improve on prior to the summative assessment. Faculty are to encourage students to revise, resubmit, and retake until they achieve mastery of learning targets. In addition to in-class work results from MAP and DRA assessments are used to inform instruction.

HIS faculty are continuing work on this area through specifically linking all assignments and assessments to learning targets and creating rubrics with specific expectations for performance levels.

### **Demonstration of Student Achievement**

HIS students demonstrate their understanding of the academic standards and schoolwide learner outcomes through a variety of activities.

### **Academic Standards**

HIS students demonstrate their understanding and achievement of the learning targets through formative and summative assessments in the coursework, which is then reported in the standards-based report card. Academic standards are clearly communicated to students through rubrics that address the relationship between student work and the learning targets. Beyond the standards-based reporting system students also demonstrate achievement of the learning targets through classroom activities including - DRA, writing assessments, NoRedInk, Albert.io, Middle School exit points and Science Fairs. In addition to in-house assessments of achievement students strong academic achievement is confirmed through external assessments such as MAP, PSAT, SAT, and AP.

### **Schoolwide Learner Outcomes (HUSKIES)**

Students demonstrate their understanding and achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes, the Huskies, through their individual classroom experiences, which are then assessed and reported in the standards-based report card section on Character. In the high school all students complete the CDGP, which documents their progress towards and understanding of the importance of, the 24 CDGP expectations. Work is continuing on defining further the expectations an assessment of the CDGP.

The visiting committee observed clear evidence through discussions with students and in-class work that students have a solid understanding of the importance of the HUSKIES and how they display these character attributes in their daily life and work at HIS. This is a strength within the HIS community.

### **Correlation**

At HIS, there are several ways in which there are direct correlations between assessment of schoolwide learner outcomes (HUSKIES), academic standards, course competencies and instructional approaches. The correlation between standards, learning targets, and assessments are made by individual teachers and Lesson Study teams. These are then reported through the four Academic Standards specified for each subject on the secondary report card. The revised assessment policies put in place in 2017-2018 is meant to ensure that all courses are assessed using the same formula of a total of seven learning targets: 4 academic, 2 character, 1 commitment.

The correlation between schoolwide learner outcomes, the HUSKIES, and instructional approaches are measured within the specific courses, with student progress being reported as two of the seven measures

on the report card. In addition, High School students achievement of the HUSKIES is evidenced within the CDGP.

The visiting committee recommends further examination of the effectiveness of combining the behavioral attributes of character and commitment into the overall academic grade, as this is contradictory to the newly revised assessment policy that advised the separate reporting of behavior and academic standards.

### **Modifications/Decisions based on Assessment Data**

As noted in the self-study, this is an area of growth for HIS. HIS does not currently have a systematic approach in place to analyze the data that is collected and use it to inform instruction and decision making with regard to curriculum, professional development, and resource allocation.

One area of strength in analyzing data is evidenced in the use of DRA results to inform instruction in the Elementary school. Teachers are currently using the data to form reading groups and to identify grouping based on learning needs, either individually, in small groups, or class-wide.

Progress is being made with regard to the use of data gathered through MAP, schoolwide training was provided during the 2017-18 school year on how teachers can access and use MAP data to inform their instruction. This is an area of growth and training will continue in successive years to continue to increase the use of data MAP provides.

### **Other areas of growth in the analysis of data include:**

Expanding the number of students taking the SAT and PSAT as a measure of student achievement to help assess areas for growth within the curriculum and instruction at HIS. The school is considering expanding the PSAT to include PSAT 8/9 and PSAT 10 for students in Grades 8 - 10.

The Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP) was introduced in the 2016-17 school year to increase character development efforts and infuse the idea into the HIS culture. As the CDGP project becomes a part of the culture the school will need to develop a method for analyzing the data produced within the CDGP to evaluate its impact on character development.

Another area for continuing growth in data assessment is evaluating the impact the reporting of the commitment target and character attributes has on student behavior. As the purpose of separating out the behavior from academics was to not only reflect accurately the academic achievement, but also to report out specifically on behaviors.

### **Student Feedback**

HIS teachers independently and inconsistently gather feedback through a variety of methods, but these methods vary widely. This is an identified area for growth for HIS, the school currently does not have a consistent system in place for collecting student feedback to inform and guide curricular instruction and schoolwide learner outcomes. Given the implementation of the new assessment policies and procedures HIS has the opportunity to revise current surveys and create a system for collecting such feedback.

## Teacher Monitoring

Although teachers at HIS individually monitor student progress through a variety of methods over time, as well as assessing and reporting on whether academic standards, there is currently not a systematic approach to gathering student feedback on their courses. This is an identified area of growth for HIS.

## Areas of Strength

1. The visiting committee recognizes and commends the school's continuous efforts to ensure a holistic approach to learning including a well-defined focus on service learning, outdoor education, community interaction, and the incorporation of the HUSKIES into the HIS school culture.
2. Students at HIS have a broad range of opportunities to engage in experiential and multidisciplinary learning. Evidence from the visit and the self-study clearly demonstrates that such opportunities are a priority and a strength at HIS.
3. The visiting committee commends HIS students, teachers, parents, and administration in their focus on maintaining and developing a truly caring, supportive, and tight-knit community. The emphasis on community has been clearly evident throughout the visiting committee's time at HIS.
4. Student performance data in external assessments clearly demonstrates student achievement in academics.
5. The visiting committee recognizes the tremendous amount of work that has been completed to define the curriculum for grade level clusters, including defining standards in the movement towards standards based reporting.
6. HIS faculty demonstrates a commitment to serving the needs of students and providing students with a broad range of curricular and co-curricular experiences.
7. HIS consistently places an emphasis on educational research through whole-school Professional Development that addresses particular areas of the school program.
8. There is continuing integration of global concepts, perceptions, and issues through the assessment and communication of the HUSKIES, the CDGP, the IPC, and the IMYC.
9. The school has clearly defined integration among disciplines through the IPC and IMYC programs, as well as in the Language Arts and Social Studies courses in High School.

## Critical Areas of Follow Up:

### 1. Curriculum Review Cycle

The school has recognized the need to develop a systematic curriculum review. The curriculum review cycle will enable the school to determine how:

- A. to better meet the needs of HIS students based on student learning data
- B. to stay current with possible changes in subject areas, which require PreK-12 articulation
- C. to analyze gaps and overlaps within the curriculum that need to be addressed
- D. to allocate an annual budget for purchasing resources for the subject areas in focus during the curriculum review cycle.
- E. to review current research and trends in the specific disciplines in an effort to build upon and support best practices

### 2. Effectiveness of Report Card Standards Components

The visiting committee recommends further research and evaluation of the Character and Commitment Targets being factored into the Academic Achievement grade as reported in both the report card and official transcript.

### 3. Documentation of Pre-K-12 Alignment and Articulation through Curriculum Mapping

The visiting committee advises the school to create and develop a system for curriculum mapping to build continuity between the divisions of the school. The current documentation of the curriculum is incomplete and does not clearly define the alignment and articulation of the preK-12 curriculum.

#### **4. Schoolwide Student Feedback**

The school will create a systematic approach to collecting and making use of student feedback to improve student learning.

#### **5. Clearly defined Direction and Purpose for PD to advance Teaching and Learning:**

The visiting committee advises HIS to define their approach to the use of professional development funds through identifying key multi-year initiatives or goals for faculty learning and PD to address the greatest areas of need in addressing student growth.

#### **6. Alumni follow-up studies:**

The school will create a process for surveying alumni to gain insight into the effectiveness of HIS in preparing students for life beyond graduation.

#### **Evidence Reviewed:**

Student interviews and discussions, Parent discussions, classroom observations, Teacher interviews and discussions, [HUSKIES Document](#), [Documentation - transition from TADS to HUSKIES](#), [Foundational School Statements \(on school website\)](#), [2016 Vietnam HFH/Global Village Report](#), [2018 Junior Service Trip Details](#), [H-TEAM \(Trail Maintenance\)](#), [Junior year service learning trip documentation - Sri Lanka 2017](#), [MP1 Service Learning - MP1](#), [MP1 website](#), [Service Learning Planning Spreadsheet](#), [Sri Lanka Booklet](#), [Working Doc detailing responsibilities for advisor to service trip](#), [Aspiring Athletes and Careers Agreement](#), [Office Hours for Student Support](#), [Using MAP results presentations](#), [ELL Essential Strategies](#), [Essential Instructional Practice](#), [Essential Professional Reading List](#), [Lesson Study Adaptations](#), [Literacy PD Kobe 2016-2017](#), [MAP presentation to teachers](#), [Professional Development Experiences](#), [Curriculum Committee 2017~2018](#), [Curriculum Committee 2016~2017](#), [Curriculum Committee 2015~2016](#), [Curriculum Committee Action Plan 2015~2018](#), [Elementary Team Meetings](#), [Executive Board Minutes](#), [Full Faculty Team Meetings](#), [HISNiseko Monday Meeting Minutes](#), [Secondary Team Meetings](#), [Wednesday Collaboration Planning](#)

## **CHAPTER IV: CATEGORY C: SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH**

### **C1. Student Connectedness**

#### **Summary**

Students at HIS have access to support services either provided through the school directly or through referral in the community. HIS recognizes the benefit and need for onsite counseling services and support services for both day students and the boarding program. Activities and opportunities exist at the school and within the greater community for students to achieve the HUSKIES through curricular and co-curricular programming. As the community service and school leadership components of the school curriculum expand in the next accreditation cycle, HIS intends for the co-curricular program to more directly and purposefully address the HUSKIES.

## **Adequate Personalized Support**

HIS uses limited in-house and out-of-house services to support its students in areas such as health, career and personal counseling, and academic assistance. These services include, but is not limited to, ELL services, after school academic coaching, college counseling, and a character development program called the Virtues Project. At this time, the school does not have any full time staff in any of these departments, although multiple faculty spend part of their time in support services. Specifically, the school has three part-time ELL teachers and one teacher who does part time college counseling. In the dormitory program, the school has dorm parents who help students in the evening or on the weekends, should needs arise.

At HIS, counseling needs remain a growth area for the school. It is understood that it would be ideal to have a counselor at the school but currently, not one is employed. In the absence of an in-house counselor, outside referral services are used for students on an as-needed basis. There are various options in the greater-Sapporo community that accommodate both Japanese and English-speaking clients.

## **School Support Systems**

HIS has a process for intervening when students struggle with certain academic challenges or English acquisition. The school follows a referral protocol whereby teachers refer students of concern to the principal and/or head of school. These students are tracked and monitored via a shared Google spreadsheet. Teachers reported that this method of academic assistance was moderately effective and evidence suggested it was not widely used by all faculty. Students are often discussed in team meetings and there is an academic coach to help when secondary students need targeted support.

## **Strategies Used for Student Growth/Development**

The school has strategies in place for teachers to develop personalized approaches to learning and alternative instructional approaches. The school has a published set of twelve instructional practices that outline the methods used by teachers in the classroom. Academic coaching is provided three times a week for students who are referred through the students of concern meeting process or volunteer to attend for additional support.

Evidence suggest that the level of communication between teachers, students and parents is adequate and effective. Parents reported through survey data and interviews a high degree of connectivity to their child's learning

The school has done an effective job of implementing an inclusion model for ELL support and have taken steps to implement systems that will support their ELL population in their learning such as WIDA testing.

Students identified in surveys and interviews a high degree of ownership in their learning and that they have choice in how or what they learn at HIS. The school provides multiple programs to its students that support individualized student growth and development. This is an area of strength. The Character Development Graduation Portfolio (CDGP) provides student reflection time and a

structure through which high school students can monitor their development as learners and as individuals. HIS also allows online coursework for students in grades 11 and 12.

There is no clear evidence at HIS that the school has a systematic process by which they review student and schoolwide profiles and assess the effectiveness of their strategies on student growth and development. The Visiting Committee recommends considering a review of these strategies on a regular cycle to determine what impact, if any, they have on student learning.

### **Support Services and Learning**

School administration, the curriculum team and all teachers at HIS work cooperatively to help ensure that support services are delivered to identified students in need, and have a direct relationship to student involvement in learning. There is an academic referral process whereby the administration works cooperatively with the student, teacher, and parents to improve the student's academic performance. The system currently in place utilizes the academic coaching program as the primary intervention for struggling students. Evidence suggests this program is moderately successful and could benefit from more structure and a protocol for more wide use by all faculty and structures to monitor its effectiveness in helping students.

When needs are identified that may stand in the way of learning, be they emotional or academic in nature, and the faculty at HIS cannot offer support, students are referred to outside agencies. This is a passive referral process that teachers and students have identified as an important area for growth in the school. There has been an emphasis since the last self-study on broadening the range of support services offered to students identified as being ELL or need additional academic support. Currently, there is no learning support program, staffing, or intervention structures for students with identified learning disabilities. There is also no formalized advisory or health program in HIS although they do incorporate sexual education into the middle school PE curriculum. It would be worthwhile for HIS to thoroughly examine all areas of support services and make sure that systems are in place to effectively help student learning.

### **Co-Curricular Activities**

HIS has an appropriate amount of co-curricular activities for students in all grades and participation is high, with most students engaged in at least one activity or sports team. In a recent survey of parents and students, most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that HIS had adequate opportunities for students to participate in athletics or activities.

Some examples of co-curricular activities that directly address the schoolwide learner outcomes (HUSKIES) are the ACT community service club and AdHoc, the outdoor education club. Students have an opportunity in multiple grades to connect with the local or international community through service or learning trips. These trips could include visits to a local senior-care center or to service learning in developing countries. HIS also takes an active role in environmental awareness and environmental stewardship through some of its co-curricular offerings.

The school recognizes that there is an opportunity for growth in the next accreditation cycle to more purposefully connect the school curriculum and the HUSKIES to its co-curricular program. In

addition, the Visiting Committee suggests looking at ways in which the co-curricular and curricular activities can be more purposefully linked to the academic standards.

### **Student Involvement in Curricular/Co-Curricular Activities**

HIS has a method for regularly evaluating the level of student involvement in athletics and activities across all divisions. Data suggests a high degree of participation amongst students in the school across all divisions. The principal's annual report provides information on the involvement in co-curricular activities. Students are kept informed of activities through homeroom conversations, word of mouth and whole-school presentations.

### **Student Perceptions**

In preparation for their accreditation, HIS surveyed it's students and found that most students agree or strongly agree that teachers support and respect students. A follow up survey discovered that students felt as though HIS was seen as a positive and welcoming community. In survey data and interviews with students, there is strong evidence to suggest that HIS is aware of student perceptions and has created an environment where students feel as though their voice is respected and heard.

## **C2. Parent/Community Involvement**

### **Summary**

Parent and community engagement at HIS is actively encouraged and sought after through involvement in school wide events and as a resource to support student learning. Parents are kept informed of student progress and achievement of the academic standards/HUSKIES and school policies through conferences and online communications.

### **Regular Parent Involvement**

HIS implements strategies and processes for the regular involvement of the parents and community. The school uses a variety of digital methods to communicate important information about school events, community issues, academic achievement and school organizations. HIS also uses face-to-face methods of communication such as assemblies, schoolwide events, and fairs to connect with and share important information with the community.

HIS leverages the PTA as one of its main conduits for parent involvement and sees it as a main way for parents who have language barriers to become involved in the school. The PTA raises money throughout the year to fund school programming. HIS recognizes that greater engagement of non-English speaking parents remains a challenge. It is working to address this area of growth by developing the school website includes plans for multi-language translation into Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and Korean.

The school does not have a formal process by which they evaluate the effectiveness of these communication channels, however interviews with parents and survey data suggest that parents feel as though they're well informed about the learning and teaching processes at school.

## **Use of Community Resources**

HIS uses community resources on both campuses in many ways to support student learning and other needs. Parent and local community expertise is drawn upon to support classroom learning. Local field trip options are utilized as the school has effectively connected students to the vast array of outdoor learning opportunities around Hokkaido. Connections are made with local organizations to provide opportunities for community service and experiential learning. The school has a strong collection of partnerships with local businesses, schools, government organizations, and other community connections that it successfully leverages to benefit student learning.

## **Parent/Community and Student Achievement**

There are effective strategies in place to ensure that parents and school community understand student achievement of the academic standards/schoolwide learner outcomes through the curricular/co-curricular program.

Parents are informed of their student's academic progress through conferences, assemblies, regularly scheduled learning reports, and by checking Google Classroom or the Alma Student Information System. Parent information sessions are held each year to explain HIS curriculum and the essential learning outcomes of the school. Opportunities are provided throughout the year for parents to enhance their understanding of other school programs and policies through means such as coffee afternoons/mornings and the open house. The school also publishes an annual report that summarizes and analyzes a wide range of school-wide student outcomes.

## **Areas of Strength for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

The visiting committee agrees with HIS in their identification of the following key areas of strength in supporting student's personal and academic growth:

1. HIS effectively utilizes many resources available in the broader community. There is broad community involvement within curricular and co-curricular programs.
2. The school offers multiple options for students of all levels to engage in outdoor leadership opportunities, character development programs, trips into the community, and service learning.
3. HIS offers an extensive variety of co-curricular activities. There is a high level of student involvement in co-curricular activities across all divisions.
4. The visiting committee also identifies areas of strength with the school's awareness and attention given to its ELL population and adopting strategies to support these students in their learning.

## **Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

The Visiting Committee supports the school's perceptions and decisions to focus on the following key areas around supporting students personal and academic growth:

1. An exploration into expanding the amount of counseling and college guidance that the school currently provides its students
2. A clearer protocol to track and monitor the effectiveness of academic interventions for struggling students.
3. Investigate protocols and systems to provide systematic and regular support for students with learning differences.

## **Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following**

Parent interviews, student interviews, teacher interviews, student survey data, parent survey data, college counseling Google classroom, academic coaching guidelines, HIS student and staff protection policy and protocol, HIS code of conduct, academic support plan process and documentation, referral services policy, ELL program documentation, student trip agenda and information, CDGP information and data, annual reports, EIR guidelines and information, progress report and report card information, ASA participation data, various community resources information, curriculum maps

## **CHAPTER IV: CATEGORY D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **D1. Resources**

#### **Summary**

Resources at HIS are allocated to meet the school's purpose, student achievement of the academic standards and the HUSKIES, and to the hiring, nurturing, and ongoing professional development of its staff. HIS has in place procedures and practices for developing an annual budget, conducting an annual audit, and conducting quality business and accounting practices. Through the yearly budgeting and planning process, policies and procedures are in place to ensure that technology, materials, and equipment essential to instruction are acquired and maintained as needed. Due to growth in student numbers in the secondary (particularly in high school), HIS Sapporo is beginning to outgrow the current campus. If it wishes to maintain (or expand) its current program of study, new alternatives will need to be explored. HIS Niseko is fortunate to be experiencing growth and should consider long-range resource planning as well to ensure the school's presence and strength in the community.

#### **Allocation Decisions**

Resources at HIS are allocated to meet the school's vision, mission, student achievement of the critical learner needs, the schoolwide learner outcomes and the academic standards. School leadership and staff collaborate to ensure this goal is met. Each spring (Feb/March) budget letters are shared with teachers that outlining the budget process and how input will be sought from divisions within the school. Budget planning sheets, representing natural sections of the school, are then shared to teachers with oversight in those areas and teaching partners and team leaders then work with one another to plan for the following year (basing decisions on upcoming needs and three years of historic data). These documents are then shared back to the business office for insertion into a draft budget.

School administration tracks teacher professional development (PD) goals which have been established through the Professional Observation/Evaluation process of the school. These goals are shared with the Curriculum Committee as a point of reference for shaping PD decisions in future years. There is evidence to suggest that the school focuses on critical learner needs and schoolwide learner outcomes as a basis for its professional development resource allocation.

Some examples in recent years include resources dedicated to the AP program, implementing WIDA, and Lesson Study.

HIS recognizes that its programmatic and population growth highlight the need for a facilities expansion to meet the vision, mission and HUSKIES of the school. The school has done meaningful work to address this need.

### **Practices**

HIS has procedures and practices for developing an annual budget, conducting an annual audit, and conducting quality business and accounting practices, including protections against mishandling of institutional funds.

Audit reports, the Executive Board's financial reports on audits, and reports from Nakagawa Accounting ensure quality business and accounting practices. The Executive Board auditors are charged with annually submitting documents to the Governor's office related to the proper auditing procedures and recommendations that have emerged from that process.

The business office has established protocols on money handling, including budget request procedures for staff, that protect against the mishandling of institutional funds.

Teacher classroom budgets are transparent and available to all staff to ensure accountability and the sharing of resources.

### **Facilities**

The school's facilities at both campuses are adequate, safe, functional, and well-maintained. The facilities support the school's mission, desired learner goals, and educational programs. The school has done work on both its Sapporo and Niseko campus to update and maintain its facilities.

The school has a facilities maintenance plan and works with an outside agency to ensure the campus is properly cleaned on a quarterly basis and well-maintained. Some examples of the school's recent work to create improved facilities in relation to student health and safety are improved emergency policy and procedures, facility upgrades and capital improvement projects, and collaboration with outside agencies such as the police department.

HIS acknowledges that there are challenges involved with the school's facilities. Due to increased population, both campuses are beginning to outgrow their current space. In order to continue to match the school's desired learner goals with its programs and curriculum, HIS sees the need for potential expansion. To accommodate an increased student population and improve facilities, plans are being considered to either purchase one of two (or both) pieces of land sitting adjacent to the Sapporo campus. Construction of a dormitory expansion on the Sapporo campus has commenced with a stated goal of stabilizing the current and future growth of the boarding population.

## **Instructional Materials and Equipment**

Evidence suggests that the policies and procedures at HIS for acquiring and maintaining adequate instructional materials and equipment are effective.

Through the yearly budgeting and planning process, policies and procedures are in place to ensure that technology, materials, and equipment essential to instruction are acquired and maintained as needed. The school has general processes for budgeting requests in place, however the school recognizes that the need for some clarification about the processes and expectations for different kinds of budget requests (room/plant vs. classroom hardware vs. technology vs. textbooks vs. expendable materials vs. events, etc.).

## **Well-Qualified Staff**

HIS has resources for hiring, nurturing, and ongoing professional development of its staff. The school has a benchmark for hiring that all teachers need to be qualified in their field, but not necessarily certified. Evidence supports the school is working on professional development to ensure all teachers, regardless of certification, fit this description. At the school, professional development decisions are made by schoolwide PD initiatives to support instructional and curricular programming as proposed by the administration and the curriculum team. Schoolwide professional development in Lesson Study and in WIDA, for example, came about in this way and was provided by school PD funds. As well as the above, all teachers are provided with a PD allowance for yearly use to stay current with educational best practices. Applications for use of these funds are made to the head of school. Unused funds can accumulate for up to two years.

In addition to a well-defined professional development program, HIS has an appropriately competitive benefits package to help attract and retain well-qualified and effective teachers. The school has conducted research to compare its package against peer schools in the region. The school outlines its hiring practices on the employment page of the school's website and uses a variety of methods and recruiting strategies to attract local, regional, and expatriate teachers.

## **Conclusions**

The resources available to the school are sufficient to sustain the school program and are effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement. The school provided reflection that this is happening with a medium level of effectiveness. The visiting committee respects the resource constraints that are inherent with a small school. Still, the school might benefit from developing a long-term strategic plan to ensure its use of resources is efficient and effective.

The school identified that resources is a consideration when determining the school's ability to address one or more of the critical learner needs. The school and the visiting committee are in agreement that developing a long-term strategic plan will allow the school to pay greater attention and be more effective in addressing critical learner needs.

## **D2. Resource Planning**

### **Summary**

HIS's governing authority and the school leadership are responsible for creating a plan to manage the school's resources for the future.

### **Long-range Resource Plan**

Currently HIS does not have a long-range resource plan for either of its campuses. The Executive Board's Strategic Planning Committee is tasked with putting together a long-range resource plan. Despite the formation of the Committee last year, work has yet to commence on the creation of a plan. The creation of this plan should be a priority for HIS.

In the absence of a long-range resource plan, HIS has other measures in place to help manage and monitor its resources. The Building and Grounds Committee examines the future needs of the school based on student population growth and dormitory growth and is responsible for planning the building expansions for the school and the dorm. HIS has frequent discussions about projected student population on both campuses to ensure availability of resources for different programs and resources. The Niseko campus has an action plan that serves as a means for ensuring the Niseko campus is properly resourced to support teaching and learning.

### **Use of Research and Information**

HIS currently doesn't have a master resource plan. However, through its self-study work, the school has identified a series of considerations and set a goal of creating a master resource plan during its 2018-2024 action plan.

Despite not having a master resource plan, HIS has clearly done significant work towards ensuring its resources are used and allocated to support its teachers and students and decisions are rooted firmly in research and relevant information.

### **Involvement of Stakeholders**

The school incorporates its stakeholders in future planning. The Branding Project and Branding Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the Building and Grounds Committee, the Curriculum Committee, and the PTA Steering Committee all incorporate various people from its community of teachers, administrators, board members, and staff.

Parent survey and interview, teacher interviews, and student interviews would suggest that stakeholder involvement in future planning is done effectively.

### **Informing**

The Head of School and FA oversee the school budget with assistance from the Business Manager and school accountant. The school conducts an internal audit that is summarized by external auditors. The HIS Executive Board auditors review the audit and then submit it to the Hokkaido Government Academic Affairs Division Department.

The school also leverages the resources in the local community, through the local government, and via the US Consulate office to acquire resources and secure various needs to assist teaching and learning.

The Visiting Committee recognizes the school's opinion that there is room for growth in this area. Specifically, the Executive Board expressed a desire to be more transparent in its communication with stakeholders and strengthen its connection to the school community.

### **Marketing Strategies**

The school has marketing strategies to support the implementation of the developmental program. HIS has engaged in various marketing strategies across both of its campuses to support the implementation of its developmental program. The school has produced a series of promotional videos that focus on both school-wide and specific focuses, including the Outdoor Education, the dormitory program and highlighting the HUSKIES (the schoolwide learning results).

The school has plans to redevelop its website and include multi-language translation options that will support Japanese, Russian, Chinese, and Korean languages.

### **Conclusions**

HIS has a long-range maintenance plan and other policies and procedures to help manage its use of resources. It lacks, however, a comprehensive long-range strategic plan which is something that work is being done now to complete via a Board appointed Strategic Planning Committee. The school has an established system of checks and balances such as regularly scheduled audits to ensure proper management of resources.

The school noted in their self-study in its self-study that some aspects of this criterion are being addressed well but that ultimately, the lack of a master plan and space constraints on both campuses make it a challenge to address the critical learner needs. The Visiting Committee recognizes the work being done by teachers, administrators, and Board members to address this need and views the completion of this goal as critical to the school's future.

### **Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development**

The Visiting Committee recognizes and agrees with the school in their identification of the following key areas of strength:

1. Involvement of stakeholders in resource related decisions.
2. The school benefits from a sound investment portfolio and a finance office that is committed and capable of executing responsible resource planning.
3. The school has developed comprehensive financial policies and procedures.
4. Proactive maintenance of resources via the long-range maintenance plan.

### **Key Issues for Resource Management and Development**

Visiting Committee recognizes the areas of growth as identified by the school:

- 1) The need for a comprehensive schoolwide long-range strategic plan that might include:

- a) A facilities master plan on both campuses to account for expected student population growth
- b) The need for a comprehensive physical plant resource plan.
- c) The need for a comprehensive personnel and time resource plan.
- d) The need for a set of comprehensive student recruitment, enrollment, transition and retention plans.

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following**

Board member interviews, faculty and staff interviews, administrator interviews, parent interviews, dormitory handbook, board meeting minutes, annual report, Building and Grounds committee minutes, long-range maintenance plan, branding action plans, new dormitory plans, budget letters, PD handbook, ‘List of Things done’, Executive Board meetings, technological upgrade documentation, professional development documentation, Executive Board strategic policies

## **Chapter IV: Category F. Boarding Program**

### **Summary**

The dormitory program at HIS states that its mission is “to provide students with a safe, healthy and supportive home and family-like environment, in order that residents may reach their potential as students, athletes and individuals who are achieving the educational outcomes of the school.”

The dormitory program was established in 1995 when the school relocated to its current campus in the Hiragishi neighborhood of Sapporo. There are currently two dormitory facilities used by the school. The original dorm, which is owned by HIS and located beside the school currently houses 20 students (17 boys and 3 girls) from grade 7 through grade 12. It is currently supervised by a married couple who were recruited by the school as dorm parents. The husband is also a member of the HIS faculty. This three-story building includes a girl’s floor and a boy’s floor, as well as a general living and dining area on the ground floor. The dorm parents and their infant son live on the ground floor in a separate apartment. A second dormitory facility, situated close to the school, was leased in August 2015. This facility houses 13 boys and is supervised by a single male dorm parent. The current boarding program serves a total of 33 students. A new dorm adjacent to the original dorm building is currently under construction and will open for the beginning of the 2018-19 school year. Two sets of experienced dorm parents have subsequently been hired and will join the staff for the start of the 2018 academic. The school will relocate all the students currently in the leased dorm in August. The HIS Executive Board considers the expansion of the dormitory program at HIS to be an important part of the school’s future enrolment plans, as well as an important revenue stream.

The indicators below were used by the school to complete **Category F: School Boarding Program**. The Visiting Committee completed site visits to both dormitory buildings during the visit and spoke with the dorm parents and a number of dorm students.

The Visiting Committee notes the following:

**Indicator 1:** *The boarding program embraces the school’s vision, mission, and supports student achievement of the schoolwide learner outcomes (the HUSKIES)*

The Mission of the dorm program states that the boarding program at HIS aims to “provide students with a safe, healthy and supportive home and family-like environment, in order that residents may reach their potential as students, athletes and individuals who are achieving the educational outcomes of the school.” The Visiting Committee believes this is an accurate and appropriate description of the school’s intentions for the dorm program and is in alignment with the school’s vision, mission and HUSKIES.

**Indicator 2:** *There is a body that holds the boarding program accountable to goals, policies, and procedures that are well-documented and aligned with the school’s mission, vision, and the HUSKIES. There is a well-established appeals process related to decisions made related to students in the boarding program.*

The Head of School oversees the dorm program to ensure it remains accountable to its mission. The school has published three dorm handbooks (Dormitory Handbook, Dorm 2 Handbook, HIS Dormitory Parent Handbook), which provide students, staff and respective parents with clear operational guidelines, practices, and procedures for dorm-living.

**Indicator 3:** *There is evidence of full support and understanding by the governing authority, leadership, teachers, staff, students, parents, guardians, and community of the expectations of the boarding program.*

The Executive Board and the school’s administration fully support the boarding program. The immediate school community (students, teachers and parents) know there is a boarding program at the school. A new promotional video about the dorm program is being made to actively promote understanding and interest in the boarding program across the wider community.

**Indicator 4:** *The implementation of operational procedures and systems support the goals of the boarding program and include specific health and safety boarding expectations.*

The Visiting Committee agrees that the current dorm handbooks provide appropriate operational procedures and systems that support the goals of the boarding program. This includes specific health and safety expectations. The Visiting Committee also agrees there is a need to further define aspects of health and safety to ensure that any and all procedures that would be expected of a fully developed boarding program are in place. The self-study indicates that one potential strategy being considered by the school is future membership in an organization, such as the Association of Boarding Schools, which would provide potential access to specific professional development and resources for dorm staff.

**Indicator 5:** *The staff members of the boarding program are qualified for their roles and responsibilities with the maturity, character, skills, knowledge, and experience appropriate to the age and needs of the boarders, to ensure a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment.*

The Visiting Committee is confident the current dorm parents have the maturity, character, skills, and knowledge to meet the general needs of the students in the dorm buildings. However, by not having any previous experience working in a dorm environment there have been a number of expected challenges for the dorm parents related to supervising dorm students. These challenges include the establishment of appropriate rules, routines, behaviors and attitudes.

**Indicator 6:** *There is an ongoing supervision, evaluation, and professional learning process for all boarding staff.*

The dorm program is monitored by the Head of School, who was previously a long-term dorm parent. Although there have been regular informal meetings with the Head of School, there is no formalized

evaluation process or professional learning options for the dorm staff. Both dorm parents confirmed regular informal conversations with dorm residents do occur. However, there is scope to strengthen the supervision and oversight of the boarding program to ensure the living experiences in the dorm remain positive.

**Indicator 7:** *There is support of the needs of all staff members of the boarding staff to ensure they can address the goals of the program.*

The dorm parents confirmed to the Visiting Committee that the Head of School is both supportive and responsive to their requests. The self-study states that HIS has struggled to support the dorm parents with language and cultural assistance as well as with the time to help them navigate banking, cell phones and the medical system, all of which are critical to the functioning of the dormitory program. A recent change in the role of the school's Administrative Assistant allowed for a shifting of office responsibilities to include support of the dormitory program. Concerns were expressed by both dorm parents on the need for more support from the school to ensure there is an appropriate work-life balance for dorm parents. The demands of the role are significant, therefore it is important that provisions are put in place to enable dorm parents to have appropriate time away from their dorm responsibilities to disconnect from the dorm and supervision of the students, while at the same time maintaining the highest levels possible of supervised care.

**Indicator 8:** *The culture of the boarding program is responsive to and respectful of the diversity and personal and academic needs of the students.*

The self-study indicates that this particular aspect of the dorm program has improved greatly. In the past vegan, vegetarian, food allergies and religious dietary needs were largely unsupported in the dormitory, however, the dorm now has a cook and staff who are supportive of the needs of dorm students. In general, the time allocated to academic homework and self-study is managed by the dorm parents effectively. Social and emotional support is provided as necessary, but neither dorm parent has any formal training or background in this type of socio-emotional counselling and support.

**Indicator 9:** *The staff of the boarding program works closely and communicates regularly with the parents and/or guardians regarding all aspects to support the students who are boarding. This includes clear expectations and monitoring for those under guardianship or legal authority of the school.*

Dormitory parents provide parents with regular information about the dorm. "Dormitory Doings" newsletters are produced on a bi-monthly basis. Parents are required to sign off on the dorm handbook each year in recognition that they understand and approve the school's dorm procedures. There is an established protocol for emergencies and procedures to enable dorm parents to immediately contact parents if necessary. Dorm parents can be contacted by parents by email.

**Indicator 10:** *There is a well-planned program of academic and personal support that is integral to the program for the day students and overall supports the school's mission, vision, and schoolwide learner outcomes. This includes the boarding staff's responsibility to communicate with teachers and to provide emotional support through counselling and/or advocate support.*

The self-study indicates that this is an area for potential growth for the boarding program. Some weekend activities that include cultural excursions to events and places around the Sapporo community are organized but not frequently. During the snow season, the dorm students have the opportunity to go skiing and snowboarding two times a week after school. This is an attractive feature for students residing in the dorm. The HIS faculty is fully aware of the dorm program and at times will communicate with the dorm parents specifically regarding certain issues or problems a dorm student may have. As stated previously, social and emotional support is provided as necessary, but neither dorm parent has any formal training or background in this type of socio-emotional counselling and support.

**Indicator 11:** *There is a process for ongoing evaluation of all aspects of the boarding program in relation to the school's purpose; this evaluation supports staff implementation of a well-developed short- and long-range plan.*

There is currently no process for the ongoing evaluation of the boarding program. The school recognizes this and will take steps to develop this accordingly. The Executive Board, on advice from the school administration, will develop long-range plans for the dormitory to ensure it remains in keeping and is supportive of the school purpose.

**Indicator 12:** *The functioning boarding facilities are regularly assessed based on the school's purpose, specifically in the following areas: the ratio of staff to students; the number of students per adequate individual living quarters; and the basic services such as medical support, laundry, meals, transport, technology etc.*

Basic services including medical support, laundry, meals and transport are provided. The school's buildings and grounds staff check the dorm facilities regularly to ensure they remain in good working order. Maintenance requests are submitted by the dorm to the school office when necessary. In addition to opening the new dorm building in August 2018, some renovations are also being scheduled for Dorm 1. This will include an upgraded kitchen facility, the installation of an industrial dishwasher, and a renovated living space on the first floor of the building. Renovations are scheduled for the 2018 winter break.

## **Conclusion**

The Visiting Committee recognizes the significant commitment displayed by the dorm parents to supporting the students in their care. Although the boarding program is established and has successfully served many students over the years, it is incumbent on the school to remain fully committed to ensuring the level of care, the quality of support and the provision of high quality living standards are maintained. The Visiting Committee recognizes that Dorm 2 (leased property) will cease operations when the new dorm building opens in August 2018. However, there are clearly operational issues, particularly the management of trash which need to be addressed immediately. The standard of cleanliness was also below expectations. The school needs to devote appropriate resources to ensuring students in the boarding facilities receive the appropriate degree of support and pastoral care, both in terms of managing the physical environment and the socio-emotional support that is necessary in a boarding program. While the current dorm parents are to be commended for their commitment to the students, it is clear to the Visiting Committee that qualified and experienced dorm parents are essential for a successful boarding program to flourish and for students to truly have the rich learning experiences that are possible in a well-organized and well-resourced dorm facility. Measures to ensure an appropriate work-life balance for dorm parents is important for the sustainability of the program and well-being of both the dorm parents and students. Although, there are aspects of the dorm program which are strong, it is essential that a fully developed system of policies and procedures (including clear child protection measures) is created and published so that students and dorm parents live with the assurance that the dorm program is appropriately supervised, supported, resourced and managed.

## **Areas of Strength for Boarding Program**

1. The new dorm facility which will open in August 2018.
2. The school has instituted an improved daily meal service for breakfast and dinner.
3. The school has a clearly defined dormitory policy handbook in place and available to all boarding students and their parents.

- The school has committed to hiring additional dorm parents to staff the new and existing dorms for the 2018-2019 school year.

### Key Issues for Boarding Program

- The visiting committee recognizes the school's own identified need to develop, formalize, and act on plans to remodel the first floor of Dormitory 1 (kitchen, dining and living areas).
- The visiting committee, through interviews with the current dorm parents, has identified the necessity for the school to create opportunities for dorm parents to have a better work-life balance in their lives.
- Evidence suggests the need to create a fuller activity program for dormitory students to ensure social engagement and a healthy lifestyle.
- The visiting committee recognizes the need for the school to provide better options for counseling support for the dormitory students.
- Through evidence cited in on-site visits to the dormitories the visiting committee recommends the school conduct a safety and security audit of the dorm facilities to identify areas of concern that should be addressed to ensure student safety.

**Important evidence about student learning from the self-study and the visit that supports these strengths and key issues include the following:**

### Supporting Evidence

Dormitory 1 Handbook, Dormitory 2 Handbook, Samples of dorm parent email and "Dorm Doings" newsletters, Job description for 2017-2018 interim Dorm 1 position as we transition to a more supported, two-person coordinator position for new Dorm 2, Minutes of the B&G Committee, Executive Board Minutes, Interview with B&G Committee

## CHILD PROTECTION – WASC FOCUS ON LEARNING (2017)

The school has included an additional section in its self-study report on Child Protection, using the criteria and indicators from the 2017 WASC Focus on Learning Protocol.

The school established a 9-person Child Protection Team in the spring of 2016 with the goal of developing an articulated Code of Conduct that specifically addressed Child Protection measures. As part of the self-study report, the Child Protection Team met to review the 11 Child Protection criteria and indicators from the 2017 FOL. The school's Child Protection Team's responses are noted below:

Criterion	Indicator	School's Response	Status
<b>A1 School Leadership</b>	The school has clearly defined leadership responsibilities for child safety and duty of care.	The school is legally required to immediately report any reported cases of abuse to the Sapporo authorities.	Complete
<b>A4 Staff</b>	<b>Child Protection A4:1</b> - The school has recruitment policies and executes rigorous recruitment procedures that ensure all employees and volunteers are of sound moral character and suitable people to work with children and young adults. These procedures may include criminal records/background checks, training, and/or other such means as may be suitable.	All incoming teachers have completed online child protection training and have either completed background checks or are in the process of finalizing them.	Ongoing

<b>A4 Staff</b>	<b>Child Protection A4:2</b> -The school has developed and adopted a code of conduct and written guidelines for appropriate behavior of adults towards children and children towards other children. All faculty, staff, volunteers, and contractors agree to abide by this code of conduct.	The school has published a Code of Conduct with specific references to child protection and compliance with the school's reporting procedures for any suspected child abuse. All faculty and staff are required to read, sign and abide by the policy.  The school has a Child Abuse Report Form, a Student and Staff Protection Policy and Protocol, standing report from the Head of School to the Executive Board, referral services and staff training on child protection through the Darkness to Light organization.	Complete
<b>A4 Staff</b>	<b>Child Protection A4:3</b> - The school provides training for all faculty and staff in the implementation of child protection policies.	Staff training on child protection is provided through the Darkness to Light organization and its training programs.	Complete
<b>A6 Resources</b>	Child Protection - Due regard is given to building and facility design, layout, and use to ensure best practice in child safety and protection.	The school has identified the need for a first-floor handicap bathroom to become the main staff and handicap bathroom.	Ongoing
<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:1</b> - The school has developed and adopted an appropriate definition of child abuse including physical, emotional or sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, neglect, commercial exploitation, and inappropriate behavior of children towards other children.	The school has developed and adopted an appropriate definition of child abuse which is clearly articulated to all staff.	Complete
<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:2</b> - The school has specific child protection policies, practices and faculty and staff training programs to ensure the safety and welfare of all students within boarding facilities, homestay and residential arrangements and on excursions, trips and student exchanges. These policies and practices are reviewed regularly.	Sapporo City provides child protection training for school volunteers  All staff must complete the Darkness to Light training program for child protection  The school is also considering the benefits of utilizing training resources at Educare	Ongoing
<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:3</b> - The school has a scheduled program of regular, systematic professional training for volunteers, contractors, faculty, and staff on student safeguarding, child abuse prevention, recognition, intervention, and reporting.	The school's membership of local child protection groups has enabled the school to bring in child protection trainers (in Japanese) to train school volunteers and staff However the school notes that more Japanese language resources and training is required.	Ongoing
<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:4</b> - The school has in place formal learning programs through the school experience related to child protection.	Not fully developed.  Sapporo City provides child protection training for school volunteers  All staff must complete the Darkness to Light training program for child protection	Ongoing
<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:5</b> - The school has developed structured procedures for reporting suspected or disclosed maltreatment or abuse and adopts a formal policy identifying actions to be taken, including informing appropriate authorities.	The school follows a recognized process and procedures for reporting suspected or disclosed abuse. Legal requirements are in place to immediately inform Sapporo authorities of any suspected case of child abuse. The school has a clear documentation process including a specific Child Abuse Report Form.	Complete

<b>D1 Resources</b>	<b>Child Protection D1:6</b> - The school is cognizant of cultural expectations and complies with the legal and ethical expectations and requirements regarding child abuse within the country in which it operates.	The school is fully cognizant of cultural expectations and complies with legal and ethical expectations and requirements regarding child abuse.	Complete
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The school continues to work through its Child Protection Team to review child protection policy, procedures, practices and resources. There is clear evidence to suggest the school is focused and committed to ensuring it remains a safe and protective place for all students. The Child Protection Team has identified a number of items it wishes to focus on in future meetings. This includes safety issues such as gym and playground usage, safety in the science lab, ski club, protocols for dealing with injuries at school, injury report forms, and emergency kits.

### **Visiting Committee Feedback for the Child Protection Team at HIS:**

The Visiting Committee recommends the Child Protection Team create a Child Protection Policy which clearly communicates how the 11 criteria are managed at HIS. This policy will then be widely disseminated to help the school support student safety and respond effectively to issues involving the safety and protection of students.

The policy should cover the following areas which are in alignment with the 11 criteria identified above:

1. Define the designated person who is responsible for overseeing child protection at the school.
2. Clearly define non-negotiables for hiring practices including: police background check in home country and current country of residence or employment, as well as personal reference checks.
3. Annual staff and faculty training to ensure consistent understanding of the responsibilities faculty have in ensuring student safety.
4. Establish a structure for educating students about abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
5. Reporting procedures for suspected child abuse.
6. Code of Conduct for all school staff.
7. Procedures for addressing student allegations against staff members or other members of the community.
8. Safety expectations for school facilities including the dorm buildings.

## **Part B: Schoolwide Strengths and Critical Areas for Follow-up**

The previous WASC Self-Study Visiting Committee identified 7 schoolwide strengths and 7 critical areas for follow up. The school's strengths included its positive multicultural learning environment, a sense of respect and care, a committed staff, the adoption of the International Primary Curriculum and International Middle Years Curriculum, and the dedication of the parents and professional staff.

The 7 critical areas for follow up have remained the focus point for the school's action plan and school improvement efforts for the past 6 years. These were as follows:

1. Further development, articulation and communication of a vertically aligned, standards based P-12 curriculum to inform assessment and instruction building on the existing curriculum.
2. Systematic analysis of assessment data to inform curriculum development and instructional practices.
3. Development and implementation of a clear set of expected instructional practices based on research and the needs of the students at Hokkaido International School.

4. Provide a coordinated system of student support services that addresses all student needs.
5. Development of systems for assessing and reporting the school's Transdisciplinary Skills and Dispositions (TADS) - which subsequently became the HUSKIES
6. Enhance communication systems, inclusive of all stakeholders, to support student learning and more broadly the curricular and co-curricular programs, and other community information.
7. Ensure an adequate strategy for redrafting the action plan and developing structures for monitoring progress in a systematic and timely manner.

The subsequent mid-cycle visiting committee (2015) identified additional steps for the school to take as it progressed forward with these 7 critical areas for follow-up. Progress towards each of these critical areas included in the self-study, and noted in Chapter 2 of this report. HIS is a school committed to ongoing improvement and these focus areas have been important goals for the school since the completion of its last self-study in 2012.

Once again, the Visiting Committee acknowledges the hard work of the staff and community in completing this particular self-study process. This is a major undertaking for all schools, perhaps even more so for smaller schools like HIS where the faculty and administration frequently take on multiple responsibilities. Undoubtedly, there is a strong sense of community at HIS. This is a genuine source of strength for the school, and when aligned, offers the HIS community enormous potential for success. The Visiting Committee is grateful for the warm welcome it has received and for the open dialogue it has enjoyed with school leaders, board members, parents, teachers and most importantly the highly impressive students who are the life-force of the school. The Visiting Committee is proud to have served the HIS community during this self-study visit and is hopeful that the following areas of strength and critical areas for follow-up, will provide the school with the direction, the leadership, the alignment, the clarity, the continuity and improvement this school deserves.

### Schoolwide Areas of Strength

1. **Foundational Statements** HIS has developed a strong philosophy for the school through its Foundational School statements. These have been developed around a changing educational environment and are clearly focused on improving student learning and developing global citizens.
2. **Board** The school is fortunate to have an Executive Board and Board of Counselors who are committed to the continued success and wellbeing of the school.
3. **Community** The visiting committee commends HIS students, teachers, parents, and administration in their focus on maintaining and developing a truly caring, supportive, and tight-knit community. The emphasis on community has been clearly evident throughout the visiting committee's time at HIS.
4. **Faculty** The faculty and leadership at HIS collectively demonstrate a strong sense of aspiration and passion towards student success. It is clear that this group is caring and deeply committed to student learning.
5. **Students** HIS, through a focus on student voice and student agency, has developed an environment whereby the student body feel valued and safe to express themselves. The students at HIS are confident, articulate, and possess a high degree of ownership over their education.
6. **HUSKIES** The school's schoolwide learner outcomes, the HUSKIES, are deeply and meaningfully embedded into all aspects of teaching in learning throughout the school. HIS is to be commended for its focus in incorporating these core principles into the education of its students by means of initiatives like the CDGP and through its assessment and reporting structures.

7. **Holistic Education** The visiting committee recognizes and commends the school's continuous efforts to ensure a holistic approach to learning including a well-defined focus on service learning, outdoor education, community interaction, and the incorporation of the HUSKIES into the HIS school culture.
8. **Small School** HIS has a yet untapped potential to capitalize on its unique small school environment to realize expanded learning opportunities and personalized learning experiences available for all students.

## **Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-Up**

The Visiting Committee has listened carefully to the many voices that make up the HIS community. We see a great deal of devotion and care for the school. It is an institution that means so much to so many. Clearly everyone wants the school to continue to grow and improve. Indeed since the last self-study important steps have been taken in a number of areas across the school and some improvements have been made. However, as is sometimes the case, in our eagerness to make things better we often get overwhelmed with more great ideas, more new initiatives, and more things to do. We should never lose sight of the fact that schools should be aspirational places, but to be a successful school we sometimes need to manage our aspirations and focus our energies on the most important things first. This Visiting Committee believes HIS has the potential to realize its aspirations. However, it needs to learn how to manage these aspirations in ways that will allow its true potential to be realized. Based on the Visiting Committee's belief that the school currently lacks the capacity to effectively manage a comprehensive set of critical areas for follow up, the Visiting Committee agreed to identify only two critical areas for follow up with a strong recommendation that the school addresses both with the necessary determination and commitment.

### **1. Leadership & Decision Making**

The Visiting Committee recognizes a growing sense of uncertainty and confusion caused by the many partial or incomplete initiatives that exist across the school. This lack of sustainability is undermining confidence and negatively impacting morale. This situation is also being exacerbated by the perception of an organizational inability to make effective, timely, and informed decisions. There is clearly a lack of accountability and no agreed structure on how decisions are made. The need to reduce this growing negativity amongst staff and provide a common sense of purpose and direction that unites the school is now essential for HIS to go forward with any sense of confidence.

The Visiting Committee therefore recommends:

- a) The Head of School, with the support of the Executive Board, leads the development and adoption of a simple process framework that identifies who is responsible for making decisions, and secondly makes these individuals or groups accountable to the community for the work required.
- b) Those identified with responsibilities will be required to develop with the support and involvement of the Head of School, appropriate systems, processes and structures so decision making is aligned and the school community has clarity. These systems, processes and structures must be clearly articulated and shared with the school community.
- c) The development of a clear organizational chart that shows the school's governance and leadership structures, the school decision making processes, and where responsibilities lie. This organizational chart must be communicated with the community and included in the school's next WASC Progress Report.

### **2. Improved Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**

Over the years, HIS has built a strong reputation for the quality of its holistic approach to education. The school's unique setting has inspired an educational experience that not only delivers academically, but also taps into the rich learning environment that surrounds the school. Character development, leadership training and unique outdoor educational opportunities are recognized hallmarks of HIS. However, the Visiting Committee believes the school must address a number of growing student support needs that go beyond the hallmarks of character building and outdoor education. We have listened attentively and observed carefully during our visit. We have heard from parents, teachers, and students that there is an urgent need to provide more effective support for a wide range of personal and academic needs across the school.

The Visiting Committee would recommend the school considers how it can support the following:

1. The provision of appropriate guidance counselling services to support students to gain admission to the universities and colleges of their choice
2. The provision and availability of essential socio-emotional counselling support for students across the school, especially for those students participating in the school's boarding program.
3. The provision of appropriate learning support resources to ensure the school is doing its best to serve the needs of each student.
4. The development of clear and comprehensive child protection policies, practices, and procedures that demonstrate to the community that HIS is fully committed to the safety and well-being of each student.
5. The development of clear schoolwide health and safety procedures, for example a scheduled plan for first aid training for key personnel
6. The development of a more robust set of practices and procedures to ensure a safe and healthy living environment for all students participating in the boarding program.

This recommendation is made at a time when there are growing requirements being placed on all international schools to meet the highest standards possible for child protection. WASC has already included a number of new child protection requirements into its accreditation process and will place an increasingly strong emphasis on student safety and well-being. It is incumbent on all WASC accredited schools to take the necessary steps to ensure stringent child protection measures are adopted.

## **Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement**

The Visiting Committee acknowledges the work of those leading the WASC process, not only in completing the self-study but also for their efforts to develop an action plan that can guide it through its next accreditation cycle. The development of an action plan that is clearly aligned to the needs of the school and is structured in a way that tasks, actions, responsibilities, timelines, resources and evidence of accomplishment are understood, is a complex undertaking. It not only takes time to reflect and build a strategic understanding of what the action plan is intended to do, but also the courage to cut away pieces which may distract us from the really important work. The quality of any action plan is easily compromised when we try to fit in everything we see as being necessary for our school to improve. The action plan sections address the critical areas for follow-up that HIS identified in its self-study. However, the Visiting Committee suggests a revision of the action plan to ensure it incorporates the critical areas for follow up identified by the visiting committee. At the same time it will be necessary, given the findings of the Visiting Committee, for the school to reassess its identified critical learner needs to ensure student needs are being effectively addressed. The action plan proposed in the self-study remains valid, but should be reviewed and where possible steps should be taken to ensure its scope is manageable and the capacity to make it workable is in place.

### **Will the action plan steps enhance student learning?**

The 4 broad goals identified in the action plan: School Systems and Processes, Academic Rigor, Character/Leadership/Service and Schoolwide Resource Plan each have the potential to enhance student learning in a variety of ways.

### **Is the action plan a “user-friendly” schoolwide action plan that has integrated all major school initiatives**

The action plan is clearly structured and relatively easy to read. In addition to tasks, action steps, staff responsible, timelines, resources and evidence of accomplishment, it also provides an overarching goal, rationale, a description of what success will look like and an overview of the review process. However, the Visiting Committee did not observe a high degree of congruence between the findings identified within the self-study and the tasks and action steps identified in the action plans.

### **Is the action plan feasible within existing resources?**

The Visiting Committee is concerned that HIS is not well positioned to achieve the tasks detailed within their current action plan. Rationale for this concern rests in the reality that limited progress was made on the 2012 self-study action plan as well as recent initiatives like the Strategic Planning Committee or the Branding Committee that began important work but ultimately failed to achieve their objectives.

### **Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system wide?**

There is concern that commitment to the action plan is not shared equally schoolwide and system wide. HIS should be commended for working hard and trying to make improvements in a variety of areas of the school. Evidence in the self-study and gathered during conversations with all stakeholders suggests that while people feel as though they are working diligently, they are doing so without clarity of direction. The Visiting Committee is concerned that the lack of direction might create an obstacle in creating commitment to its action plans.

### **Existing factors that support school improvement**

HIS stakeholders are largely passionate and appear to care about the well-being of the school and its students. There is a clear desire throughout the HIS community for improvement.

### **Impediments to improvement that the school will need to overcome?**

The impediments to improvement are a lack of clarity in identifying the roles responsible for actionable tasks; unclear alignment that is contributing to ambiguity for people in the organization. The school is lacking appropriate decision making systems and a lack of agreed upon protocols that enable meetings to be productive. There are also several issues surrounding the function, capacity and membership of both the Executive Board and Board of Councilors. The governance structures are unclear to the community.

### **Soundness of follow-up process that the school intends to use for monitoring the accomplishment of the schoolwide action plan**

Multiple stakeholders within the organization identified monitoring of processes and initiatives as an area of improvement for the school. The school identified this as a growth area in multiple areas of its report. For example, the school has systems in place to support ELL students or students with academic concerns. It lacks, however, a protocol to monitor the effectiveness of these systems. The design of the action plan includes a place where evidence of accomplishment is required. Although responsibilities have been assigned it remains uncertain whether or not these particular groups or individuals will have the capacity to effectively monitor the action plan.

## **Conclusion**

The Visiting Committee recognizes the strong sense of community that has traditionally existed at HIS. This is indeed one of the great strengths of small schools. Throughout the visit we witnessed numerous moments where students from across the school intuitively connected and celebrated their school experience. The students at HIS are wonderful ambassadors for the school and demonstrate a strong sense of purpose and unity in their learning. We also recognize that the students are supported by a passionate faculty, a committed leadership and a focused board. There is clear evidence that the school is keen to grow, keen to strengthen and keen to succeed. Indeed it is perhaps this sense of community that gives HIS such an opportunity for future success. However, realizing this potential has become a challenge because the leadership structures and decision-making processes needed for ongoing improvement are unclear. HIS is a unique school with a unique community. The goal for everyone is to begin working together in a unified and cohesive manner, supported by clear decision-making structures and a shared understanding of the school's priorities. This alignment of purpose and resources will undoubtedly assist HIS as it takes its next steps.

We wish you well.

Cameron Fox

WASC Visiting Committee, Chair

11 May 2018