

Upon completion of the 2011 Osaka International School self-evaluation

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The 2011 self-evaluation process for Osaka International School has provided a significant opportunity for us to review some of the most important aspects of the changes brought about to the school as a result of the foundation merger of April 2010. The cooperation of the various departments of the foundation on the Uegahara campus and representatives of WASC, along with the understanding of the Evaluation Promotion Committee have been crucial to bringing the process to a successful completion. The efforts of all involved is much appreciated.

Prior to the foundation merger there were many questions asked about the effects that the merger would have on the education taking place on the Senri campus, and to the way school operations would change with a different governing body in charge. It is for this reason, amongst others, that WASC requires a substantive change report to be submitted at the time of such change. Now two years past the date of the merger, the timing of the study was ideally suited to seek answers to these questions. This study looked in detail at the aspects of governance and resourcing which underpin everything that happens at the school.

The governance structure of the previous Senri International School Foundation was often criticized in relation to its efficacy to support learning at Osaka International School. It is clear from the areas of strength outlined in category A of the report that the merger has been useful in providing a way to clarify the mission and purpose of the school, and at the same time provide an opportunity to look at how the founding statements of OIS/SIS complement those of Kwansei Gakuin. The conclusion drawn through the self-evaluation process was that the missions do indeed complement each other very well. That recognition has been given for this, means that we can be confident that we are working from a solid base as we implement the programs of study for our students. We can also take from the report's conclusions that the governance structures now in place do indeed support the learning taking place at Osaka International School.

While areas of strength have been recognized, there are still areas of growth into which we need to put continued efforts.

The complications of running an English language based school within a Japanese language based foundation remain significant. Notably from the report, the process of translation of documents is an area that we need to work on. Clear communication within OIS itself and between the Senri Campus and Uegahara will be dependent upon KG as a whole being successful in this venture.

OIS is beginning to become more familiar with the structures in place within Kwansei Gakuin, but we can still improve in the way that we make the most effective use of the resources that are available to us. We are still working to understand clearly the budget submission process and timeline and to learn how we can use this to provide resources in the best way to support classroom learning. The report highlights needs to link teacher evaluation and resource allocation as well as the creation of a clearer school wide action plan. Similarly, student achievement, as it is assessed by teachers and by students themselves, needs to be linked clearly with our published student learning results. Both these things suggest that we need to continue to put effort into the way that we employ the structures that underpin the running of the school to keep our "Focus on Learning".

This study, the feedback from WASC and the general comments received from the wider community, give a clear message that the foundation merger has been a positive move for Osaka International School. We hope that reciprocally the same is true for Kwansei Gakuin as a whole and look forward to moving on from here to develop educational programs that continue to be at the forefront of international education.

Significant findings from the WASC substantive change report

The focus of the 2011 annual evaluation for OIS was the effectiveness of the new governance structure resulting from the merger of the Senri International School Foundation (SISF) and Kwansei Gakuin Educational Foundation (KG).

This evaluation also served as a substantive change report to the school's accrediting agency the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The substantive change report fulfills part of OIS's full evaluation which will take place in 2013.

The data was collected over a 6 month period and included input from all faculty and administration and selected groups of parents.

The means of collecting data was through interview, questionnaire, documentation and a visiting committee investigation.

A. Organization for Student Learning

School Purpose

1. The school has established a clear statement of purpose that reflects the beliefs and philosophy of the institution. The purpose is defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) that form the basis of the educational program for every student.

Governance

2. The governing authority (a) adopts policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes) for the school, (b) delegates implementation of these policies to the professional staff and (c) monitors results.

School Leadership

3. The school leadership (1) makes decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes), (2) empowers the staff and (3) encourages commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning

School Improvement Process

7. The school leadership facilitates school improvement which (a) is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students, (b) has school community support and involvement, (c) effectively guides the work of the school, and (d) provides for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan.

WASC Category A: Organization for Student Learning Areas of Strength and Growth Needs

Areas of Strength	
a.	OIS has a clear mission and purpose for the school
b.	KG is an established organization
c.	KG and OIS mission statements complement each other
d.	The staff at OIS understand their position descriptions
e.	Clear avenues for communication exist at OIS
f.	The staff is encouraged to voice concerns
g.	There are regular contributions to school action plans are made by a variety of share holders.
Growth Needs	
a.	To develop a clear process of translation between KG and OIS - key documents need to be translated into English
b.	To ensure concerns are addressed i.e. status updates
c.	To better define link between teacher evaluation and resource allocation
d.	To renew an overall school wide action plan needs which is made public and reviewed collaboratively
e.	To monitor student achievement in regard to the student learning results
f.	To Structured K-12 student self reflection on their achievement of SLR is needed
g.	To make assessment data from grade reports easily accessible to review, discuss and take action on
h.	The clarify the connection between teacher evaluation and strategic planning

D. Resource Management and Development

Resources

1. 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 of the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes).

Resource Planning

2. The governing authority and the school leadership execute responsible resource planning for the future.

WASC Category D: Resource Management and Development

Areas of Strength	
a.	Currently the library has adequate facilities and resources
b.	Professional Development is organized and meets the needs of the faculty
Growth Needs	
a.	To strengthen the relationship between the "...decisions about resource allocation, the school's purpose and the achievement of expected school wide learning results,..." as the budget process evolves with the school's new relationship with KG.
b.	To clarify procedures regarding the acquisition of audio-visual /support technology equipment.