

CIS Accreditation Report

The International School of Koje

May 2021

Evaluator *Mr Rick Spradling*

Table of Contents

Part 1: Basic Information - Membership Evaluation	1
Part 1: Reflective Statements - Head of School - Membership Evaluation	2
Part 1: Reflective Statements - Governors and Board - Membership Evaluation	3
Domain A: Purpose and direction - A1 - Membership Evaluation	4
Domain A: Purpose and direction - A2 - Membership Evaluation	6
Domain A: Purpose and direction - A3 - Membership Evaluation	7
Domain A: Purpose and direction - A4 - Membership Evaluation	9
Domain A: Purpose and direction - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	10
Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B1 - Membership Evaluation	11
Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B2 - Membership Evaluation	13
Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B3 - Membership Evaluation	15
Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	17
Domain C: The curriculum - C1 - Membership Evaluation	18
Domain C: The curriculum - C2 - Membership Evaluation	20
Domain C: The curriculum - C3 - Membership Evaluation	21
Domain C: The curriculum - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	23

Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D1 - Membership Evaluation	24
Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D2 - Membership Evaluation	26
Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D3 - Membership Evaluation	27
Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	28
Domain E: Well-being - E1 - Membership Evaluation	29
Domain E: Well-being - E2 - Membership Evaluation	31
Domain E: Well-being - E3 - Membership Evaluation	33
Domain E: Well-being - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	34
Domain F: Staffing - F1 - Membership Evaluation	35
Domain F: Staffing - F2 - Membership Evaluation	37
Domain F: Staffing - F3 - Membership Evaluation	38
Domain F: Staffing - F4 - Membership Evaluation	39
Domain F: Staffing - F5 - Membership Evaluation	40
Domain F: Staffing - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	42
Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G1 - Membership Evaluation	43
Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G2 - Membership Evaluation	45
Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G3 - Membership Evaluation	47

Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	48
Domain H: Community and home partnerships - H1 - Membership Evaluation	49
Domain H: Community and home partnerships - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation	51
Part 3: Conclusions - Membership Evaluation	52

Part 1: Basic Information - Membership Evaluation

The information required is contextual: how the school is structured, accreditation history and any recent changes to the school.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

This information has been reviewed by the evaluator and provides useful context for the preparatory evaluation visit as a whole. The honest assessment of the school's variable and uncertain enrolment picture is especially valuable and gives important background for many aspects of the visit.

Commendations

CIS does not require commendations in this section.

Recommendations

CIS does not require recommendations in this section.

Part 1: Reflective Statements - Head of School - Membership Evaluation

The Head of School has the opportunity to relate the application for CIS Membership or Accreditation to the school's own Guiding Statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

This reflective statement provides helpful background on the school's desire to receive CIS accreditation and the alignment of the school's guiding statements with CIS expectations. The crosswalk of ISK's mission components and how they are implemented is especially well done, and the explicit linkage to global citizenship in teacher's planning documents is also very helpful.

Commendations

CIS does not require commendations in this section.

Recommendations

CIS does not require recommendations in this section.

Part 1: Reflective Statements - Governors and Board - Membership Evaluation

The Board, as the custodian of the school's mission and vision, is able to reflect on the application for CIS Membership or Accreditation, the CIS Code of Ethics and the school's Purpose & Direction.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

This reflective statement provides helpful background on the school's desire to receive CIS accreditation and the alignment of the school's guiding statements with CIS expectations.

Commendations

CIS does not require commendations in this section.

Recommendations

CIS does not require recommendations in this section.

Domain A: Purpose and direction - A1 - Membership Evaluation

The school's purpose, direction, and decision-making is guided by clear and aspirational guiding statements that are appropriate for the needs of all constituent groups and the context of the school.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The International School of Kojé has developed a clear set of guiding statements since its founding over a decade ago. As recently as 2018, the school's mission and vision were formally reviewed using community-wide input. The resulting revised purpose and direction are captured in a mission statement of five bullet points and further elaborated in four specific steps to success in achieving that mission. A helpful tagline summarizes the ISK vision: "to become a passionate learning community". The school has developed a series of age-appropriate visual representations of these guiding statements, to which are added the personal goals associated with the IPC and IMYC. These posters are widely visible throughout classrooms and common spaces around the school, and staff widely agreed that these expressions of the school's purpose were embedded in lesson plans and daily conversations. The guiding statements in their revised form were indirectly approved by the foundation board that oversees the school in the sense that the board offered no concerns or objections to the revisions when they were presented by the school administration. The school leadership relies on these guiding statements when making major decisions. For example, the impact on COVID has been addressed through "caring for ourselves and each other" and being "safe and healthy", to use the words of the mission and steps to success. Many of the school's important policies make specific reference to the wording of the school's mission and vision. Parents who were interviewed indicated that ISK's values were a key reason they had enrolled their children at the school, especially the focus on international mindedness and the IPC/IMYC curricula, which support mission goals such as confidence, self-reflection, challenge, curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong learning. Although the school has had significant fluctuations in enrollment in recent times, and will be considering ways to recruit more students in the future, school leaders were

clear that the school's guiding statements were deeply held and would not be substantially altered as the school takes steps to add to the student body. It is clear that ISK truly lives its guiding statements in daily life and in long-range planning.

Commendations

Domain A Standard 1 - The school leadership and community for articulating and embedding a clear set of age-appropriate statements of purpose and direction which guide daily and strategic decisions about the school.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain A: Purpose and direction - A2 - Membership Evaluation

The guiding statements provide clear commitment to high-quality learning and teaching which is effectively implemented at each stage of a student's pathway through the school.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

During the 2018-2019 school year, ISK administration and staff collaborated in the development of a school-specific definition of high-quality teaching and learning, which draws heavily on the IPC/IMYC foundational principles of knowledge, skills, and understanding. This definition has been captured in a graphic visualisation widely displayed around the school. Staff reported use of this definition to guide their instructional planning, with specific references in lesson plans and a shorthand set of symbols and key of terms which students also recognize and help scaffold their learning around these precepts.

Despite the school's self-rating, the evidence clearly indicates that ISK already meets the criteria of the preparatory evaluation stage, and thus a higher rating is warranted.

Commendations

Domain A Standard 2 - The school leadership and staff for their shared understanding of high-quality teaching and learning, which is incorporated into daily planning and instructional delivery by teachers, and is understood by students as well.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain A: Purpose and direction - A3 - Membership Evaluation

The guiding statements provide clear commitment to developing global citizenship and intercultural learning.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

As with the other components of this domain, ISK has developed a school-specific definition, of international mindedness in this case, which guides the community's implementation of the mission components: "care for...the world around us" and that students should "be...global citizens". Being "internationally minded" is one of the four steps to success in support of the school's mission, and a simple definition "learning who we are, being open and connecting to our world" is another of the powerful graphic representations of the school's beliefs on display around classrooms and common areas. As noted in A1, parents greatly support this school belief, and students are regularly encouraged to demonstrate international mindedness through a weekly trophy awarded in the primary school, regular notes of appreciation from staff to students ("Boogie letters"), and attention in the secondary school to important goals of the United Nations. Staff echoed the school's abiding commitment to global citizenship, and felt that the school could always strive to embrace outreach even more, while recognizing that COVID-19 restrictions had unfortunately curtailed some of the school's activities to connect with the local and global community.

Commendations

Domain A Standard 3 - The school community as a whole - students, staff, and parents - for embracing international mindedness as part of the school's core beliefs and incorporating this focus into daily life for students.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain A: Purpose and direction - A4 - Membership Evaluation

The guiding statements provide clear commitment to well-being, conform to the CIS Code of Ethics, and demonstrate commitment to the values inherent in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990).

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

As noted in A1, ISK has clear language in its guiding statements demonstrating its commitment to well-being. In addition, the school's membership report includes a compelling and explicit crosswalk linking the school's beliefs and the CIS Code of Ethics, clearly demonstrating alignment with the latter document. The school has also offered some focus on the United Nations sustainability goals, though the impact of COVID-19 has meant that activities in support of these goals has been largely curtailed in recent months. Although the school's statements of purpose and direction certainly include words and phrases aligned to the intentions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, more overt emphasis on this important global document could be considered, including use of a child-friendly version of this document added to the other powerful displays around school.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain A Standard 4 - The school leadership and staff consider further incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, in age-appropriate and child-friendly language, in its visual displays of purpose and direction around the school, to stimulate deeper discussion of these important concepts.

Domain A: Purpose and direction - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school's actions should be supplemented by recommendations indicated by the evaluator in this report under the various standards which are not already in the school's plan, specifically some increased emphasis on student and staff understanding of the UN Rights of the Child.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B1 - Membership Evaluation

The respective roles and responsibilities of governance and/or ownership and leadership are suitably defined in writing, respected in practice, and aligned with the CIS Code of Ethics to enable the sustainable development of the school.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has a somewhat unusual governance and leadership structure. The founding and sponsoring company (Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering) has set up an educational foundation to oversee both ISK and Kojé University, as the local employers see the importance of having international schooling and higher education available to attract both local and expatriate families. The foundation is governed by an eight-member board, whose role for ISK is primarily to approve budget and finances, appoint the senior leadership of the school, maintain oversight of the school's capital assets, and provide commentary on the school's strategic and long-range planning. Major school initiatives are shared with the board, who then may provide comment. In the absence of a direct rejection, the school can assume that their proposals are accepted and can go forward with implementation.

The school founding company recommends a local executive as ISK's head of school, who must then be approved by the foundation board of directors. The head of school is technically the ultimate administrator of the school, though this role is primarily the handling of administrative matters. The board sets up a selection committee to oversee the appointment of a new principal, who is the educational leader of the school. The principal and head of school collaborate on some areas of oversight relating to finance and human resources, though the head of school is the ultimate authority for all hiring and operational decisions. The head and principal are joined by a Korean business manager as the senior leadership of the school. A vice principal position, previously in place, was eliminated as a cost savings due to the COVID drop in enrolment. The head of school and business

manager meet with the board but the principal does not; board meetings are conducted in Korean. The head of school and principal appear to have a successful collaborative relationship.

Although the structure is somewhat confusing on paper, and unusual in terms of best practice in international school governance, the ISK community generally seems clear on who to approach for various issues. The head of school has an office and is at school all day, takes a serious role in school affairs, and was commended by many for knowing all the students' names and being an integral part of the school. At the same time, the head of school role is normally a two-year position only, with a new head thus being selected fairly often, which may be less than ideal in terms of leadership continuity. Commendably, the school is in the process of setting up an Advisory Committee, whose membership will include parents, staff, administration, and representatives of key local companies. The committee will provide guidance on school planning, but is not a decision-making body.

All members of the community agreed that the governing board and senior leaders acted in clear alignment with the CIS Code of Ethics. Although the school's leadership and governing structure seems to be working well, the system could be more clearly spelled out in documentation going forward, including a comprehensive "who to see for what" FAQ sheet, to more effectively align with the standards of this domain.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain B Standard 1 (Major) - The school governance and leadership capture the somewhat complex nature of the school's governing and leadership structure in clearly documented descriptions and procedures, so that the entire school community can understand their workings.

Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B2 - Membership Evaluation

The head of school is empowered to be the educational leader and, in partnership with the governors and/or owners, has clearly defined responsibility and accountability for student learning, well-being, global citizenship, and the culture of the school as a whole.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

Both the head of school and the principal have clear job descriptions, the Head responsible for administration and long-range planning, the principal responsible for education, with some overlapping roles and responsibilities in the areas of finance and human resources. In the case of staffing, for instance, the principal does the majority of the screening and selection, but the Head has final sign-off authority. Staff felt that these respective roles and responsibilities were fairly clear, but perhaps understandably, the Principal was their primary go-to, especially since the recent elimination of the vice principal role. Parents had a similar impression, seeking out the principal or the academic coordinators to resolve individual issues and concerns. The head of school is appraised by the foundation board, but the principal does not currently have a formal appraisal process (though, commendably, this omission is already listed as a planned action in the school's development plan).

The school will need to address any perceived ambiguity in roles, along with formalising the appraisal process for the principal as well as head of school, as it proceeds into the preparatory evaluation phase of its CIS accreditation.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain B Standard 2 - The school board and leadership complete and implement a regular

and formal appraisal process for the school principal.

Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - B3 - Membership Evaluation

The governors and/or owners and leaders ensure there is educational and financial [strategic and operational] planning to support the school's viability and implementation of the guiding statements, and that these plans are appropriately communicated to the school community.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The impact of COVID-19 on the school's primary clientele in the shipbuilding industry has been dramatic, with ISK dropping from a high of over 500 students a few years ago to its current enrolment of around 75 students. Naturally, this drop in income has resulted in financial deficits the past couple of years, which have been covered by the foundation's corporate sponsors. Although the school has adjusted its expenses and staffing, the school's governing board has commendably retained as many staff as possible to maintain high-quality education for ISK's students. The annual budget is approved by the board but the principal and academic team have considerable input during the budget planning process. The school's finances are independently audited regularly, though a full audit report will need to be shared with CIS as part of the preparatory evaluation accreditation stage. The school's very capable business manager develops rudimentary three-year financial plans, though these should be more detailed when shared with CIS for the preparatory evaluation. Understandably, there is some degree of anxiety among parents and staff about the school's future, and additional communication to the school community about the sponsors' highly commendable commitment to maintain the school's existence, and its vital importance to the local corporate sector, would be wise and greatly appreciated.

Commendations

Domain B Standard 3 (Major) - The school's foundation board and corporate sponsors for their visionary understanding of the importance of ISK's existence, and their commitment to

continue financial support of the school in the future.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain B: Governance, ownership and leadership - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school is especially well-positioned due to its current (2020-2023) school improvement plan, which is excellently aligned with CIS accreditation domains. The school's actions should be supplemented by the recommendations indicated by the evaluator in this report under the various standards which are not already in the plan (specifically, documenting the roles of board, head, and principal).

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain C: The curriculum - C1 - Membership Evaluation

The curriculum as a whole, offers access, engagement, and challenge to support the intellectual, physical, social, and emotional needs of all students

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has made a thoughtful and conscious decision to embrace the curriculum framework of the International Early Year Curriculum (IEYC), International Primary Curriculum (IPC), and International Middle Years Curriculum (IMYC) to support its mission, vision, and values. In the school's final years (high school), the school is currently following the IGCSE and A/S Levels, though there are very few students in those programs at present. The school's admissions process is very clear about the school's curriculum and beliefs, and the entire school community - students, staff, and parents - uniformly praised and supported the school's chosen approach. The International Curriculum continuum is felt to be learning-focused and inquiry-minded, developing student independence, and well-aligned with the school's commitment to global citizenship and its multi-national student body. Students who have left the school have been surveyed and found to have made smooth transitions to higher education or other schools (both domestic and international). The school's program is commendably broad and includes social-emotional learning as well as physical education, all within the IC framework. The IC's eight Personal Goals are roundly embraced by students at all levels, and linked by teachers to instructional themes. The school's stated commitment to well-being is reflected in wellness classes, and healthy living is specifically included in lesson plan templates. There are numerous after-school activities, clubs, and sports which can be accessed by all students, a benefit of the school's small size at present. The school's sole Year 13 student stated that he felt well challenged and had been properly prepared to gain university entrance. To its great credit, the school's academic leaders and staff have developed illustrative crosswalks of the IC with CIS's standards; these will facilitate subsequent stages in the accreditation process.

Commendations

Domain C Standard 1 (Major) - The school for its effective implementation of the IEYC, IPC, and IMYC in alignment with the school's purpose and direction, and its demonstration of the alignment of its curriculum with the CIS accreditation standards for each of its academic divisions.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain C: The curriculum - C2 - Membership Evaluation

The documented curriculum determines the development of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attributes, including well-being and intercultural competencies relevant to the students' current and future development.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The International Curriculum (from Fieldwork) is thoroughly implemented at ISK from Reception through Year 10. The school's curriculum documentation is comprehensive and well-structured. References to knowledge, skills, and understanding are embedded in teacher's lesson plan templates, and explicitly posted in all classrooms and many common spaces. Students were able to articulate these expectations, and could also give compelling examples of opportunities to expand their understanding and to challenge their personal perceptions, values, and attitudes.

Commendations

Domain C Standard 2 - The school leadership and staff for developing effective planning frameworks to ensure the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and understanding in all areas and levels, in alignment with the school's guiding statements.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain C: The curriculum - C3 - Membership Evaluation

Global citizenship, intercultural learning, and digital citizenship are intentionally planned for within the curriculum to ensure students are well prepared for life beyond school.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has a very explicit commitment to global citizenship, through its definition and emphasis on international mindedness. The school's student body and staff are both multi-national, and opportunities for exchange of perceptions and experiences are widespread. The IC frameworks embed this concept on a daily basis in nearly all subject areas. At the same time, the school takes pains to embrace the host country culture and language. Korean is taught at various fluency levels and available to almost all students (high school students may not be able to work Korean in their schedules), and Korean culture is embraced through numerous on- and off-campus activities (though the latter have been sadly curtailed for the time being due to COVID-19 restrictions). Students and parents alike expressed appreciation for the school's attention to both global citizenship and host country culture. ISK teaches computing lessons to all levels, including concepts of digital citizenship, and an outside consultant came to campus just before the COVID outbreak to present workshops to students, staff, and parents on online safety. However, the school has not yet developed a discrete definition of digital citizenship at ISK to complement its definitions of international mindedness and global citizenship.

Despite the school's self-rating, the evidence indicates that the school does not yet exceed the criteria for this standard, and a revised rating of Met is appropriate.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain C Standard 3 - The school leadership and staff facilitate development of an ISK definition of digital citizenship in preparation for the next phase of the accreditation process to anchor the school's efforts in this important area.

Domain C: The curriculum - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school's actions should be supplemented by the development of an ISK definition of digital citizenship, to guide future curriculum planning in this important area of student learning.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D1 - Membership Evaluation

Teaching is closely aligned with the school's definition of high-quality learning which enables all students to be engaged and challenged, to gain access to the curriculum, and to have success in their learning.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

Observations of recorded lessons and real-time remote observations of classes at all levels, including specialist classes, indicated that students were well-engaged in learning. Students, in both primary and secondary, themselves emphatically confirmed this impression. They pointed out their many options and choices for extension and enrichment on topics of individual interest such as linguistics and mathematics. After-school activities also provided interesting choices for engagement. Students especially valued the school's emphasis on peer support, as classmates helped each other with learning concepts. Student interaction was actively encouraged by teachers, and students appreciated this "not quiet" classroom atmosphere. Students especially valued their opportunities to connect ideas across disciplines.

Teachers felt that the International Curricula could be effectively individualized to suit student learning needs, with differentiation easily managed in the small classroom sizes. Students and staff both commented that there was "no shame" for students who need the help of a classmate or adult to grasp a difficult concept or experience. Teachers monitor students closely, who agreed that it was always okay to ask for help. At the same time, one student expressed appreciation that teachers helped the students to figure out the solutions not just gave them the answers. ISK has a specialist for both EAL and Learning Support who provide pull-out and push-in support as needed. The school's assessment coordinator felt strongly that the school's regular reliance on assessment data from several different sources provided the necessary information to adjust instruction for individual students. The school uses Visible Thinking practices to help students (as one put it) "learn

about learning”.

The school has developed a site-specific definition of learning as well as an extensive teaching and learning policy.

Commendations

Domain D Standard 1 - The school leadership and staff for developing a well-crafted policy on teaching and learning at ISK, which is linked to the school’s over-arching definition of learning.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D2 - Membership Evaluation

There are effective policies and procedures in place to identify the varied needs and overall well-being of students, both at admission and while enrolled, to ensure that all students may benefit from the school's programmes.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The ISK admissions policy has recently been revised, and it provides clear indication of the process and the school's assessment of applicants, including the limits of the school's ability to provide support for language and learning needs. Parents interviewed were very positive about their experience in the admissions process. The admissions office is very student-centered, allowing students to begin classes even if company payment has not been fully processed. The admissions officer is friendly and compassionate, indicating that often her key task is just "to listen" and calm parent anxieties. Applicants are given appropriate diagnostic tests, including the WIDA for English language ability. Results of these tests are shared with classroom teachers as a student's program is established with the appropriate instructional team. In a few cases of intensive needs (such as autism or behavioural disorders), a shadow teacher has been engaged to support the students, at extra cost to the parent/company.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - D3 - Membership Evaluation

Teaching draws on a range of appropriate cultural and authentic contexts to provide meaning and purpose for students in their development as global citizens and intercultural learners.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has a clear and widely visible definition of international mindedness to underpin its commitment to global citizenship, and this concept is genuinely and deeply embedded in instructional plans and delivery. Students and staff could cite numerous examples of knowledge, skills, and understanding about this mission-driven concept in their classes and extra-curricular activities. At the same time, the host country language and culture are given considerable emphasis. Korean language is available to almost all students, and Korean culture is celebrated and discussed throughout the school year. Global citizenship is assessed somewhat through the IC frameworks and assessment tools, but evaluation of how well ISK students are learning about the host country language and culture is less well-developed. Formal assessment of these two intercultural learning goals could be a useful undertaking for the preparatory evaluation phase of the school's accreditation journey.

Despite the school's self-rating, the evidence indicates that the school does not yet exceed the criteria for this standard, and a revised rating of Met is appropriate.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain D: Teaching and assessing for learning - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school's actions should be supplemented by any recommendations indicated by the evaluator in this report under the various standards which are not already in the school's own plan.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain E: Well-being - E1 - Membership Evaluation

The school environment is characterised by openness, fairness, trust, and mutual respect to support student learning related to well-being. The school listens to students' views and develops their agency, compassion, environmental stewardship, and leadership capabilities.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK clearly meets this standard at the membership evaluation level and, to its credit, is well along the path to aligning with the even more rigorous expectations of the preparatory and team evaluation stages of accreditation. The school's culture is warm, friendly and positive, an observation emphatically shared by all constituents. Staff noted that they felt "comfortable with each other", while secondary students said that they "definitely!" felt respected and trusted by adults at the school. Primary students liked the "cooperative" feeling at the school, and found their peers "kind and friendly". Primary and secondary students have the student council to develop leadership skills and advocate for school improvement, and the school's house system also include leadership roles as captains, for interested students. External awards such as the Duke of Edinburgh (high school) and William Pike (middle school) give students a special focus on leadership development. Secondary students are sometimes assigned buddies in the primary school, to provide support and mentoring. Students were included in the interview and selection process for the new principal. An annual satisfaction survey is sent to students as well as parents, and activities such as movie nights and futsal competitions have been organized by students. The student council was successful in persuading the school to establish two indoor social areas, one for ping pong and another as a study lounge. Students have set up fund-raising events in support of Venezuelan students. Staff describe the school philosophy as "student-directed learning", and students and parents confirmed that staff listen to students and are pro-active in their intervention. Parents and students both mentioned their appreciation of the school's receptivity to concerns about food service, with the resulting change in provider having been widely praised. Parents also expressed appreciation for the school's help with parenting issues as appropriate.

Commendations

Domain E Standard 1 (Major) - The entire school community - students, staff, and parents - for collaborating to establish a school atmosphere of positive attitude, mutual support, trust, and clear behaviour expectations for all groups.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain E: Well-being - E2 - Membership Evaluation

The school has clearly documented and effectively implemented policies and procedures relating to child safeguarding to protect and promote the well-being of all enrolled students. These policies set out how the school addresses the following issues: safer recruitment; staff conduct; student behaviour; reporting, managing and recording child safeguarding concerns and allegations of abuse; roles and responsibilities of staff, leaders and governors to manage and oversee safeguarding; staff training, student education and parental engagement; peer-on-peer harassment and abuse (including but not limited to bullying and sexual harassment); online safety; and security and health and safety. These exceed, where necessary, local regulatory requirements.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK takes child protection very seriously, and has developed a comprehensive set of child protection documents. The school Principal is the designated safety lead, and all staff have undergone child protection training using an online provider. Interviews with parents, students, and staff reinforced the idea that child safeguarding is understood as a community-wide responsibility. The school was uniformly described as a safe environment by students, staff, and parents. The school has had very few instances to activate its safeguarding practices, but as one staff member noted, complacency is to be guarded against through regular updates of training and discussion. The school has to date not needed to establish connections to local authorities who would be involved in a serious incident, and it would be wise to develop those personal relationships before they are needed in a crisis. The code of conduct for staff members is not currently signed and filed annually, which is recommended practice. The school's child protection documentation does not include a flow chart for handling allegations, which would also be a useful addition. For guidance, the school is advised to consult the latest recommendations for schools from the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (ICMEC) at www.icmec.org/education-portal.

Commendations

Domain E Standard 2 - The school leadership and staff for developing comprehensive child safeguarding practices and procedures, including safe recruiting and safe online learning.

Recommendations

Domain E Standard 2 - The school leadership and staff continue to enhance and upgrade the school's child protection practices following the guidance of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (www.icmec.org/education-portal).

Domain E: Well-being - E3 - Membership Evaluation

The school ensures the provision of health care, healthy relationship, and well-being education, and these exceed, where necessary, local regulatory requirements.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK takes the physical and mental health of its student with great seriousness. The school provides staff with regular training in CPR, first-aid, and AED use. The school nurse is very pro-active, and greatly valued by all in the school community for her support of student, staff, and even parent medical needs. In an emergency, a nearby hospital is available. Staff appreciate the Korean government's requirement of annual health checkups. The school does not currently have a guidance or mental health counsellor on staff, but there is a local, English-speaking counsellor available for consultation. Student dietary needs are cleverly indicated through a system of coded wrist-bands worn during the lunch serving line. Medical records are kept appropriately locked, and access to digital records in the school's student information system is appropriately limited. Personal, social, emotional, and health education is provided through a formal program (SEAL in the primary and Wellness in the middle school), though not in high school. However, high school students are provided with some career guidance by the principal, and the high school students are assigned an adult tutor whom they can approach with PSHE issues or needs.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain E: Well-being - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school's actions should be supplemented by the recommendations indicated by the evaluator in this report under the various standards which are not already in the plan. **A critical action for immediate attention is modification of the current arrangement where a school student is living alone without family.** As an important resource, the school is advised to consult the latest recommendations for schools from the International Center for Missing and Exploited Children at www.icmec.org/education-portal and review the expectations for Domain I in the CIS framework of standards.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain F: Staffing - F1 - Membership Evaluation

The faculty and support staff are employed in sufficient numbers, and with appropriate experience, qualifications, and competencies and in accordance with the host country employment law and the CIS Code of Ethics.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK at present is blessed with a very generous student-teacher ratio, as its drop in student numbers has been less impactful than might be assumed, through support by the board to maintain as many staff as practical. Although a few staff have unfortunately been released due to budget pressures, the favorable student-teacher ratio will continue next year as well, due to the school's commendable commitment to maintain staffing levels when possible. Staff were very positive about the overall staffing levels of the school. Additional teaching assistants in the early years would be welcome, once school finances improve. Both staff and students noted the need for an on-site counsellor (though the school currently does have access to a local private counsellor as required). The school follows all Korean labor law, including provision of severance and support for those staff being reduced due to declines in enrolment. Staff report that the school's human resources approach has been compassionate and helpful during this difficult period. The ISK code of conduct aligns with the CIS Code of Ethics, and the administration indicated a continue willingness to discuss and enhance working conditions and compensation if possible. Overall, the school's staff compensation appears appropriate, especially for a school of ISK's current small size.

Commendations

Domain F Standard 1 - The school governance and leadership for maintaining support to keep staff levels and student-teacher ratios as favorable as possible, even in the face of COVID-19 financial impact.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain F: Staffing - F2 - Membership Evaluation

Thorough background checks have been carried out for all staff and volunteers to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the country, previous employment history, criminal record, qualifications, and suitable references. This information has been taken into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed.

Evaluator Ratings

Exceeded

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK's human resources department follows a clear policy on background screening, which applies to all positions, and to both local- and expatriate-hire candidates. All staff currently at the school have undergone this screening and criminal background checks. The school hires staff through local advertisements and also through recruiting agencies. Candidate documents are checked carefully, and the Principal contacts candidate references personally, by telephone.

Despite the school's self-rating, the evidence clearly indicates that ISK already meets the criteria of the preparatory evaluation stage, and thus a higher rating is warranted.

Commendations

Domain F Standard 2 - The school administration, and especially its human resources department, for thoroughly following a comprehensive policy on screening of all employees, both current and future, regardless of candidate origin, thus demonstrating the school's commitment to child safeguarding.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain F: Staffing - F3 - Membership Evaluation

The school provides for the continuous professional development of faculty and support staff that relates to school priorities, addresses the professional needs of the staff, and contributes to the development of student learning, well-being, and global citizenship.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK, even during the financial pressures of COVID-19 enrolment impact, has maintained support for professional development. This applies to both teaching and non-teaching staff. In recent months, the school has slightly shifted its approach to funding individual PD, partly as a result of a change in Korean tax law (to avoid teachers being taxed on PD funds). The school maintains a log of PD taken, and teachers are expected to update these records as they undertake such training. PD provision is linked to school goals and its development plan, and a collaborative approach is used where either the staff member or the school can suggest PD opportunities. As appropriate, PD is linked to the staff appraisal system. Staff are normally very eager to attend PD but the restrictions on travel and gatherings due to COVID-19 have understandably reduced most PD to the less desirable online delivery. Staff who were interviewed described PD support as generous, and had experienced few, if any, denials of requests.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain F: Staffing - F4 - Membership Evaluation

The appraisal/performance management system is defined and implemented for all faculty and support staff based on pre-determined, explicit criteria and is supported by a programme of professional development and/or training, which is linked to appraisal outcomes and identified school priorities.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has a simple and clearly laid-out procedure for performance appraisal. This process is applied annually to all staff, both teaching and non-teaching. The appraisal procedure includes goal-setting for both groups. Teacher appraisal, including classroom observations, is overseen by the principal while non-teaching staff are evaluated by the business manager or other senior administrators. In addition, staff members expressed appreciation for the Looking for Learning approach, which encourages peer visits and feedback. It is noted that the appraisal policy does not include a procedure for appeals.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain F Standard 4 - The school leadership, in consultation with staff, add wording related to appeals in the appraisal policy and procedures, so that staff know how to formally question their performance evaluation's conclusions.

Domain F: Staffing - F5 - Membership Evaluation

Collectively, the leadership and staff create a professional and trusting working environment. Written policies and guidelines establish expectations for the performance and conduct of all faculty and support staff, and they are applied fairly and consistently.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK, perhaps benefiting from its small size, operates a working atmosphere that is caring and professional at the same time. One staff member characterized the school as "like a family". This perception was widely reported, even though the reduction in force necessitated by the impact of the global pandemic has resulted in some painful contract non-renewals. Staff members characterized the school as a good place to work, friendly, mutually supportive, trusting, with a relaxed atmosphere, great students and parents. One teacher had left the school and then returned because "I really love this school." The school has natural turnover for a smaller school with younger international teachers (who often choose to move from school to school for their own growth), but some staff have remained for several years, a positive sign, and the school has done a good job of finding well-qualified replacements for those who choose to leave. Job descriptions exist for all roles, and the school shares a code of conduct and relevant behavior expectations with all staff, who felt these responsibilities were all very clear. It is noted that this code of conduct is not currently signed and filed on an annual basis, as is recommended good practice by the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children's Education Portal (www.icmec.org/education-portal).

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain F Standard 5 - The school leadership ensure all staff members review and annually

sign the code of conduct, to further reinforce child protection expectations.

(For further guidance, the school is advised to consult the recommendations of the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children at www.icmec.org/education-portal.)

Domain F: Staffing - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The school's planned actions are appropriate as stated and are commendably incorporated in the school improvement planning documents, showing timeline for completion and oversight responsibilities. The school's actions should be supplemented by any recommendations indicated by the evaluator in this report under the various standards which are not already in the plan, specifically adding an appeals process to the appraisal procedure and having staff sign the code of conduct annually.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G1 - Membership Evaluation

The school maintains premises and facilities, with supporting systems and services, to enable it to fulfil the school's stated purpose and direction, deliver the curriculum, and contribute to the well-being of students.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK is fortunate to have constructed, several years ago, a purpose-built campus with a capacity of over 500 students. Due to the reduction in student numbers caused by the COVID-19 impact, the school has generous amounts of space for all instructional activities. As a relatively new facility, there have been no major maintenance issues, and the school's facilities manager carefully follows Korean government regulations on facilities upkeep. The campus is regularly reviewed for safety and security; recently, the parking and traffic flow was adjusted for student safety. Although the evaluator was not able to visit the school in person, the school provided extensive video evidence of the school's facilities. Parents who were interviewed were very positive about facilities and specifically reported that their children felt completely safe and secure at school. The school is very well-resourced in terms of equipment and materials, an observation echoed by students and staff. Students appreciated the modern buildings and new equipment. Staff would like to see a staff-only changing room available, while students mentioned a climbing wall, fitness center, and swimming pool as their wish list. Both groups recognize that finances are currently an obstacle to any facilities enhancements.

Commendations

Domain G Standard 1 (Major) - The school governance and leadership for providing an extremely well-resourced and spacious campus for its students, effectively supporting instruction and well-being.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G2 - Membership Evaluation

The premises have high standards of maintenance, cleanliness, health, safety, and security, which are supported by written policies and effective procedures, and which exceed, where necessary, local regulatory requirements.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

The videos supplied by the school depict a campus that properly attends to an environment conducive to teaching and learning. Child protection and safeguarding is taken very seriously by ISK. To its credit, the school was quick to address a few minor shortcomings in the area of child protection that the videos revealed, such as oversight of an art storage room, and reminders to keep classroom windows from hallways clear of any obstructions. During remote class observations, the evaluator did note three additional areas where line of sight visibility is compromised. One music room has double sound-proofed doors, which when closed give no visibility to the interior. The gym storage room is a potential area of concern similar to that of the art storage. And the PE office, off of the gym, has doors with no windows, which is also not advisable. (The school had already begun plans to address these areas of concern even as the visit was ending.) The evaluator also saw a few instances in which teachers had partially blocked visibility through glass panels beside classroom doors, though none of these instances appeared egregious. Nevertheless, it would better if such papers and posters were confined to the frosted glass lower portion of these windows so that the upper portions are left as clear as possible.

Impressively, ISK has invested in air quality monitors and restricts students' outdoor play on those relatively few days when the air quality index reaches concerning levels. Overall, the campus is light and airy with lots of windows and an open feeling. The school has recently updated its health and safety policy and procedures statement. The school employs two on-site maintenance persons, under the direction of the facilities manager, but if outside repair expertise is needed, this can take longer than ideal, at least under the current

circumstances. ISK has an excellent emergency procedures manual covering a variety of crises, and it regularly conducts drills using a differentiated alarm system for fire evacuation, intruder alert, and earthquake shelter. These drills are recorded and debriefing notes added as appropriate. In the case of an off-site full evaluation, a nearby hotel is available to provide shelter for the entire school staff and students. Students were unanimous in their feeling that the school is a safe and secure place for their well-being. Staff expressed similar views but one staff member wisely noted that while the ISK situation is very good for students, the school should beware of complacency about child protection procedures and issues.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

Domain G Standard 2 - The school leadership find appropriate solutions to ensure that visibility into all instructional spaces and offices is unrestricted, for child protection and safety.

Domain G Standard 2 - The school leadership remind staff to leave the upper half of classroom windows to hallways fully unobstructed so that visibility into classrooms is not compromised.

Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - G3 - Membership Evaluation

The technology systems (infrastructure and data) support the school's teaching, learning, and administrative needs and have appropriate and effective safety, security, and confidentiality measures in place.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK has taken several recent steps to enhance its provision of instructional technology. As the school is now seven years old, some of the original audio-visual equipment is starting to show its age. Nevertheless, the school is well resourced for IT; Chromebook sets are available for use, and students from Year Four upward can bring their own laptops. Students appreciated that the school also had a few spare computers and chargers that they could use if they had a problem or forgot their own device. Wi-Fi provision is excellent. Computers for teachers are slowly being upgraded, as many have desktops in classroom, which makes work from home more difficult. The budgetary constraints of COVID-19 have put long-range technology plans temporarily on hold, but the school understands the need for on-going IT upgrade and will continue to address these needs in the future. Staff generally reported satisfaction with both hardware and software available for their use, and students shared equally positive observations of the school's technology. The school heavily uses the Google Suite for Education, so students save work on Google Drive, which is also used for various internal communications, such as maintenance requests.

Commendations

None at this time.

Recommendations

None at this time.

Domain G: Premises, facilities, technology systems, and auxiliary services - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

Although there are no critical planned actions at this time, the school will want to continue its planning for instructional technology upgrade and also take note of the reminder about ensuring visibility into all instructional spaces and offices and keeping classroom windows from the hallway clear. The school may wish to begin looking at the preparatory evaluation criteria to develop additional planned actions.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Domain H: Community and home partnerships - H1 - Membership Evaluation

Effective communications foster a productive home-school partnership and a positive learning community.

Evaluator Ratings

Met

Evaluator Reason for Rating

ISK engages in numerous communication avenues with parents, including its website and email. The website was updated recently and continues to improve. However, the most commonly used channel for school-home communication is Bloomz, the school's communication software that was widely praised by parents. Bloomz allows posting of photos as well as text, giving parents frequent visual indication of what their children are doing at school on a daily basis. The principal and the academic coordinator regularly send messages to parents on a variety of topics, including health and safety during COVID-19, parent participation, school spirit activities, and student leadership. In addition, numerous in-person events (prior to COVID) are undertaken to inform parents, including a welcome back assembly at the beginning of the school year. Several times a year, especially at curricular exit points, conferences are held with parents, students, and teachers so that learning achievement can be shared. Student-teacher communication is primarily conducted through Google Classroom, the school's learning management system. The regular dissemination of Boogie Letters (named for the school's turtle mascot) is greatly appreciated by students who receive these notes of recognition. The school's parent handbook is also comprehensive and informative.

Parents reported that school personnel in all roles were quick to respond to parent questions. The school has historically administered an annual parent satisfaction survey to elicit parent concerns; (most recently anxiety about teacher turnover and consistency of instruction has been a topic of discussion). On a larger scale, parents expressed great appreciation for the school's senior leadership responding positively to their request for more clarity about the school's operations next year, in light of ongoing anxiety about

enrollment numbers and the impact on various year levels. The school is in the process of establishing an advisory committee of parents, teachers, administration, and company representatives to provide a regular, structured sounding board for important topics and to solicit input from all constituents. There is a parent-teacher association which undertakes some activities, and new parents are made welcome through group chats of room parents and PTA nationality groups for mutual support. One mid-year arrival particularly praised the support they had received, and also the school administration and staff's personal knowledge of their children's names and backgrounds on initial arrival. One parent described their transition to ISK the "most relaxed" of all their family's school moves over the years.

It is understandable that, even with the high level of communication the school has employed, the current, highly uncertain situation of the school's future enrolment and staffing needs generates a considerable degree of anxiety for some staff and parents. The school will need to redouble its efforts to provide the greatest transparency possible to reassure those who are most affected by this uncertainty. Personnel decisions, even in the best of times, are complicated and private. When compounded by financial pressures that cannot easily be quantified due to unknown enrolment, communication of these personnel moves become even more critical and difficult. All parties will need to exercise as much forced calm and over-communication as possible to maintain the school's fortunately huge stock of good will and positive intentions.

Commendations

Domain H Standard 1 - The school community as a whole for effective and comprehensive two-way communication between home and school, resulting in happy and informed parents, students, and staff.

Recommendations

Domain H Standard 1 - The school leadership continue the difficult (and impossible to satisfy all) task of regular, open communication about the school's plans and actions with respect to programs and staffing for the future, to at least reduce (not eliminate) the level of anxiety for many in the community.

Domain H: Community and home partnerships - Planned Actions - Membership Evaluation

As a result of the self-evaluation, the school identifies the actions necessary to strengthen this aspect of school life. The Self-Study should be action-orientated, with evidence-based evaluation leading to informed planning and proposed actions, in line with the school's guiding statements.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

Although no planned actions were identified by the school at the membership stage, the evaluator identified one recommendation for the school to address. The school may now wish to continue reviewing its alignment with the criteria in this domain for the preparatory evaluation stage, in particular its avenues for formally soliciting parent input into school operations and strategic planning as well as parent involvement avenues and the induction of new families.

Commendations

Please refer to the commendations under individual standards for this domain.

Recommendations

Please refer to the recommendations under individual standards for this domain.

Part 3: Conclusions - Membership Evaluation

An opportunity for the school to summarise the self-reflection and self-evaluation process.

Evaluator Ratings

No Rating

Evaluator Reason for Rating

This membership evaluation was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when many schools had enacted on-line learning and teaching, to maintain contact with their students and continue their education. As conditions improved in individual countries, some schools were able to return to on-site lessons, though under considerably changed circumstances of health screening and campus access, while other schools were forced to continue with remote teaching for an extended period of time. Even when conditions improved within the country of a CIS school, travel to and from the country was often severely restricted or forbidden, making in-person accreditation visits untenable. CIS agreed that the International School of Koje (ISK) was appropriately placed for a virtual evaluation process and offered the school the opportunity to conduct a virtual membership visit to maintain its journey towards membership. The visit took place successfully in May 2021. The CIS School Support and Evaluation Officer, based in Los Angeles, conducted meetings and lesson visits virtually. Discussions were held with all stakeholders. Fortunately, the school had been able to return to in-person classes in recent weeks. The school arranged for the evaluator to observe live classes (via streaming) which, coupled with pre-recorded remote instructional lessons, as well as recorded videos of the school campus, allowed the evaluator to gain a reasonably broad perspective of the school. Although disappointing not to see the school in person, the virtual membership visit was completely sufficient to determine that the school is certainly suitable for CIS membership.

ISK makes a very positive impression, and has a great deal to be proud of. The school has clear, highly visible, and broadly endorsed statements of purpose and direction, and these are linked to its chosen curricula, the IEYC, IPC, IMYC, IGCSE, and A/S Levels. Structured lesson plans and regular faculty and staff conversations ensure that the school's mission and vision are genuinely embedded in daily classroom instruction, campus operations, and

long-term planning. The school is blessed to have the financial backing of corporate sponsors and a foundation that is willing to support the school through the dramatic downturn of enrolment experienced in the past two to three years, so the school can retain staffing levels to continue implementing its commendable understanding of high-quality teaching and learning to its students. The school's atmosphere is positive, warm, friendly, inclusive, and mutually supportive, all of which are deeply appreciated by staff, students, and parents. Global citizenship is a key facet of the school's instructional program, in tandem with appropriate emphasis on the host country language and culture. All of this takes place in a modern and extremely well-resourced facility which is especially spacious during the current enrolment decline. When the facility had to temporarily close due to COVID restrictions, the school shifted to online learning in an exceptionally smooth manner (described as "amazing" by one parent).

Although the school is doing many things very well, ISK is seeking CIS membership and accreditation to become even better, and the report highlights a few important areas for attention. The school's somewhat complex governing and leadership structure appears to be working well enough but could be considerably more clearly captured in written and graphic documentation for the school community. The role of the principal, as educational leader, could perhaps be even better integrated with the role of the board and head of school, including formal appraisal. While the school's child protection policies and practices are very good, as with most schools, there are several areas for improvement, which are detailed in the report. And, not surprisingly given the volatile and still uncertain patterns of enrolment, the school must continue and even further enhance open communication with all community stakeholders to try and reassure staff and parents that the school is doing its utmost to make the best of a very difficult situation with respect to staff turnover and retention, and that the school will be continuing to operate for years to come.

In conclusion, the International School of Kojé is a very good small school with commendable and achievable ambitions to grow back to its earlier student levels. The encouraging reality is that, despite being battered the last few years by enrolment declines and the necessary reduction in staffing, teaching and learning continue at very high levels. As one member of the community noted, the school's challenge is to rebuild itself after a stressful period of enrolment uncertainty. ISK is a small school which, to its great credit, continues to teach students and support staff like a much larger school, all while making

the most of its current small size to personalise attention and individualise instruction. Encouragingly, it has the backing to continue for many, many years to come. Most important, students, at all levels, could not have been more positive about their love of ISK: “We all think ISK is great!” One student proudly proclaimed, “We help each other.” Yet another student who had been in many schools in her life, now nearing high school, succinctly noted that “I want to go to school.”

ISK met all membership standards and exceeded several (in itself a testament to the school’s professionalism). The school clearly has the commitment and capacity to achieve CIS accreditation after it is granted membership, and the school will be an excellent addition to the CIS family of schools. The school effectively developed its membership evaluation report, incorporating its planned actions into the school’s long-range planning documents. The slides of evidence uploaded were particularly valuable. For the preparatory evaluation report, the school should make use of hyperlinks in the school’s narrative to enable direct connection to important uploaded evidence. And when appropriate, uploading the same evidence in different standards and domains is, though extra work, helpful for the evaluators reading the report.

CIS would like to thank Youngsoon Lee, Head of School; Kerry Harris, Principal; and several key staff members for ensuring the visit went smoothly and efficiently under highly unusual circumstances of COVID-19. CIS offers further thanks to the students, staff and parents who were generous in their time and honest in their answers to the many questions posed. CIS also wishes the school well as it prepares to undertake the CIS accreditation process.

Commendations

CIS does not require commendations in this section.

Recommendations

CIS does not require recommendations in this section.