

**SELF-STUDY VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT**

**WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

**FOR**

**EAST-WEST INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

**#130 Corner Sts. 143-360**

**Boeng Keng Kang 3  
Phnom Penh, Cambodia**

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## WASC FOCUS ON LEARNING OVERSEAS VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

### Chapter I: Student/Community Profile

Briefly summarize the most critical information from the student/community profile that impacts the school. Include the following:

- Brief description of the students and community served by the school
- School's analysis of student achievement data
- Other pertinent data

**Note: The entire profile does not need to be included but insert or attach pertinent charts/graphs on student performance.**

**Comment on significant findings revealed by the profile and/or pertinent items that were not included in the profile.**

East-West International School (EWIS) is in its seventh year of operation. It began in September, 2006, to provide an international education for primarily, but not exclusively, Cambodian children. In 2006 the school opened for Preschool to Grade 1 students along with a half-day ESL program. In 2007 and 2008 the school needed to change campuses to accommodate its growing population. In 2008 the school no longer offered the English Second Language classes as it was now a general education school. The school currently has classes from Preschool to Grade 10 with plans to increase the High School to Grade 12 in the next two years. The first graduating class will be in the 2014-15 school year. EWIS is a bilingual school providing education in English as well as Khmer throughout the grades.

The enrollment of the school for the 2012-13 school year is 356 students with 245 students in Preschool to Grade 5 and 111 students in Grades 6 to 10. Seventy-three percent of the total school population is Cambodian, 14% is Korean, and 7% is Thai, Filipino, Vietnamese, American, Chinese, Canadian, Malaysian, or English with the remaining 6% of mixed parentage (many having one Cambodian parent).

Since 2006 the school has experienced steady growth each year. The growth rate beginning the 2012-13 school year was much lower than previous years. This lack of growth can be contributed to 51 students leaving at the end of the last school year, and might be contributed to more international schools being available for parents to choose from and the high mobility rate of Koreans. A total of 61 new students were enrolled for the 2012-13 school year which is 17% of the current student enrollment. The significance of the new student enrollment is that 14 of the 61 students (23%) are of a nationality other than Cambodian or Korean. In Preschool to Grade 5, Koreans make up 8% of the population while in Grades 6-10, they make up 26%. Forty-six

percent of the students in Grades 8-10 are Korean. Only 2% of the school population is English first language students.

There are two classes at each grade level from Kindergarten to Grade 6 and one class per grade level in Grades 7-10. There is a cap of 22 students per class. In Kindergarten - Grade 5, each class has a Khmer assistant. For English Language Arts in these grades, the classroom teacher teaches in English to half the class while the other half is taught in Khmer by the assistant in a different classroom and then the students switch. Each English Language Arts lesson is about an hour a day. Students in Grades 6-8 receive 50 minutes of English and 50 minutes of Khmer each day. In Grades 9-10, there are two classes for English and students are divided by ability. For Khmer all Cambodian students who will sit the national examinations receive 50 minutes of Khmer Language Arts each day. There is only one level.

There is no formal ESL support for the students so they acquire English through total immersion; making every teacher an ESL teacher. Students can receive additional ESL support after school, five days a week for an hour each session at an addition charge. The assistants in the elementary classrooms are also available to lend support when possible. In Grades 6-10, those students who need extra help are set up with buddies who are strong English speakers.

Grades 9-10 students study for the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) from Cambridge, England, which is in May and June of Grade 10. Korean students in Grades 9-10 study Korean at the IGCSE level. The Cambodian students sit for the National School's externally moderated and marked exam which is in June or July of Grade 9. The students who pass the national exam in Grade 9 will be able to take the Cambodian National Certificate in Grade 12. The Grades 11-12 students will study AS levels, and possibly A levels, from Cambridge, with external examinations in both Grades 11-12.

There are two students, one in Kindergarten and one in Grade 4, that need specialized support. Both have a one-on-one support teacher, provided at the parents' expense. Classroom teachers assist to increase English ability for students in Grades 5-9 through differentiation of the reading material, working with students in small groups and through the assigned homework.

Twenty five teachers are currently employed at EWIS with two administrators (the Secondary Principal teaches one math class per day). Sixty-four percent of the teachers have a Master's or a Bachelor's degree in education or a teaching certificate in the area in which they teach. Due to the school's purpose of serving mainly Cambodian students, school fees are not high enough to provide competitive salaries and benefits to teachers. Although the school strives to hire only qualified staff, at times uncertified staff are hired. However, these are people who have worked in schools and with children. Of these teachers, one is enrolled in a teacher's certificate course through the United States and the other three are actively investigating their certification options.

EWIS administered the Scholastic Language Test to Grades 1-5 to assess phonics ability, vocabulary understanding and comprehension during the 2011-12 school year. Most of the students scored higher than the grade level average (above a 5). The students in the upper grades were more challenged by the vocabulary but did well with the comprehension part possibly

because the students could use context to understand the comprehension part. The Scholastic test did not suit the school so a more appropriate standardized test is being sought.

Grade 9 students took the first Khmer externally marked and moderated exams in June 2012. All four students passed the exams.

At this time there is no postsecondary education data. Most students want to attend university yet not one Cambodian University is accredited. For that reason the school chose to teach A and AS levels in Grades 11 and 12 as most universities around the world recognize these tests.

## **Chapter II: Progress Report (suggested length: 2 pages)**

- **Briefly comment on the school's major changes and follow-up process since the last self-study.**
- **Discuss how the school through its action plan has accomplished each of the critical areas for follow-up, including the impact on student learning.**

In April 2009, the Visiting Committee listed 6 critical areas of follow-up for EWIS in their report. EWIS has been successful to the best of their ability in addressing a majority of the critical areas.

In regards to the first critical area of follow up to increase efforts to engage parents more actively, EWIS has extended an open invitation to parents to visit classrooms and help in any way they can. Only a few parents have taken up this offer since it is a big step for Cambodian parents. The school also brings in parents through Open House, end-of-the-year concerts and Parent Teacher Conferences. Some parents have helped with and attended basketball and soccer games, accompanied the Grade 5 classes on their field trip, attended the Science Fair culmination and shared lunch with their child at school. EWIS will continue to provide opportunities and encourage parents to become more actively involved in their child's learning as noted in their Action Plan for 2013-14.

To address the critical area of developing a schedule to increase the length of the school day, EWIS added an extra Khmer class for secondary students before school, offers After School activities on Mondays and Tuesdays from 2:30 - 3:30pm, basketball practice is held Wednesdays and Thursdays after school and English as a Second Language is offered each day after school for an hour. Many teachers have expressed that the students attending the language classes have become more confident and it has increased their English ability. Due to the traffic congestion after 3:30pm and the number of students who take extra classes at home after school, EWIS feels that not much more than this can be done.

The third critical area of follow up was for the creation of common assessments and terminology for each discipline, a standardized assessment system and a better measuring tool for determining English fluency. The school has adopted a Math program for Kindergarten - Grade 5, Zoo-phonics

for Nursery to Grade 2, A-Z Readers, Math and Science curriculum for Grades 6-8 and IGCSE curriculum for Grades 9-10. All of these provide common assessments and terminology with A-Z readers providing standardized expectations and and IGCSE providing standardized assessments. The Scholastic Reading Tests given twice in 2011-12 are also standardized. The Khmer textbooks and curriculum provide expectations and standards for teachers. The Reading and Writing continuums were introduced this year for Kindergarten to Grade 6. Meetings were held last school year to discuss what a grade on a report card means for whole school consistency and common planning time has been provided for where there are two classes per grade level. Options for the adoption of an English fluency assessment have been considered but no decision about implementation has been made. The school will continue to add common assessments to subject areas where needed and search for a suitable English fluency assessment tool.

In looking at the fourth critical area of follow up, providing more curriculum related activities outside of the school environment, EWIS has field trips in place for Grades Kindergarten - Grade 10; has golf lessons for PE at an off campus golfing range twice a week; holds basketball and soccer games against other schools off-campus and is planning a school field day that will also be held outside of the school environment. Homework continues to be provided for students by classroom teachers.

Reviewing potential adjustments in how the instructional day is configured to enable more opportunities for professional development was the fifth critical area of follow up. EWIS organized the timetable so grade level teachers can meet together, time is available so teachers can observe other teachers, and teachers are released from duty so they can attend training and development meetings afterschool. Discussions that follow the trainings have been useful and informative for most teachers. Class coverage was provided for a teacher to attend a professional training class in Chiang Mai.

The last critical area of follow up that EWIS addressed was for the Principal and Secondary Principal to seek support to determine a clear curricular direction for High School students. Information was gathered from a variety of resources, and it was determined that the Cambridge AS subject levels will be offered in Grade 11. The school is still determining whether A levels will be offered at Grade 12 or further AS levels. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) will be taught and the possibility of adopting ACT is being investigated.

### **Chapter III: Self-Study Process (suggested length: 1-1½ pages)**

**Comment on the school's self-study process with respect to the parameters and accuracy.**

- **Did the school accomplish the five parameters of the self-study? (See Focus on Learning, page 3 or Reference Card #1)**
- **Does the self-study accurately reflect the school's program for students?**

- **Does the observable evidence reflect a sampling of what ALL students are doing and producing with respect to the WASC criteria and the school's expected schoolwide learning results?**
- **Does the observable evidence support the school's identified areas for growth?**

The Self-Study process for EWIS began in February 2009 when the faculty met about the Expected Schoolwide Learning Results (EWIS calls them School Goals) and the WASC process. In April, the ESLRs were clarified with the help of an educational consultant. These ESLRs were further clarified in November when parents were invited to discuss the ESLRs with the staff. The WASC Leadership Team and the school's owner attended a WASC training workshop in 2010.

The ESLRs were discussed further in 2011 to ensure that they were expressed in a user friendly form for the predominantly non-English speaking families and, following dissemination, parents were invited to comment and ask questions and to discuss the ESLRs during Parent/Teacher interviews. Students and parents were surveyed in 2011 while teacher groups reviewed the curriculum with these criteria in mind; What Students Learn, How Students Learn, and How Assessment is Used.

All faculty were involved in Home Groups during 2012 to discuss, evaluate and provide evidence for the Self-Study sections while the Leadership Team evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses with a strong focus on student learning. The draft Action Plan was developed by the leaders of Home Groups, the principal and the secondary principal in consultation with the owner, using information from the home groups, parent responses, student contributions and the educational needs of the students. The Leadership Team shared the Self-Study report and Action Plan with the staff during a faculty meeting.

The school paid attention to and accomplished the five parameters of the Self-Study. It is noteworthy that, despite Cambodian parents' quiet respect for the professionals and the school program, the leadership team and the staff made a concerted effort to include parents in the process wherever possible. There is evidence that all stakeholders have been involved and, therefore, have buy-in to the Action Plan. This Plan was comprised of five major goals, which appeared to the Visiting Team to be action steps rather than overarching goals so some suggestions were made. The Leadership Team continued to re-work the goals during the visit.

The Self-Study provides an overview of the program for students. The observable evidence, both provided in the workroom and visible around the school does provide an accurate sampling of the work that students do within the curriculum. There are plenty of samples of students' work, much of which is noted to be very careful and neat in presentation and, especially in primary classrooms, walls are well used for display of work.

Work related to the ESLRs is less evident and, in fact, both students and teachers were not immediately aware of them when asked. It is certainly suggested that the ESLRs be posted prominently in all classrooms in addition to the plan to have them incorporated in the playground mural. Despite not being able to articulate the actual ESLRs, the entire population does, in fact, seem to embrace the values and qualities expressed in them. For example, all students felt that respect is both a goal and a strong component of the fabric of the school. Not all teachers know about the ESLRs, especially those who are new. Although not explicitly taught by most teachers, many can give examples of some of the values and intentions that are embedded in units and classroom activities. In addition, the evidence shows that there was discussion and documentation in 2010 on how teachers intended to embed and assess the ESLRs.

Information in the Self-Study and observable evidence largely support the identified areas for growth. There was one area in the initial Action Plan, the creation of an athletic department, that was not cited as a major need in the Self-Study. It appeared to have been an idea that developed at the end of the process and may be removed from the second draft of the Action Plan.

## **Chapter IV: Quality of the School's Program**

**Part A: For each criterion in the following categories:**

- A. Organization for Student Learning**
- B. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**
- C. Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**
- D. Resource Management and Development**

### **CATEGORY A. ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT LEARNING**

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

- **To what extent has the school established a clear statement of purpose that reflect the beliefs and philosophy of the institution?**

East-West International School was founded to provide an affordable international education for Cambodians. The school mission was developed and modified by the teaching staff with the basis of the vision being respect. Respect was also the basis for the development of the ESLRs.

There is a collective understanding and commitment to EWIS' purpose. Parents, students, teachers, assistants, and administrators all share a common belief and dedication to the purpose of the school. The purpose is best described in the *Newton Thilay Authority Document for Principals-*

“It is the vision and mission of EWIS to provide each and every (Cambodian) child the opportunity to become fluent in English and Khmer, thus giving them a basis on which to work and succeed in an ever changing world. EWIS is dedicated to academic excellence, and by making learning fun, EWIS hopes to instill in each child a lifelong love of learning. EWIS also wishes that each child learn about and appreciate the Cambodian culture and language, as well as the other cultures of the world, thus giving them a global perspective so that each becomes a responsible world citizen and a contributing member of society. EWIS strives to become a leading educational institution, both locally and internationally, and will cooperate fully with all governmental agencies and relevant NGO’s.”

The Visiting Committee found that the published mission statement does not encapsulate the true essence and shared understanding of EWIS but the statement above does, indeed, reach the heart of the true mission.

- **To what extent is the purpose defined further by adopted expected schoolwide learning results that form the basis of the educational program for every student?**

East-West International School has clearly defined ESLRs developed in 2009 by the entire school community and approved by the Board of Directors. In 2011, the ESLRs were reviewed. Through consultation of the school community, the ESLRs were simplified and clarified to create concise clear language accessible to all. Considerable effort was taken to involve the parent community in the process. Parents were invited to discuss the goals, small groups were consulted, and information was distributed in both English and Khmer. The work to utilize the parents affirms the stated goals of EWIS. Furthermore, the Cambodian teacher assistants were utilized in providing guidelines for what is valued and desired by Cambodians.

The ESLRs have been communicated to teachers in faculty meetings and the Handbook. Parents have been told of them through Parent-Teacher Conferences, Parent Newsletters, and the website.

The faculty has a passing knowledge of the ESLRs. While they have been addressed in varying faculty meetings, they do not appear to be the goals of instruction. There seems to be some disconnect between curricular instruction and assessment and the ESLRs. While stating many measurable skills and behaviors, they are not being directly assessed.

## **A2. Governance Criterion**

- **To what extent does the governing authority adopt policies which are consistent with the school purpose and support the achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results for the school?**

In lieu of a conventional governing body, the owner and the Leadership Team, composed of the School Principal, School Coordinator, Secondary School Principal, and the Early Childhood Coordinator, takes on the role. The school owner and the Principal are in regular communication. However, this school year the owner has not participated in any meetings with the Leadership Team.

Although the owner is involved in all major financial and facility decisions, he is not usually involved in policy making.

The Leadership Team's mandate is to equip the staff to teach so that the students learn, therefore the policies are consistent with school purpose and achievement of the ESLRs.

- **To what extent does the governing authority delegate implementation of these policies to the professional staff?**

The professional staff is responsible for the implementation of policies. The owner takes a hands-off approach to the daily management of the school.

- **To what extent does the governing authority monitor results?**

Each member of the Leadership Team monitors a specific division of the school. The Early Childhood Coordinator monitors the preschool through Grade 1 instructional program. The Secondary Principal is responsible for monitoring all aspects of Grade 6 to 12 instructional program. The School Coordinator monitors the Khmer instructional program, parent satisfaction, and the day-to-day support services. The School Principal monitors the overall effectiveness of the entire EWIS school program in addition to taking responsibility for Grades 3 - 5.

The owner of the school monitors the school facilities and finances, and the employment of the auxiliary staff. The administration has clear evaluation procedures for each division of the school.

### **A3. School Leadership Criterion**

- **To what extent does the school leadership make decisions to facilitate actions that focus the energies of the school on student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results?**

The mission and ESLRs are the basis for making all key decisions. The school leadership makes decisions to facilitate actions that focus on student achievement of the ESLRs. The ESLRs are recognized as an integral part of the school. Due to limited resources, significant thought goes into each decision, making sure it focuses on the goals and mission of EWIS. The leadership team also

wants to motivate the staff to not just teach the school ESLRs but to model them for the students.

- **To what extent does the school leadership empower the staff?**

The leadership empowers the staff to teach according to their strengths. They believe the teachers are the key to the success of the students. Teachers and leadership work together. The role of the leadership is to equip, support and encourage the staff so that there is partnership in improving student learning. As long as children are learning, staff is able to make choices about teaching style, encouraged to be creative, encouraged to give input and make suggestions. Teachers commented on the high level of administrative support. They feel supported and empowered to teach to their strengths and be creative.

The EWIS leadership team is at the top of the planning structure. Planning starts with the Leadership Team and spreads to the specific teams involved. The Leadership Team continues to work to develop decision-making processes.

- **To what extent does the school leadership encourage commitment, participation and shared accountability for student learning?**

There is a feeling that the leadership and the staff at EWIS are “in it together”. The vision of the school motivates many teachers. Even though the salaries are comparatively low, EWIS is able to attract qualified, experienced teachers. Many teachers agree to work at EWIS for the vision and want to feel purposeful in their teaching. Most teachers have commented that they enjoy the students and they enjoy teaching at EWIS.

Teachers are committed. They want the children to succeed. Many teachers express concern for individual children that results in interventions and involvement by parents. The teachers feel accountable for student learning. Overall, the Visiting Committee found a strong commitment to the school purpose from the teachers and assistant teachers.

#### **A4. Staff Criterion**

- **To what extent are the school leadership and staff qualified for their assigned responsibilities?**

EWIS seeks to hire the very best, highly qualified teachers. Economic realities of the school necessitate flexible hiring policies. Since the school was created to serve middle class Cambodian students, the fees are not high (but may be significant for many of the parents). The low school fees necessitate low salaries and a limited benefit package; therefore people with experience and qualifications cannot always be hired. EWIS seeks individuals with integrity and who understand the vision of the school to move the school forward.

Unlike many international schools, EWIS does have the financial capabilities to utilize well-known professional search services which guarantees pre-screening and confidential references. Many candidates are local hires and, therefore, reference checks are performed as diligently as possible.

Most teachers at EWIS had previous teaching experience. Few hold state sponsored teaching certificates. That said, the teachers are skilled, dedicated and passionate, and demonstrate a love for working with children.

The Principal recommends to the owner, ways to improve the compensation package in order to attract and retain the best teachers. A partial airfare allowance was added recently for second year returning teachers. A full airfare was added for third year and up returning teachers.

- **To what extent are the school leadership and staff committed to the school's purpose?**

The commitment of all stakeholders to the school purpose is a defining feature of EWIS. The faculty and administration have all stated a distinct dedication to the purpose of the school.

All staff signs a contract that supports agreement with the school's purpose and vision. The school leadership and staff have shown a distinct commitment to providing a quality education for the students. They are very conscious of their predominantly Cambodian student body and seek to meet their specific needs.

- **To what extent does the school leadership and staff engage in ongoing professional development that promotes student learning?**

EWIS does not have a professional development plan. The lack of funds limits the amount of outside training. Professional development, however, is provided by inhouse staff and from online courses. Funds can also be specifically requested for needs that are considered important. The development is based on perceived, observed and requested help. Time has been allocated for grade teachers to have preparation time together with the option of asking for assistance from the school counselor and / or principal. Time is allocated a week before school for orientation and training and during after school meetings for specific training purposes.

Both the staff and the Leadership Team commented on the need for a professional development plan, even within the constraints of the fiscal resources.

The goal of the EWIS supervision and evaluation procedures is to better equip the faculty in their teaching. The Leadership Team prioritizes the evaluation procedures, but due to time constraints it is limited. Evaluation and supervision is an ongoing reality but it is thinner than it should be due to the lack of staff. Due to the heavy workload of all administrators, not all evaluations have taken place. Beyond this, there are peer observations and mentoring. Teachers work together to observe and coach each other.

**A5. School Environment Criterion**

- **To what extent does the school have a safe, healthy, nurturing environment that reflects the school's purpose?**
- **To what extent is the school environment characterized by a respect for differences, trust, caring, professionalism, support, and high expectations for each student?**

EWIS is characterized by the feeling of community. There is a feeling that everyone is in the school together. A Middle School Student Council member best epitomized the feeling as, "All for one and one for all." Community members, from students to cleaning staff, feel respected and valued for their role in EWIS. It is a remarkable feeling of togetherness that is to be celebrated.

Respect is a key concept that resonates through EWIS. It serves as the foundation of all aspects of the school. All communication is directed in a way to be accessible to all members of the school community. School documents are written in both Khmer and English. Additionally, translators are on hand to facilitate communication when needed. It is evident that the school values the parent community through the lengths it is going through to open lines of communication.

Furthermore, EWIS demonstrates a commitment to creating a caring environment with high expectations for all. Key skills and strategies are taught and a continual focus throughout monthly award ceremonies, character education programs, and incentive programs. Student recognition is seen through monthly award ceremonies that reward successes in both English and Khmer studies and on the school ESLRs.

The EWIS counselor has developed an affective education program to fit the school needs and create a safe place for students to learn. This curriculum encompasses kindness, anti-bullying, strategies for conflict resolution, study skills, self-esteem, and respect. In conjunction with the counselor, the principals, teachers, and coordinators work together to encourage and create strategies for students that encourage learning and growth.

**A6. Reporting Student Progress Criterion**

- **To what extent does the school leadership and staff regularly assess student progress toward accomplishing the school's expected schoolwide learning results?**

- **To what extent does the school leadership and staff report student progress to the rest of the school community?**

The school leadership and staff are beginning the process of forming structures for the regular assessment of student progress toward accomplishing the ESLRs. While they are not currently being formally assessed, many of the ELSRs are being indirectly assessed.

Reporting focuses mainly on individual student progress. It is assumed that once the school gains data on external tests, college placement records, and scholarships it will be reported to the school community.

**A7. School Improvement Process Criterion**

- **To what extent does the school leadership facilitate school improvement which is driven by plans of action that will enhance quality learning for all students?**
- **To what extent does the school leadership have school community support and involvement?**
- **To what extent does the school leadership effectively guide the work of the school?**
- **To what extent does the school leadership provide for accountability through monitoring of the schoolwide action plan?**

The school leadership is committed to improvement and therefore discusses and considers plans of action that will enhance learning for students. The EWIS teachers and leadership team generate the planning process with occasional contributions from the owner of the school. Parents have also suggested plans or ideas.

Whenever there are new plans or new ideas teachers are consulted and students are consulted if appropriate. The school leadership encourages suggestions from staff that will enhance learning for all students.

Aligning of professional goals, teacher evaluation and strategic planning is noted as a growth area by EWIS. Currently, professional goals are not as explicit as they could be and teacher evaluation is incidentally linked to strategic planning, as evidence is gained about needs.

The School Leadership has general support from the parent community. Community involvement is limited due to cultural and national norms.

The school leadership provides for accountability through the monitoring of the school Action Plan which was shown through the accomplishments of the 2009 Action Plan. Although EWIS accomplished a majority of its goals in their 2009 Action Plan, the VC has not seen evidence of the

monitoring process. The school leadership guides the work of the school. As the school grows, a larger administrative team will be needed.

**Areas of Strength for Organization for Student Learning Category (if any)**

EWIS is commended for...

- 1 A community commitment to shared purpose
- 2 A visionary and effective Leadership Team
- 3 A culture of open communication
- 4 Continual improvement and growth
- 5 Efforts for increasing school community involvement
- 6 Involvement of teachers in decision making

**Key Issues for Organization for Student Learning (if any)** that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

The Visiting Committee recommends that EWIS ...

- 1 Consider revising the mission statement
- 2 Formulate a professional development plan
- 3 Align systems of professional goals, teacher evaluation, and strategic planning
- 4 Clarify the roles of the Leadership Team
- 5 Clearly communicate the ESLRs, include them in unit planning and assess them authentically
- 6 Develop a structure to review the principal role and a succession plan.

**CATEGORY B. CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT**

**B1. What Students Learn Criterion**

- **To what extent does the school provide a challenging, coherent and relevant curriculum for each student that fulfills the school's purpose and results in student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results through successful completion of any course of study offered?**

The school uses research based curricular programs such as Zoo-phonics, Go Maths, British Key Stage Three framework, and the IGCSE curriculum. The school uses a bilingual model based on brain research that learning takes place when the brain makes connections between new concepts and familiar concepts. Although some of the curriculum materials are outdated, teachers supplement with more up-to-date materials (for example Pluto's status, "My Plate" guide to healthy eating, and genetic engineering information).

The Self-Study indicates that the ESLRs and curriculum standards are complementary. The ESLR of being academically capable and effective communicators is met throughout the curriculum. The report includes examples of questioning in Language Arts, critical thinking in Math (the GO Maths program), Science (laboratory exercises), and Social Science (projects) as evidence of meeting this ESLR. Other ESLRs of being independent and interdependent learners and caring learners (respect, fairness, and inclusivity) are met throughout the curriculum with examples given from PE (team sports) and Life Skills classes. Some teachers report explicitly teaching the ESLRs and others feel the ESLRs are implicitly taught. The school recognizes a need to explicitly teach and assess the ESLRs across the curriculum.

The school has modeled its curriculum from a variety of standards including McRel, British Key Stage Three, and IGCSE. The elementary curriculum uses Zoo-phonics and A-Z readers for Language Arts, Go Maths for Mathematics, and McRel standards for Science, Social Science, and other subjects. In Grades 6-8 the British Key Stage Three standards are used for Math and Science (Grades 6 & 7 – Grade 8 will be studying Earth and Environmental Science based on National Geographic Society's Science textbook beginning in 2013-14). Other subjects reportedly use international standards with Social Science focusing on History and Geography in preparation for the IGCSE curriculum. Grades 9 and 10 use IGCSE curriculum standards for all subjects except Khmer, Physical Education, Art, and ICT. Khmer classes follow the national curriculum. Although detailed curriculum documents exist for the whole school curriculum, there is little evidence of it being used. The Visiting Team feels that many teachers may regard the text as the curriculum.

A variety of evidence was reported documenting student engagement in learning and the Visiting Team observed this to be true during the visit. There is a variety of student work displayed within the school, although it is not evenly distributed.

All student assessment evidence reported is internal-based. Most of the evidence is tied to the curricular programs chosen. These include Zoo-phonics performance indicators, Go Maths performance standards, A-Z leveled readers, British Key Stage Three Outcomes, and IGCSE performance indicators. Running records for reading are used and the counselor provides training and support for this. The students have yet to take the IGCSE external exams for Grade 10 students. Four students sat for and passed the Khmer Grade 9 National Exam.

Over the last seven years various parts of the curriculum has been written and/or revised according to need and appears to be teacher driven rather than systemic. In 2011/2012 the English Language Arts curriculum was reviewed from Grade K to 8. Zoo-phonics was adopted and it is reported that the new program is standards based and developmentally oriented, but it is not clear how they match with the school's adopted standards. The EWIS curriculum is still under development as the school plans to add Grades 11 and 12 in the coming years. The elementary science and social studies curriculums are to be reviewed in 2013/2014. There is recognition of a need for developing a formal curriculum review cycle.

Collaboration is reported when reviewing curriculum. Grade level teachers work collaboratively to support student learning. The decision to adopt many of the curriculum components like Go Maths and Zoo-phonics, and the decision to do semester courses of History and Geography were decided collaboratively among teachers and the principal. The staff are reported to have monthly whole staff meetings and the math department has weekly meetings in which collaboration takes place. Teachers also have common planning periods with their peers teaching the same level/subject. Mentoring and peer observation are also ways teachers collaborate.

Since Grades 11 and 12 have not been implemented there are no clear policies regarding course completion. In addition to the AS and A level qualification from IGCSE the school is planning an EWIS certificate of completion. The school recognizes the need to develop these policies. The teachers handbook includes policies on assessment and homework but the school recognizes the need for more consistency in assessment due to the varied backgrounds of the teaching staff.

## **B2. How Students Learn Criterion**

- **To what extent does the professional staff use research-based knowledge about teaching and learning?**
- **To what extent does the professional staff design and implement a variety of learning experiences that actively engage students at a high level of learning consistent with the school's purpose and expected schoolwide learning results (student learner outcomes)?**

The school has chosen curriculum programs that are research based (Zoo-phonics, Go Math, IGCSE courses, concept baskets, and A-Z readers), but it is not clear that teachers have received training in recognizing and supporting varied learning styles. Students were observed to be engaged in learning through problem solving activities, inference making, persuasive writing, presentations, literatures circles, and other learning experiences. The classroom environment is relaxed and non-threatening and is an environment where every person is valued. EWIS encourages students to express their ideas and ask questions, which is not typical of Cambodian culture.

Internet resources are used to maintain current information on curriculum topics. Teachers also access the IGCSE website for current information. At this time, there is no schoolwide access to

the internet so teachers are accessing this information with their own equipment and at their own cost. The school recognizes the need for schoolwide internet access and have included this in their Action Plan.

Both formative and summative assessments are used for planning purposes. In some subjects pretests are used. Some assessments come from the adopted programs (Zoo-phonics and IGCSE) and some are teacher produced. Results are used for planning of teaching and re-teaching. Standardized reading test results have lead to an increased emphasis on vocabulary. All secondary teachers have a two hour planning block for each day's lesson. This allows for a well planned class each day that takes advantage of the textbooks and materials available.

EWIS uses a collaborative professional learning model in which teachers work together to improve teaching and learning. The model was developed because of a limited professional development budget but a desire to provide professional support for teachers. Some examples of training include teacher led workshops on journal writing and mindfulness, training for Go Maths, concept baskets, Zoo-phonics, and A-Z readers, and online courses for teaching Language Arts. Other types of professional development includes mentoring, cooperative learning, support from the counselor, and online resources (IGCSE).

A variety of instructional strategies are used to deliver the curriculum. Most strategies adopted arcater to the mainly ESL population of the school. These include bilingual education in the lower grades, hands on activities (like laboratory), visual aids (posters and the use of LCD projectors), and graphic organizers.

Technological integration is an area seen as needing improvement. The school does have LCD projectors available for class instruction and students generally have computers and internet access at home. There are plans to provide internet access beginning next year. Graphing calculators are provided for use in math classes. ICT classes focus on the use of word processing, spreadsheets, and other publishing tools. Electronic encyclopedias are available for research purposes.

Although students may not be able to explicitly state the ESLRs when asked, many of the things the students say they like about the school are connected to the ESLRs. Students reported that they liked that they were improving their English communication skills and that they were asked thinking questions by their teachers. Respect was a common theme raised by students and they cited examples like the Peace Keepers, Life Skills classes, and the fact that they were respected by teachers. Students feel that they are learning. The school would benefit from more explicit teaching of ESLRs.

The EWIS student population is mainly ESL so many of the teaching strategies used are to meet this need. A bilingual approach is used especially in the lower grades so that students can learn both in Khmer and English. Visual and kinesthetic (especially in the lower grades) learning

modalities are commonly used. When necessary a one-to-one learning approach has been used for students with special needs.

Much of the school curriculum is program based or textbook based. This is partly due to the limited resources available in Cambodia. The extent to which teachers teach beyond the program or textbook varies from teacher to teacher. EWIS would benefit from continuing to build its resources (including the internet). More professional development in developing standards based units would help teachers move beyond the program or textbook.

**B3. How Assessment Is Used Criterion**

*(Note: Include comments on the degree of acceptable progress by all students toward clearly defined expected schoolwide learning results, academic standards, and other institutional and/or governing authority expectations.)*

- **To what extent are the assessment results the basis for measurement of each student's progress toward the expected schoolwide learning results (student learner outcomes)?**
- **To what extent are the assessment results the basis for regular evaluation and improvement of curriculum and instruction?**
- **To what extent are the assessment results the basis for the allocation of resources?**

EWIS believes that assessment is integral to teaching and learning. A variety of assessment techniques are used which include mind mapping, group work, presentations, projects, and traditional homework and assignments. Many of the assessments used are embedded within the curriculum programs that have been purchased. A Scholastic Standardized Reading test was given twice in the 2011/12 school year. Although the results of the Scholastic test indicated a need for more vocabulary building, the test did not meet the needs of the school.

Assessment data is part of the information considered when making decisions about curriculum and allocation of resources. For example, when Zoo-phonics was found to be successful for the EWIS student population, the school made a commitment to purchase the complete curriculum. More schoolwide emphasis was given to vocabulary development based on assessment data.

Student progress is monitored by class teachers and reported to parents at parent teacher conferences (twice a year) and through report cards (twice a year). Report cards include evaluations of student behaviors as well as progress toward academic goals and teacher comments. ESLRs are not explicitly reported to parents.

Although the school feels like they can make comparison between their students and other international student populations, there is no outside assessment to corroborate their comparison. The Visiting Team and the school agree that the search for an external English fluency and math fluency (for example the International Schools' Assessment) is important.

**Areas of Strength for Curriculum and Instruction Category**

EWIS is commended for...

- 1 Creating a school environment that is conducive to learning.
- 2 Choosing curricular materials that fit their population (students and teachers) and provide a framework leading towards IGCSE and A/AS levels.
- 3 Honoring teacher generated ideas for curricular development.
- 4 Allowing flexibility to teachers in delivering the curriculum.
- 5 Providing structures that allow collaboration among teachers which teachers take advantage of.

**Key Issues for Curriculum and Instruction (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students**

The Visiting Team recommends that EWIS...

- 1 Gain a greater understanding and use of EWIS-adopted standards and benchmarks for each subject area.
- 2 Develop a philosophy of assessment and implement schoolwide grading policies.
- 3 Develop a curriculum review cycle to ensure regular review and updates
- 4 Explicitly teach and assess the ESLRs
- 5 Select an external assessment for English fluency and math fluency with international school norming.

## C. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT PERSONAL AND ACADEMIC GROWTH

### C1. Student Connectedness

- **To what extent are students connected to a system of support services, activities, and opportunities at the school and within the community to meet the challenges of the curricular/co-curricular program in order to achieve the expected schoolwide learning results (schoolwide learner outcomes)?**

EWIS has a counselor who has developed a school wide affective education program and provides student and teacher support services. There is an after school program that provides some social and academic programs to support student learning including tutoring and an ESL program. Students commented on their desire for additional opportunities for being together after school. The secondary school has a student council which provides leadership opportunities for students. Part of the schoolwide affective education program trains Grade 5 students as Peace Keepers. The school also has day trips for K-4 and overnight trips for Grades 5 and up.

Teachers provide a variety of support including interventions to help students focus and achieve, individualized attention, homework help, homework diaries, and parent/teacher interviews for struggling students. Students can be referred to the counselor for behavioral, academic or social support. The counselor provides effective intervention and also makes outside referrals. The interventions are followed up and the teachers are trained by the counselor for classroom support when necessary. The administration is informed of all interventions.

There is a lack of appropriate referral resources in Cambodia, although they are beginning to emerge. However, the school counselor provides appropriate services when possible, and two students have been referred to an outside referral center for diagnostics with limited success. Families can be referred to a local medical facilities for medical issues.

The school's goals and vision center on respect. Students are valued for their efforts and who they are. There is a school wide affective education program that addresses self-esteem, diversity, and connectedness. The school is family oriented and all school members are considered members of the family. The staff handbook includes guidelines for teachers including discipline, class environment, interventions, and classroom management.

Co-curricular activities include an ESL program (which is compulsory for some students), competitive basketball and soccer teams, chess, badminton, and sewing. The program is dependent on what teachers offer rather than an assessment of need. The secondary school has a Student Council which was organized this school year. There is a school yearbook and a monthly newspaper. There is also a voluntary summer school program. The school feels somewhat limited in what can be offered in the after school program because of constraints due to limited staff and the school location (traffic congestion in the afternoons).

The school evaluates the effectiveness of the co-curricular activities by monitoring the number of students involved and through comments from the supervising staff and the students who attend. The school evaluates the counseling services by monitoring the counselor's log of students receiving intervention which is reviewed by the principal. A survey of the students receiving interventions indicates that they are positive about the interventions provided.

The admissions policy allows for admission of special needs students on a case by case basis. Special needs students are admitted if it is felt they will benefit from the program provided by EWIS, if the teachers are able to work with them and if other students will be safe. There are currently four special needs students in the school. Three are integrated into regular classes (one has a one-to-one support teacher) and one receives a one-to-one individual program and does not attend regular classes.

EWIS has not yet had a graduating class so that support for university admissions is minimal. The school recognizes the need to develop a college guidance program. The school has had a dialog with Grade 10 students concerning career possibilities.

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

- **To what extent does the school leadership employ a wide range of strategies to ensure that parental and community involvement is integral to the school's established support system for students?**

The school employs a wide range of strategies to involve parents which is counter-cultural to Cambodian norms. Many parents attend the twice yearly Parent/Teacher conferences. Parents also come to campus to have lunch with their children. Parents attend sporting events, Open Day, field trips, and the end of year concert. A few parents assist in the classes. Newsletters are sent home in both English and Khmer when there is information to communicate to parents. Homework diaries are used to communicate with parents by the teachers. The school wants to provide more social activities for the parents and students to help overcome cultural barriers to the parents' involvement in the school and meet school goals.

The school has field trips into the local community and sometimes invites speakers to the school. The Counselor has networked with other counselors and special needs teachers in Phnom Penh in a local support group. This is important as there is a lack of social services available in Cambodia and they are able to keep each other informed about what is available. The school takes advantage of what is available and as an example had one of the local teachers do a two day training for special needs support.

EWIS has challenges in ensuring that parents understand the ESLRs. This is due to the culture in Cambodia. However, in the parent meeting with the Visiting Committee, parents expressed satisfaction that their children were learning to ask questions, were improving their communication skills in English, and were learning respect and inclusiveness. All of these are included in the ESLRs.

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

EWIS is commended for...

- 1 The support given to students that is caring, relevant and helpful.
- 2 Valuing the intrinsic worth of every student.
- 3 Creating a Student Council for students to have a voice and take responsibility for leadership.
- 4 Responsive interventions that enable students to succeed
- 5 To the best of their ability, EWIS respectfully accommodates special needs students.

**Key Issues for Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth Category** (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

The Visiting Committee recommends that EWIS ...

- 1 Increase the opportunities for more formal social engagements for parents and students at the school.
- 2 Develop a college guidance program and career counseling.

## D. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

### D1. Resources Criterion

- **To what extent are the resources available to the school sufficient to sustain the school program and effectively used to carry out the school's purpose and student achievement of the expected schoolwide learning results (school learner outcomes)?**

For a young school, there seems to be tremendous respect for the fact that income is not immediately sufficient to meet all the hopes and requests for resources. Rather than beginning the section with a list of needs, the school chose to focus on the wide variety of resources that have been acquired. It appears that all decisions directly impact and are related to the various curriculum development changes and school-wide initiatives that have taken place in the past few years. Examples include the Zoo-phonics curriculum, the Go Maths curriculum and the textbooks necessary for the IGCSE subjects.

It is certainly unusual and challenging for the population that the school has occupied three different campuses since its inception and that another move may be necessary within two years depending if the lease on two of the three properties is extended to fifteen years. In this event, a new building would be built, and this combined with the existing buildings will be sufficient for the school, nursery-grade 12.

Each move has enhanced the facilities for the growing population but disruptions and changes are not easy to manage. If a move is needed, it appears to be a hope that the next campus will be a final move and the owner has been investigating possibilities on an ongoing basis for quite some time. The Principal has been in dialogue with the owner about the specific needs and given feedback to his suggestions. There does seem to be respect from the owner that the professional educators' viewpoints are necessary and valued - this is seen by the Visiting Team as an essential component for this next and, hopefully, last home for the school.

The desire to keep the school at its present site with expanded facilities or somewhere close by is important to the staff who feel that the center city location is important to the program. Parents corroborated that the convenience of the location is one of their factors in selecting the school. All recognize that the desire to remain central comes at greater land and construction costs.

Although all resource requests have to be submitted to the Newton Thilay Community, the report states that "In the years since the school opened not one request has been denied." The owner seems to be very supportive of the school's intentions and the professionals' requests and even instigated the purchase of musical instruments himself. It is clear that this unusual success is, at least in part, due to the Principal being conservative, thoughtful, purposeful and reasonable in the requests made.

The school does not currently have internet access and this need has been cited in the Action Plan. It seems that the request has been approved and careful thought has been given to the "roll out" of this new resource. The plan is for the staff and the computer lab to be equipped with access while the staff considers the possibility of either providing devices for students or going with a BYOD

program. Staff have been delighted with the newly acquired LCD projectors and more have been ordered while document cameras are also under consideration as another additional useful item of technology. All of these technological developments enhance both student learning and the possibilities for increased professional development.

The assistant teachers who deliver the Khmer program, expressed a need for more resources to support their teaching. They do have some basic texts but are in need of more library books and supplemental resources so that they, too, can be less text driven in their work. This need is understood but the school has bought all the additional library and supplementary resources that are available. Cambodia is not a reading community, therefore, books have not been produced.

As in many proprietary schools in developing countries, the budget and audit processes are unusual. The ultimate financial authority is the Newton Thilay Community and tuition fees are paid to them. Some material and uniform fees are paid to the school and the School Coordinator accounts for these but turns them over to the Community. There are adequate systems in place at the school to receipt and account for all monies received. The Principal does not have access to the accounting of the tuition monies received by the Community. It has been suggested that EWIS should be treated differently from the other schools administered by the Community and the staff is prepared to handle all accounting procedures in the school. In theory, this suggestion has been well received but has not yet been fully approved.

The Principal is able to create a budget so that reasonable requests for resources can be made and she has been given some authority to make some financial decisions without consultation with the owner or the Community. The Authority for Principals document is, in fact, quite detailed in its delineation of duties. In addition, the Principal is given a petty cash allowance that is used for daily or unanticipated classroom supplies.

The current facilities are described as safe, functional and well maintained and the owner has added cooling greenery to the environment. The Visiting Team found this description to be accurate apart from some very minor maintenance issues. In addition, the environment is welcoming to students, and teachers have shown flexibility in making some less than perfect spaces work to meet student need. The power cuts during dry season appear to have been more challenging this year and, within a few hours notice, the owner rented a generator for the period of the Visiting Committee's visit. There may need to be consideration for the purchase or long term lease of a generator. This will depend on the government's announcement that the city of Phnom Penh will have 100% of the electricity needs met by June 2013.

It is not an easy process to acquire instructional materials as major companies do not deliver to Cambodia and customs clearance is complex and expensive. Teachers have actually brought in many materials themselves and some have been resourceful in soliciting donations for books.

These same teachers have accepted relatively low salaries and minimal benefits because of a strong interest in working at EWIS where they can feel purposeful and fulfilled as professionals with a trust in the school's vision. The Visiting Team was, naturally, very concerned about the compensation package as it requires teachers to have other income streams or a truly altruistic devotion to their work. In addition, many teachers have been hired without experience and credentials and, although passionate and inspired, time has to be dedicated to their training and mentoring. All this may lead to a poor retention rate which, in turn, causes a lack of consistency

in delivery of curriculum and continuity of student learning. As parents become more involved and discerning, it may lead to expectations for greater retention of qualified and valued teachers.

Despite the compensation challenges, the school has been successful in attracting dedicated teachers many of whom are described as being wonderful. The team observed a very evident commitment to the school's mission and passion for both the quality of the students and support from their leaders. A key criterion for review of the staff, the good progress of all students, is cited as proof that high qualifications and salaries may not be the only factors in school success. The Visiting Committee concurs.

## **D2. Resource Planning Criterion**

- **To what extent does the governing authority and the school leadership execute responsible resource planning for the future?**

The school does not have a master resource plan but this is not a reflection of negligence, it is typical of the culture of Cambodia where plans are usually short term and responsive to immediate need. This is not unusual in SE Asian countries and may be even more evident in Cambodia where the Pol Pot regime removed a sense of hope for the future. One day at a time living can be refreshing but living without plans for a school poses particular challenges. This is best illustrated in the fact that the school has already had three different campuses. However, the educational resources do seem to be planned a year in advance so that each new program does have at least the basic resources necessary for its implementation. In addition, it appears that the owner has been proactive in the new campus search as the planning has begun at least two years before the need.

Despite the absence of a resource plan, the principal and staff identify the short term needs that are necessary to deliver the current program and any immediate initiatives. Research is conducted through online sites and through talking to staff in other schools. These requests are almost always met. The school has cited a need for more funding for science and social studies materials. It is suggested that, with a Curriculum Review Cycle in place, the planning for upcoming curricular needs can be regular and anticipated.

Currently the school does not inform public or appropriate governmental authorities about the financial needs of the school. Situations and systems within the country make this neither necessary or appropriate at this time or in the near future.

Marketing has not, yet, been a priority for the school as most students are attracted through word of mouth and the school's good reputation within the community. However, thought has been given to publicizing the first external examination results (IGCSE) and the WASC accreditation process. These are both key factors mentioned by parents as reasons for choosing the school so word of mouth reputation will be stronger. Press releases surrounding those two factors along with the securing of a new permanent campus would surely be strong public relations statements.

***Areas of Strength for Resource Management and Development Category*** (if any)

EWIS is commended for...

- 1 Remarkable dedication of teachers, driven by the EWIS mission, who accept low salaries and minimal other benefits, and deliver a program focused on student success and respect.
- 2 Assistant teachers with significant longevity with the school who deliver the necessary Khmer instruction and ably and happily provide valuable assistance to the foreign teachers.
- 3 Strong and supportive leadership which creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration in the entire team of professionals.
- 4 Ability of the school to provide most necessary materials despite limited funds and procurement challenges.
- 5 A well maintained and safe campus

**Key Issues for Resource Management and Development Category** (if any) that need to be addressed to ensure quality education for all students

The Visiting Committee recommends that EWIS...

- 1 Create more transparency (and full leadership team involvement) in budgeting, handling of actual funds and strategic financial and resource planning.
- 2 Pay increased attention to the staff compensation packages in order to attract fully qualified teachers and ensure retention of valued staff.
- 3 Investigate ways to increase funding for the immediate curricular resource needs including internet access, Library books, Khmer resources, etc.
- 4 Use strategic financial planning and more realistic tuition fees to meet the inevitable high costs of the new campus and the accompanying facilities expectations for high school students.

**Part B: Synthesize the strengths and key issues from all categories into schoolwide strengths and schoolwide critical areas for follow-up. Include the information given below (suggested length: 2 pages)**

- general comments about the emerging schoolwide strengths and critical areas for follow-up.
- schoolwide areas of strength (list numerically) Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.
- schoolwide critical areas for follow-up that will do the following: (list numerically) Be sure that these can be documented by other sections of the report.
  - *support* those areas already identified by the school in the action plan sections
  - *strengthen* those identified areas in the action plan sections
  - address additional areas identified by the visiting committee. This includes areas related to student achievement and other profile data, the school program and operation, and the action plan.

#### **General Comments**

East West International School has made commendable progress during the past three years. In addition, through its self-study process, the school has identified priorities for continued and

future growth. Below are Schoolwide Areas of Strength and Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up identified by both the school and the Visiting Committee.

**Schoolwide Areas of Strength** (not in order of importance)

EWIS is commended for...

- 1 A community commitment to shared purpose.
- 2 A visionary and effective leadership which creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration in the entire team of professionals.
- 3 Continual improvement and growth.
- 4 Efforts for increasing school community involvement.
- 5 Choosing curricular materials that fit their population (students and teachers) and provide a framework leading towards IGCSE and A/AS levels.
- 6 Honoring teacher generated ideas for curricular development and allowing flexibility in delivering the curriculum.
- 7 Valuing the intrinsic worth of every student and providing timely support in a caring, relevant and helpful way.
- 8 Respectfully accommodating special needs students to the best of their ability.
- 9 Remarkable dedication of teachers, driven by the EWIS mission, who accept low salaries and minimal other benefits, and deliver a program focused on student success and respect.
- 10 Assistant teachers with significant longevity with the school who deliver the necessary Khmer instruction and ably and happily provide valuable assistance to the foreign teachers.
- 11 Creatively acquiring materials despite limited funds and procurement challenges.

**Schoolwide Critical Areas for Follow-up** (list numerically)

The Visiting Committee concurs with the school's identified areas that are outlined in the schoolwide action plan and recommends that EWIS...

- 1 Clearly communicate the ESLRs, include them in unit planning, teach them explicitly and assess them authentically.
- 2 Gain a greater understanding and use of EWIS-adopted standards and benchmarks for each subject area.
- 3 Develop a curriculum review cycle to ensure regular review and updates.
- 4 Develop a philosophy of assessment and implement schoolwide grading policies.
- 5 Select an external assessment for English fluency and math fluency with international school norming.
- 6 Increase the school's income in order to fund recruitment and retention of high quality staff; procurement of all necessary resources; and the upcoming expenses for the new campus.

## Chapter V: Ongoing School Improvement

- **Include a brief summary of the schoolwide action plan**

Following the recommendations of the Visiting Committee, EWIS is in the process of revising their action plan shared in their Self Study report. The VC felt that the goals in the action plan were actually action steps rather than articulated overarching goals and that the format being used was not user-friendly. During discussion with the VC, the Leadership Team recognized that the components of a viable plan had been identified but the structure needed refinement. EWIS is now in the process of creating a new Action Plan that will be more appropriate, address the critical areas of follow-up and be user friendly.

**Comment on the following school improvement issues:**

Although the original Action Plan did not address fully the criteria mentioned below, the VC has full confidence that the final draft of the Action Plan will enhance student learning, be feasible within existing resources, and have full commitment of the school. The confidence comes from accomplishments in their 2009 Action Plan, discussions with the Leadership Team, and drafts of their 2013 Action Plan. In the most recent draft, EWIS has been able to articulate overarching goals that encompass the action steps identified earlier.

- adequacy of the schoolwide action plan in addressing the *critical areas for follow-up* Consider these questions:
  - Do the action plan sections address the *critical areas for follow-up*?
  - Will the action plan steps enhance student learning?
  - Is the action plan a “user-friendly” schoolwide action plan that has integrated all major school initiatives?
  - Is the action plan feasible within existing resources?
  - Is there sufficient commitment to the action plan, schoolwide and system wide?

**Existing factors that support school improvement**

There are a number of factors at East-West International School that will support the school improvement process as outlined in the Action Plan. These factors include:

- Visionary owner who trusts the professional staff to deliver the program.
- Strong, hardworking and committed leadership by the School Principal and a supportive team
- Dedicated teaching staff (teachers and teacher assistants) and their commitment to improving the quality of the educational program at the school
- Previous accomplishments on 2009 Action Plan

**Impediments to school improvement that the school will need to overcome in order to accomplish any of the action plan sections**

The Visiting Committee sees the following as possible impediments to accomplishing the Action Plan:

- The challenge of balancing the desire to have an affordable program with the true cost of providing a quality international education.
- The necessary staff to complete all the goals in the Action Plan without burnout. Currently administrators and teachers are already taxed with their current responsibilities.
- Low staff retention which results in lack of institutional memory and consistency.
- Attracting and retaining quality teachers

**Soundness of follow-up process to monitor accomplishment of schoolwide action plan**

Although EWIS accomplished a majority of its goals in their 2009 Action Plan, the VC has not seen evidence of the monitoring process. The VC believes that EWIS can create a monitoring system into their 2013 Action Plan.

**Closing Comments**

During the visit, the Visiting Committee was struck by the fact that the vision of the school is fully embraced by the entire school community. There is a palpable devotion and commitment to providing meaningful learning experiences in an atmosphere of deep respect for all.

The VC felt privileged to be welcomed into the life of the school for a few days. We express our sincere thanks to everyone who received us warmly and graciously answered all our questions.