



Association des sections internationales  
britanniques et anglophones

**ASSOCIATION DES SECTIONS INTERNATIONALES  
BRITANNIQUES ET ANGLOPHONES**

Association subject to the law of 1<sup>st</sup> July 1901 and the Decree of 16<sup>th</sup> August 1901

*Association régie par la Loi du 1<sup>er</sup> juillet 1901 et le Décret du 16 août 1901*

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Registered address / Sièges social: **Section Britannique, Lycée International,  
2bis rue du Fer à Cheval, 78101 St. Germain-en-Laye**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**DATE:** Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2020

**PLACE:** Remote meeting on Zoom platform

**PRESENT**

1. James Cathcart (St. Germain), President
2. Rob Miller (Lyon), Vice President, Strategic Liaison Leader History-Geography
3. Shaun Corrigan (Fontainebleau), Treasurer
4. David Gage (St. Germain parents), General Secretary
5. Katharine Axten (Balzac parents)
6. Alan Geary (Lyon), Subject Leader History-Geography
7. Betty Lau-Vanchet (Sèvres)
8. Laura Martin-Clark (Ferney-Voltaire)

**ABSENT EXCUSED**

9. Nick Baker (St. Germain), Strategic Liaison Leader English

**MEETING**

The meeting started at 08:30.

**1. Agenda**

The President had circulated an agenda for the meeting by email.

**2. Future Meetings - Board, Schools' Forum and AGM**

2.1 The next Board meetings are scheduled for:

- 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020
- 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 immediately after the AGM - short formal meeting to appoint the Officers for the year
- 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021
- May 2021 – date to be confirmed

- Heads of Section and University Entrance Zoom sessions will be scheduled in November (dates to be confirmed).
- 2.2 A discussion took place and it was agreed that holding the Schools Forum after Christmas would be preferable to during the run-up to Christmas.
  - 2.3 A tentative date of 21<sup>st</sup> January for the Schools' Forum and the AGM was set and noted that it will undoubtedly need to be held remotely. The slot for the AGM would probably be 4 - 5 p.m.
  - 2.4 The organisation and content of the Schools' Forum was discussed. In the context of a remote meeting one day might be adequate but possibly it could be held over 2 days. The timetable needs to take into account the time differences (i.e. Guadeloupe and Singapore) and so 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on 2 days might be better. RM noted that a remote Schools' Forum is very different from an in-person one with its strong element of social interaction.
  - 2.5 BLV will check whether Dragonfly would be willing to provide a training session during the Forum.
- 3. Communication of OIB marks and new Bac**
- 3.1 JC related that over the summer he had needed to respond to a number of parents from various OIB schools who were disappointed that the marks awarded to their children in the British OIB subjects were lower than predicted marks and/or their school report average.
  - 3.2 A statement had been issued explaining the process that had been used. JC confirmed that an evidence-based system was used by Cambridge. The schools gave predictive grades and CIE did an analysis, school by school, of previous years predicted grades as against actual results and then made adjustments up or down accordingly. JC had various communications with CIE and Ministry in the wake of the complaints from parents.
  - 3.3 It was noted that the system used in the UK was entirely different. An algorithm based on past results had been used, with the result that if a particular school had never had an A\* grade before then no student there (not matter how brilliant) would be awarded an A\*. When the inequity of this became evident the UK government did a U turn with predicted grades being deemed the actual grades. This brought added pressure on CIE to make a change as regards the OIB results (even though a different system had been used).
  - 3.4 After many communications and much consultation, CIE issued a letter including a statement that universities should use the school report grades where they were higher and the Ministry tacitly accepted this position.
  - 3.5 It is unlikely that the MEN will use the same system this year and both in France and the UK it is improbable that predicted grades will be used again this year. ASIBA is monitoring OFQUAL and developments in France and intends to provide guidelines for teachers this year. JC suggested that marks in school reports should take into account a holistic approach as they could be used in continuous assessment.
  - 3.6 LMC raised a point on the pie chart presentation of the OIB and the British curriculum's place in it. JC gave some clarifications and drew attention to the News section on the website and his article on the new Bac posted on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
  - 3.7 The dates of the Bac exam session next year were noted: specialist subjects in mid-March, philosophy in mid-June and the grand oral after 21<sup>st</sup> June. It is expected that both the OIB written paper and orals will be held in June.

#### 4. **Bac Blanc**

A discussion took place on the organisation of mock OIB exams (Bac blanc). LMC noted that she had had to use her influence to ensure that a Bac blanc had been held as many teachers were under various pressures due to the pandemic. Other schools had experienced similar issues.

#### 5. **Calendar of Board Meeting topics**

The meeting went through the calendar of recurring topics to be addressed by the Board at particular points in the year. Directors were invited to make suggestions of any additional items.

#### 6. **Membership Fees**

6.1 This year the membership renewal payment request will be sent out by the St. Germain British Section office, under the supervision of the President, via the ASIBA database. As usual, accompanied by the President's letter giving a summary of ASIBA's activities over the last year and the Secretary's cover letter. These should normally be sent out in the next week or two.

6.2 ASIBA needs to prepare for the replacement of the current OIB Administrative Coordinator who is approaching potential retirement age. This will have a significant effect on ASIBA's finances and it is likely that part of the required increase in its revenues will need to come from membership fees, probably with steady scheduled increases over a few years. However, there are clearly issues and limits on what can be achieved through fee increases and it was noted that some greater support from private sections may be needed.

6.3 KA underlined that fee increases would be likely to create issues for state schools as well as for parents' associations that pay the ASIBA fee, such as the APE of Balzac. KA noted that her parents' association, membership of which is not obligatory and which many parents do not join, has experienced diminishing revenues so a fee increase could be problematic.

6.4 **DG, JC and SC agreed to review the data, notably income and the projected cost of an OIB Administrative Coordinator, and make a proposal at the next Board meeting.**

#### 7. **Secretary and Additional Directors**

7.1 RM advised that he had spoken to Xavier Vuillier, Head of Section at the Lycée international, Colomiers (Toulouse) and he would be happy to join the Board. **It was suggested that Xavier be invited to the next Board meeting at which he could be duly elected.**

7.2 It was noted that DG's daughter had now left the Lycée International, St. Germain-en-Laye, and he would be stepping down as Secretary at the forthcoming AGM. The board expressed their immense gratitude for DG's valuable contribution over many years of voluntary service. BLV expressed her willingness to take on the role and this was welcomed by the meeting. DG will provide BLV with a job description and all needed background information and documents. **The handover process will be added to the agenda for the next Board meeting.**

7.3 BLV will approach the new Director of Sèvres to see if she may be interested in working with ASIBA on a project using her expertise on French HE.

## **8. University Entrance Post-Brexit**

- 8.1 JC gave some information on a former St. Germain student who runs a business providing advice to students considering applying for anglophone courses in and outside the UK such as in various European countries, Canada, Australia and Ireland. He would be ready to do a webinar for teachers and for students free of charge as an introduction to the services that he can provide. This would be along the lines of the webinar at which Greene's presented the aptitude test training that it offers, notably for UK university entrance, and targeted training to address lacunae in the OIB curriculum for certain UK university courses.
- 8.2 RM praised the Unifrog on-line platform that his school (Lyon) uses, which provides advice on the application process in all the countries. The subscription is fee-paying but specifically recognises the OIB and gives prediction of what kind of marks that would be needed for any particular course.
- 8.3 JC noted that state schools might not be able to pay the institution subscription fee..
- 8.4 It was agreed that ASIBA should continue to enhance its value to members by looking into ways to make tools and supporting materials available to all schools and their OIB students in order to support their needs as regards university entrance.
- 8.5 RM said that the Board needs to consider all the possibilities and proposed a Google classroom to share information on the various services available.

## **9. Greene's Maths IGCSE online courses**

- 9.1 St. Germain has traditionally offered students the possibility of taking iGCSE maths through a series of after-school group lessons arranged with an external tutor. However, JC is exploring the idea of running the course online through Greene's and opening it up to all ASIBA schools' students at a price of around €200 for 12 online hours, with a small fee for ASIBA included.
- 9.2 The choice of the Edexcel or Cambridge course is being reviewed but unless there are material pedagogical reasons to the contrary, ASIBA would like to continue to support Cambridge and nurture the valued relationship between the two parties.
- 9.3 It might be necessary to pilot the course and then make it more widely available to ASIBA schools.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9:40.

**James Cathcart, President**

**David Gage, General Secretary**