

## Dear Parents, board members, and Trondheim municipality!

Tonight, at this Annual General Meeting, I am addressing you as the main representative of the Board of Directors at ThIS. All of its members are attending, and have contributed to the preparation of this Annual Report of the 10<sup>th</sup> year in ThIS' existence. This report collates the most important information originally accounted in BoD meeting minutes, which are available to all parents through It's Learning. You are encouraged to consult these for additional detail.

The present Board was constituted last June shortly after the AGM 2013, as follows:

Maarten ATM Broekmans – Chairman,  
Idar Petersen – Vice-Chairman,  
Hege Tunstad – Member,  
Kristin Ingstad-Sandberg – Member,  
Ute Mann – Member (elected through Parent's Committee),  
Vanessa Triujeque – Member (elected through school staff).

BoD meetings were furthermore attended by the Principal and Business Manager, representatives of teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents, and Trondheim municipality (all of whom have a right to speak and have their comments recorded in the minutes), as well as a secretary.

In June 2013, the school's Administration had just completed the implementation of a complicated set of orders imposed by the Labour Inspection Authority (*Arbeidstilsynet*) and the Directorate for Education and Training (*UDIR*). Newly recruited principal James Hamilton arrived shortly after, and had to be introduced to the actual situation at ThIS, with recently redefined administrative regulations and procedures. Thanks to the pro-active attitude and relentless support of school administrators and staff, James has been able to grasp the essences of the new school routines and the embedding Norwegian legislative framework in short time. The authorities' orders once necessary to uniformize administrative routines and to optimize the psycho-social environment for our children at ThIS, are now indeed a thing of the past. Upon delivery of the first audit report early 2013, *UDIR* already pre-announced there would be a second audit to follow up. This second audit was completed in March this year, and the report is now in preparation. Principal James Hamilton will report on facts and feats from school administration and the IB curriculum in a moment.

At the same time last year June, the school's financial situation was serious and severe, with more money leaving the school than coming in, *and* at a higher rate than budgeted. When the BoD was made aware of the pressing finances mid-June by Business Manager Christine Østerlie, a Financial Task Force – FTF was immediately established, with a mandate to assess the school's financial situation in detail, to install any measures necessary to strictly limit expenses, and to supply the Board with recommendations for short- and long-term remedies, giving top priority to preserve 'IB curriculum quality *sensu lato*'.

The Financial Task Force concluded the financial misery was to some extent attributable to an unfortunate coincidence of unforeseeable expenses (unexpected bills arriving until November), for another part certainly also to inadequate budgeting as well as overly slack enforcement of the 2013 budget as approved in 2012. Thus, the 2014 budget was prepared in a

most conservative way, to maximize income while keeping costs at bay, so as to increase financial buffer capacity and long-term stability. The Board is well aware that some countermeasures (eg. a mild increase of the monthly tuition fee) may have been unpopular, but without these, the future of ThIS would have been very uncertain. Thus, I am very happy to inform that with united efforts from administration, the Board, and parents at ThIS, we have been able to bend the downward financial trend into an upward. Business Manager Christine Østerlie will present a financial overview over the fiscal year 2013 in a short while.

After restructuring 'school routines *sensu lato*' and financial sustainability as described, the Board has been considering how to consolidate these in short term (ie. 1-2 year) and long term (>2 year) strategies. In addition to school routine and finances, a recently established Strategy Task Force – STF has reviewed current school strategy regarding workforce professionalism, curriculum expertise, partnership development, and resources and facilities, whether certain aspects had either been achieved, become obsolete, or are still relevant. From the results of this assessment, the STF defined four short-term strategic objectives, notably: to strengthen rigor and quality of the IB curriculum, strengthen community and service aspect of the IB program, to improve community image and relationship with Trondheim municipality, and to connect with local community resources. The practical implementation of these four objectives strongly relies on contributions from staff and teachers, as well as students and parents, to ensure they are carried by the whole school community. Evaluation, implementation and further development of school strategy will be continued by the STF and the next Board at ThIS.

The three subjects described above represent the most important issues the Board has been working on throughout the past year. Many additional items have been on the table during the twelve meetings the Board has had since the previous AGM in May 2013. I thank my Board member colleagues and all representatives of various school bodies and external instances, notably Vice-Chairman Idar Petersen, Business Manager Christine Østerlie, Principal James Hamilton, and representative for Trondheim Municipality Aase Müller, for valuable input, constructive comments, and collegiality, with the ultimate purpose to facilitate great education for our children, which truly is a privilege of immense proportions.

This year as Chairman of the Board at ThIS has been very giving, both on a professional as well as on a personal level. However, professional commitments at my paid job have made me decide not to stand candidate for (re-) election. I thank you, parents, for the trust and confidence invested. I wish the new Board good luck and success in their Board commitments.

Yours Sincerely,  
Maarten Broekmans  
Chairman of the Board of Directors at ThIS

## BoD – Annual Report 2013-2014

Welcome!

- all BoD members are attending
- this report collates essences of BoD meeting minutes
- approved boD minutes available through It's Learning
- parents encouraged to consult minutes for details

## BoD – constituted June 2013:

- Maarten Broekmans – Chairman
- Idar Petersen – Vice-Chairman
- Hege Tunstad – Member
- Kristin-Ingstad Sandberg – Member
- Ute Mann – Member (elected by PC – approved by AGM)
- Vanessa Triujeque – Member (elected through staff)

by default invited to attend BoD meetings: Principal, Business Manager, representatives from teaching & non-teaching staff, students, parents, and Trondheim Municipality (all non-voting, but with right to speak and have their comments recorded), and a meeting secretary (14 attending altogether)

## Administration, Audits, New Principal

- UDIR & Labor Inspection audits Fall 2012: many orders
- revision of administrative routines and psycho-social environment completed ~June 2013
- arrival of new principal into 'new school environment'
- great effort delivered by school staff introducing James
- work continues to consolidate routines in daily practice
- re-audit by UDIR this March, report in preparation
  
- additional information by James Hamilton in a moment

## School Finance

- serious & severe situation June 2013
- Financial Task Force – FTF: BM + school accountant + IDP
- mandate: in-depth assessment, strictly limit expenses, recommend short & long term countermeasures
- TOP PRIORITY: 'maintain IB curriculum quality'
- conservative 2014 budget, unpopular tuition fee increase
- joint effort successful: financial trend now upward
  
- additional information by Christine Østerlie in a while

## Short and Long Term Strategy

- with restructured school administration and finance being well on their way...
- critical look at school strategy 1-2y and >2y ahead
- est'd Strategy Task Force – STF: KRS + HET + Principal
- various aspects in existing strategy evaluated whether already achieved, still relevant, or obsolete/redundant
  
- work to be continued by STF and next Board

## Conclusion

- many more issues on the BoD plate in period 2013-2014
- signed minutes available on It's Learning for details
- thanks to: all BoD colleagues and body representatives
- special thanks to: Idar Petersen, Christine Østerlie, James Hamilton, Aase Müllerm, for valuable input, constructive comments, and collegiality
- ...to facilitate great education to our children
- ...and thanks to YOU for your trust and confidence!