



REPORT ON THE FIVE YEAR VISIT TO

St Andrews School

April 26-29, 2009

On behalf of

The Council of International Schools

And

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Five Year Visitors:

CIS Daryl Barker

NEASC Jerome Auclair

INTRODUCTION

St Andrew's School, The International School of the Bahamas, was founded in 1948 in St Andrew's Presbyterian Kirk on Shirley Street, in Nassau. In the early 1970s, the School was moved to its current 37-acre location on Yamacraw Road, at the eastern end of the island of New Providence. Today, St Andrew's boasts a multiple-building campus housing some 66 classrooms, state-of-the-art science laboratories, a well resourced library, two art studios, a swimming pool, cafeteria, basketball courts, playground areas and athletics fields.

The school is a limited company, governed by a board of directors. The St Andrew's School Foundation was set up in 2002 to serve as a major support vehicle for the School. One of the Foundation's tasks involves a commitment to raise funds for a building program that will give the School world class facilities, so that its students may benefit educationally and be able to compete appropriately with students from other countries. Another function is to raise funds in support of other aspects of the School's programs, for example, by establishing an endowment fund to finance scholarships.

The school's guiding principles include a Motto, Mission Statement, Philosophy and a set of Aims. Current enrolment is 846 from ages 2.5 – 18. The student body is 68% Bahamian with the remaining 32% coming from a further 22 countries. Most students continue their education in either Canada or the USA. There are currently 78 full time teachers at the school with another 3 half-time, representing an overall increase in faculty by 8 FTEs since 2006.

The School is an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School and offers the Primary Years Program (PYP) (Pre-school through Year 6) and IB Diploma. Students are able to begin Pre-school at age two and a half, with Year 1 starting at age five. The Pre-school, Pre-reception and Reception classes are located in a modern, purpose-built Early Childhood Centre (ELC). In the Primary program, social and emotional development, whole language, phonics and writing are emphasized. History, science and geography are integrated through units of inquiry. Physical education, art, Spanish and music are taught by specialist teachers; there are three learning support teachers who serve students with mild to moderate learning differences, and one enrichment teacher.

In the Middle School, Years 7 through 9, all students follow the same course of study. Integrated Mathematics and Science are used in Years 7, 8 and 9. Social studies focus on The Bahamas and world studies. Computers, practical arts, music, art, drama and P.E. are included and there is a band and chorus.

The Upper School program (Years 10 through 11) follows the Bahamian National Curriculum, with students selecting a course of study in various subject areas, to prepare for the Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE), which is monitored by Cambridge University. St. Andrew's students have attained very high scores during the past few years. In Years 12 and 13, the School has implemented the IB Diploma Program. 95% of the graduating class leaves the school to attend university, with 60% of these attending American universities, and the remainder going to universities in Canada, England and, locally, The College of The Bahamas.

St Andrew's has been accredited by NEASC and CIS since December, 1994. At the time of its reaccreditation in 2004, the school ran from pre-school to year 12. However, in August 2004 the first year 13 students commenced their studies at the school, in order to complete the second year of the IB diploma course that they had begun in August 2003. The year 13 program was accredited in 2006. Also in 2006, the standard two-year report was accepted by both accrediting agencies.

The steering committee for this five-year report was comprised of the following:

Mrs. Margo Albury	Personal Assistant to the Principal
Ms. Allison Collie	Head of Primary School
Mr. Frank Coyle	Head of Secondary School
Mr. Bob Wade	Principal and CEO
Mrs. Sharon Wilson	Assistant Principal, Director of Admissions, Incoming Principal (Chair, Steering Committee)

This five-year visit took place over three school days plus a Sunday, during which time the visitors met with all members of the management team separately and as a group. They also met with members of faculty and staff involved in all areas of the report, members of the middle and high school student councils, the board of directors, the chair and vice-chair of the Foundation, the faculty association, the appraisal committee, and the PTA. They also visited classrooms and other facilities and generally familiarized themselves with the School.

The rest of this report is written in the normal format, with section by section reports containing the following components:

- a) Comments relating to original recommendations (which have been quoted verbatim where they appear in this report) of the Visiting Team and the school's responses to them
- b) Observations, including perceptions and comments on any significant developments in the school since the time of the two-year report

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The report closes with a set of conclusions, summarizing our impressions of the School at this point in its development and contains a recommendation to CIS and NEASC concerning the school's accreditation status. We trust that the report is useful to the school and the accreditation agencies we represent.

We were met at the airport on our arrival on Saturday by members of the Management Team and Steering Committee to be taken to our hotel, and on Sunday, we enjoyed lunch and a preliminary conversation with them. Following a tour of the school, we had a meeting with two board members, including the chair, who were not available during the week. We were introduced to the faculty with a buffet breakfast at 0800 on Monday morning, and to the high school students in their assembly at 0830. A comprehensive programme of meetings was scheduled for the three days, in which we had the opportunity to meet with everyone we wished. On Wednesday afternoon, we met with the Management Team for feedback and discussion on the key areas identified during the visit.

We would like to thank Mr Bob Wade, Mrs Sharon Wilson, Ms Allison Collie and Mr Frank Coyle, along with the faculty, staff and students for a most warm welcome and for the many courtesies extended to us during our short visit. The cooperation and openness of the administration and staff were of enormous assistance. Everything was done to make our tasks easier to accomplish and to ensure that the visit was a pleasant professional experience.

Acronyms used:

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ASCD	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
AUP	Acceptable User Policy
BGCSE	Bahamas General Certificate of Secondary Education
CAS	Creativity, Action, Service
CIS	Council of International Schools
ECIS	European Council of International Schools
ELC	Early Learning Centre
ESL	English as a Second Language
HL	Higher Level
I & S	Individuals and Societies
IB	International Baccalaureate
IBO	International Baccalaureate Organization
ICT	Integrated Computer Technology
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
ISA	International Schools' Assessment
IT	Information technology
MFL	Modern foreign languages
MIS	Management Information Systems
MSIT	Middle School Improvement Team
NAIS	National Association of Independent Schools
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NMSA	National Middle School Association
NSU	Nova Southeastern University

PSE	Personal and social education
PSR	Position of special responsibility
PTA	Parent-teachers' association
PTC	Principals' Training Centre
PYP	Primary Years Programme
SL	Standard Level
TAC	Teacher Appraisal Committee
TTC	Teachers' Training Centre
TOK	Theory of Knowledge
VTR	Visiting Team's Report

SECTION A:

PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 3 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 were rejected and 1 is in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“The School gives consideration to reviewing the mission statement, philosophy and aims more often than every five years.”

The School has rejected this in both the two-year and five-year reports because the School did not feel the rationale behind this recommendation had been sufficiently explained. While the visitors do not wish to make a comment on whether this recommendation as it stands should now be given further consideration, they believe it is beneficial to involve all sections of the school community in the regular five-year reviews.

A Board retreat was held off-site on 31 May 2008, in which a review of the School’s Mission and Philosophy was the primary focus. This meeting did not result in any changes in the statement of philosophy and objectives. Though the previous review of 2001-2002 had led to revised statements through a wide community involvement, and while it may very well be that the community would not wish to change these statements at this stage, the visitors believe there would have been advantage in consulting and seeking more input from the community in the review process in 2007-2008.

This recommendation was **rejected** by the school, although the visitors feel that, while not necessarily more frequently reviewed than every five years, when reviewed, all constituents of the School’s community should be involved.

Recommendation 2:

“The School gives consideration to linking the objectives of individual curricula directly to the mission statement, philosophy and aims to ensure that expectations for student performance are congruent with course objectives.”

The School has rejected this in both the two-year and five-year reports because the School felt after much consideration following the original recommendation that it did not fully understand what the recommendation meant and that the Visiting Team had not clarified this at the time of the Visit.

The visitors would simply suggest that the conscious referencing of statements of objectives in individual curriculum documents to the School’s overall mission statement and philosophy may help in ensuring a clear

vision for all in promoting the School's stated aims across all areas of the curriculum.

This recommendation was **rejected** by the school, although the visitors feel that there would be some merit in meeting its spirit in practice.

Recommendation 3:

"The School administration continues efforts, despite being unsuccessful in the past, to engage Bahamian public schools in dialogue to share expertise to their mutual benefit."

The School is to be commended on the progress made in the ways highlighted in its two and five year reports.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The visitors are very pleased to see the progress made in a large number of continuing initiatives involving cooperation and dialogue with Bahamian public schools.

It is clear that the appointment of a middle school curriculum coordinator has already made a significant difference in developing middle school essential agreements that can help align the middle school's curriculum and philosophy with the School's mission. The visitors note the intention of the School to build further on the successful development that has been achieved to date.

The visitors were pleased to hear broad agreement from different sections of the community that the School demonstrates a continuing commitment to excellence and that faculty and administration expressed this as an important and continuing aim for action for them.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration and board develop a written policy/plan to formalize a review process of the School's Mission and Philosophy at regular intervals
- the administration and board ensure there is community consultation and involvement in every review of the School's Mission and Philosophy by giving opportunities for recognized input from all staff, parents, students and other appropriate stakeholders
- the administration, faculty and community embrace and promote at every opportunity the School's Mission and Philosophy by relating developments

in all areas of the School's operations (eg curriculum, program, resourcing or buildings development) to it and by communicating and debating how such developments help promote the Mission and Philosophy

SECTION B: ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 7 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 4 were completed and 3 are in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“The Board establishes a method of policy manual reviews to ensure that this kept up-to-date.”

The School has indicated that the Board reviews policies regularly at meetings. Eight specific policies that have been added or revised within the past three years were offered as evidence of this focus.

This recommendation has been **completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“The Board implement an annual process of Board orientation and training.”

The School has reported that Board retreats were held in the spring of 2006 and 2008. These retreats addressed issues such as the roles of the Board and the School Administration, School Mission and Philosophy, and Strategic Planning. While these may have been beneficial to an extent, issues in these areas continue to exist. There is no annual plan for Board development.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The administration review the process for teacher evaluation to ensure that it is regular and complete.”

The School has indicated that evaluation takes place regularly, as outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Further, the administration reviews the process through an ongoing Teacher Appraisal Committee (TAC), consisting of teachers and administrators. The TAC met monthly in the 2007-2008 school year to examine the teacher appraisal process with the intention of adopting a uniform document for the primary and secondary levels, simplifying the document and process, and placing more emphasis on professional development for teacher growth. Although some progress was made on these three objectives, due to other issues in the school that are defined in this report, the TAC has done very little in the current school year.

The School reports that this recommendation has been **completed**. While the visitors agree that an ongoing review of the process for teacher

evaluation has been established, the work of the TAC must be regular and uninterrupted.

Recommendation 4

“The Administration take a serious look at the areas in the Primary School in need of further staffing, ie Art and Guidance.”

A serious need for a guidance counselor at the Primary level has been formally recognized, but the position is not being funded due to the current financial situation of the School. Funding for this position is planned for the future.

This recommendation is partially completed and still **in progress**.

Recommendation 5

“The Administration reviews parents’ concern regarding transition to the Middle School and either make some changes in year 7 or provide parental awareness of the differences that their children will encounter.”

The School has created an ongoing transition committee which included students, parents, teachers and administrators in 2005-2006 to address this issue. The committee has recommended and implemented a “Transition Day” and several programmes that included advice from year 7 students to year 6 students, presentations by Middle School teachers and administrators, answers to questions from year 6 students and their parents, and presentations to parents. Further curriculum articulation work has been done by teachers of years 6 and 7, including the development of three integrated curricular units for year 7, to help make the academic transition easier and smoother for students.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6

“The Principal create/update job descriptions for all positions of responsibility and assure staff awareness of their responsibilities as described.”

All job descriptions have been created or updated, including those for several positions that were new or whose responsibilities were changed.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 7

“The Administration puts into action a plan that renews staff professional development opportunities.”

The School has indicated that this plan was completed and implemented by the completion of the two-year follow-up report and was in effect for the past few years. Although some teachers felt that the allocation for professional development funds were an entitlement that could be expended in any way they wished, the funding was available and teachers took advantage of it. Due to the current financial situation, professional development funds have been frozen until further notice. It is anticipated that when the budget freeze is lifted, the staff will again have a variety of professional development opportunities that are tied into their evaluations and the goals of the school.

This recommendation was reported to be **completed**, although its completion is presently suspended. It is important that when the financial situation is resolved, the professional development monies be reinstated at the levels that had been in existence.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

There have been several significant developments in the organization and administration of the school, both since the accreditation visit and the school's responses to it were given.

The present size of the Board is 9 members, instead of a maximum of 13. Since the last accreditation visit, the chairperson of the Board of Directors has changed as has the Principal. PTA and Teacher representatives no longer sit on the Board. The current Principal will be leaving at the end of the 2008-2009 school year and will be succeeded by the current Assistant Principal.

The position previously identified as Business and Maintenance Manager has been split into two separate positions: Financial Controller and Campus Manager. Both these positions sit on the Administrative Council (ADCON).

New positions created since the previous accreditation visit are: Assistant Principal; Director of Development; Deans of Early Years, Junior School, Middle School and Upper School; Head of Secondary in Years 7 through 13; and School Psychologist.

The school is currently experiencing a difficult financial period, due to several years of running deficits, of which the Board was not aware time, despite the budgets being audited. The Board has addressed the issue and has developed short-term plans for stabilizing the school's finances, which include holding back on expenditures in some areas, reducing expenditures (e.g. reducing electric consumption, elimination of some positions, bringing some outsourced maintenance functions into the school, etc.), tightening

expenditure procedures, involving the administration more in the process of budgeting and expenditures, working out concessions with employee groups, and exploring other sources of funding. The result of these efforts is an optimistic forecast for the financial stability of the school. However, this optimism is tempered by the current financial climate in the Bahamas and in the world. It is difficult to predict how the global economic downturn will affect the school's enrolment and financial situation. This will be closely monitored.

Another issue of concern is the year 13 enrolment for the coming school year. In a typical year, about half of the students leave the school after year 12 when requirements for the local diploma have been met. In the past two years, this left 20 and 28 students to complete the IB Diploma Programme in year 13. However, the projection for 2009-2010 is that only 9 – 11 students will enter year 13. This would make it difficult and very costly to run the IB Diploma Programme. The reasons for the exodus of students need to be carefully examined and the issue of year 13 reviewed with the best interests of the students in mind.

Another issue of concern is the relationship between the Board and the St Andrews School Foundation. Uncertainty exists regarding the responsibilities, roles and relationship between these two groups. These issues need to be resolved in order that effective short and long term planning can be accomplished to move the school forward. It is clear that all members of the school community have the best interest of the school and its students at heart, so there is optimism that all can develop a common vision for the future of the school.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- The Board continue to define its role and responsibilities as a policy making body and work with the new Principal to develop a clear understanding of delineation of authority.
- The Board develop plans for the coming school year (that include stabilization of the financial situation), short-term plans, and a long-range strategic plan, to be publicized, monitored and revised as needed.
- The Board and the Foundation develop a clear understanding of the role of each and relationship between them regarding the future development of St Andrews School.
- The Board should consider periodic training for its members in the understanding and performance of their duties

SECTION C: SCHOOL STAFF

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 4 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 were completed and 2 are in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“The administration make opportunities available for both the faculty and the non- faculty staff to share their experience and knowledge with others.”

The visitors note that there is a sharing of faculty expertise, particularly in the form of workshops conducted by staff on return from courses they have attended. It is felt that this could be further developed, particularly in the secondary school and is, as noted by the School, in progress.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The administration make adequate provision for a sufficient number of faculty staff to be available to carry out satisfactorily the Guidance, Learning Support, Art and IT programs.”

Although this recommendation was rejected in the two-year report, the Visitors are very pleased to note that there has been much progress since then, with a number of new appointments in these areas and an increase in the amount of non-contact time for individuals where appropriate.

The School's report indicates that this would be further strengthened by adding a specialist IT teacher and guidance counsellor for the primary school.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The administration give urgent attention to the need for an assistant or secretary for the Head of Primary.”

At the time of the Two Year Report, the Primary Head received part-time secretarial support. The present Head of Primary has a full-time secretary.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 4:

“The school ensures the professional development program is renewed and linked meaningfully to the appraisal system.”

The professional development program, frozen at the time of the last report, was fully reinstated but, in response to specific circumstances, has now been frozen for next year. The visitors note that this is presented as a temporary situation and that all elements of the school community would like to see this reinstated as soon as circumstances allow.

A teacher appraisal committee has been formed and done much work over the past 18 months towards developing an effective teacher appraisal system to improving the quality of teaching and learning through professional growth at its core. The visitors note that it is intended that this committee should report soon on a system of appraisal that will develop and improve the existing appraisal arrangements, and then continue to monitor the effectiveness of the system.

The absence of representation of non-teaching staff on the teacher appraisal committee is noted by the School in its report, and this was emphasized by those staff the visitors talked with. In addition, staff members indicated that they would like a stronger and implemented appraisal process to be in place for them, as they felt this to be generally lacking. Staff members expressed some uncertainty in the light of present conditions if contracts would be renewed or not and the lack of formal appraisal may contribute further to this uncertainty. Certainly, staff expressed to the visitors a desire for a formal annual appraisal of their work.

While this recommendation was considered **completed** by the School in the five-year report, it is probably fairer to say, while acknowledging the advances made to date, that this continues to be a work **in progress** in the light of current circumstances.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The school now has a full time faculty member for Primary Art, the salary for this post being covered for five years from a generous annual donation. There are additional faculty members, including the following: in PE (full time), PYP Coordination (50% time with 50% time for learning enrichment), Middle School Curriculum Coordinator, an additional teacher (50%) for Primary Spanish, an additional teacher (50%) for Primary Music, a full-time assistant (replacing a part-time assistant) in the Food Science and Nutrition department and in the IT department (1.5 additional staff).

The visitors feel that the School has made significant progress in appointing needed additional faculty and staff members, who have made a genuine improvement to the program and services offered. On the administrative side, there have been some additional appointments to significantly improve the quality of this support, including a development director and separate positions of Financial Controller and Campus Manager to replace the

previous Business Manager. In the view of the Visitors, the School is fortunate in having been able to attract and appoint highly effective people to these roles. In support, additional maintenance personnel have been added and a restructuring of outsourced services implemented. These changes have clearly impacted positively on the effectiveness of these areas.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the board and administration ensure that financial planning details and projects the continuing employment of the primary art teacher beyond the period covered by the donation
- the administration continue to develop opportunities available for faculty and staff to share their experience and knowledge with others
- the board ensure the professional development program be reinstated at the earliest opportunity and that priority be given to this
- the teacher appraisal committee continue its work and produce its report for an effective professional staff appraisal system
- the administration either widen the brief of the teacher appraisal committee to include consideration of non-teaching staff appraisal or set up an additional committee to address relevant issues
- the administration include a representative from the non-instructional staff in discussions about appraisal, salary, health and pensions
- the administration consider planning for the future employment of a designated computer teacher for the primary school when funding allows or reassigning functions of existing staff to incorporate this role
- the administration consider planning for the future employment of a guidance counsellor for the primary school when funding allows or reassigning functions of existing staff to incorporate this role

SECTION D: EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMME

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 5 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 1 was completed, 3 are in progress, and 1 is planned for the future/no action.

Recommendation 1:

“The Administration give urgent consideration to the availability of access to IT facilities for the Early Childhood learners.”

The School responded that all classrooms have a computer that can be used with software or for Internet access. Room 18D (computer room) is currently used by classes from Year 1 – Year 6, and is available for all classes to use, on a sign-up basis. Children in the ELC use class computers to reinforce skills focused on in class. Various sites are used, including some specific sites that can be used as a learning resource for children experiencing difficulties in certain areas: auditory processing, fine motor skills, ESL. Children in Reception also have access to CD / tape players and are taught to start / stop these independently. The Early Learning Centre is also outfitted with a television, DVD player and VCR. Internet sites used regularly by infant school teachers include: Starfall, Rainforest Maths, BBC.

The extent of student use of technology in the ELC is presently dependent largely upon the individual teacher. However, the most proficient teacher is working with others to upgrade their skills and to help increase access for all students.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The Administration make provision for a suitable IT Programme for the Early Childhood years supported by professional development and age appropriate software.”

The School has completed and ICT and Library curriculum for Pre-Reception and Reception which is being implemented through the use of classroom computers. The need for age-appropriate software has not been met and is planned to be purchased for the 2009-2010 school year.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The Administration consider further training for support teachers in ESL.”

The School responded that there is no discrete faculty for ESL students. The number of children this involves remains small. Each class in the ELC has a full-time assistant. Teachers and assistants offer ESL children as much support as possible during lesson time, and use a variety of visual resources to support their learning. A learning support teacher works at timetabled sessions in the Reception classes, and as needed in Pre-School, and Pre-Reception. One Primary learning support teacher has completed ESL Certification and shares her experience and expertise with others. Other members of the Primary team have completed training, and due to the collaborative nature of the school, are always happy to share their knowledge with others.

The recommendation is **planned for the future**, if the number of students with ESL needs justifies it.

Recommendation 4:

“The Administration place greater emphasis on the importance of Physical Education to young children by timetabling more PE lessons in a week.”

The School has increased time with the addition of a full-time physical education specialist in the 2007-2008 school year. Also, teachers do small group physical activities, using equipment such as Brain Gym as well as Music and Movement lessons. Planning is in progress for weekly Physical Education lessons for the Pre-School students in 2009-2010.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 5:

“The School give consideration to maintaining current class size.”

The current policy for maximum class sizes is 20 for Primary Classes (with some exceptions at 22) and 15 for Pre-School Classes. These numbers should be continually reviewed in light of activities in these classes that require more space.

This recommendation has been **completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The curricular offerings in the Early Learning Center continue to expand and offer students a wider variety of learning experiences. The Early Learning Centre now has six classes: 1 Pre-School, 2 Pre-Reception, and 3 Reception classes. The Early Childhood Programme is an integrated approach to teaching. Language Arts and Maths are taught through units of inquiry and learning centers. Music is taught by a specialist teacher twice a week in Pre-Reception (20min sessions), and Reception (30min sessions). Pre-School students also now enjoy a once per week 30 minute music lesson with a music specialist. Reception classes have one 30-minute Spanish lesson per week, taught by a specialist teacher. Circle time is used in all classes in the ELC. There is a separate Pre-School class (part-time: 8.50 – 12.30). Reception teachers have common planning time once a week. The Pre-School teacher and Pre-Reception teachers meet as a team, and are trying to do this on a weekly basis where possible. Although the teachers are cooperative and provide each other with much assistance and support for development, additional professional development opportunities for the teachers would strengthen the delivery of the diverse curriculum.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration increase professional development opportunities for ELC teachers and staff

SECTION E: ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 8 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 6.5 were completed and 1.5 are in progress.

In the separate subject reports relating to the primary school curriculum, there were 31 recommendations, and the School indicates 11 have been completed, 13 are in progress, 2 had no action yet and 5 were planned for the future. Planned for the future were capital investments or projects requiring specific funding.

Recommendation 1:

“The Primary and Middle School staffs, through the office of the Curriculum Coordinator and the future (2004-2005) deputy Head for Curriculum in the Middle School, ensure the smooth transition of curriculum content and teaching-learning methodology from the Primary to the Middle School.”

The transition committee, formalized meetings between curriculum coordinators in primary and middle schools, discussions held by primary and middle school teachers on curriculum and teaching strategies, and the activities devised for the transition from Y6 into Y7, have all clearly made an impact on easing transition difficulties for students. Y7 students the visitors met with reported that they felt prepared for the changes, with the exception that, although they were told there would be more work to complete in Y7, they did not know what this meant until they experienced a gradual increase in their workload through the year.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The school administration gives urgent consideration to making available the financial and material resources to put in place a dedicated Primary IT room with age appropriate furniture and software.”

There are currently two primary designated IT labs, with new computers installed in 2008, and an enhanced primary software collection.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 3:

“The Primary staff develops an IT curriculum for the Primary programme as a dedicated subject as well as to enhance learning in all subject areas.”

The curriculum document has been provided in a draft stage. The curriculum focus is information and communication technologies, which includes library skills, research skills, and multimedia use.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 4:

“In the absences of specialist teachers, the primary staff develops written curricula for Drama and Art to ensure a scope and sequence throughout the primary Program.”

A specialist art teacher has been hired and curriculum documented from Years 2 – 6. While there are many opportunities for drama present in the primary curriculum, the visitors note that a drama scope and sequence should be properly documented as recommended.

Although as noted, dramatic arts opportunities are integrated as appropriate, and dramatic arts are considered a strong component of the primary school, drama is not a formal part of the units of inquiry and there have been no in-service programmes on drama techniques. Drama is not formally assessed in this area of the school. Some classroom teachers use drama, but to varying degrees.

This recommendation is **completed** for Art and **in progress** for drama.

Recommendation 5:

“Serious consideration be given to hiring Primary Art Specialist.”

A primary art specialist has been hired, covered by an anonymous donor until the 2011-12 school year. The visitors recommend that the cost of this beyond the time covered by the donation is formally incorporated into the budget projections for that time.

This recommendation is **completed** with the consideration noted above.

Recommendation 6:

“Given that Spanish is taught formally with a specialist teacher to all classes 1-6, strong consideration needs to be given to articulating a scope and sequence for this subject at the Primary level.”

The Primary Spanish Curriculum was written in 2005 and is currently being reviewed to ensure it is more reflective of the IB PYP framework with regards to inquiry based units and varied and authentic assessments.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 7:

“Consideration be given to providing the opportunity for members of the Primary special needs/support team to receive training in TEFL or similar ESL Programme”

In light of the fact that the number of non-native English speaking students attending the school is relatively small, it may be considered that the present arrangements are sufficient. There is some training, although this could perhaps be further enhanced by current certified EAL teachers on staff.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 8:

“Professional development opportunities, outside and beyond on-going training for PYP, be encouraged and budgeted for Primary staff.”

There has been a clear commitment to enhancing professional development provision in the primary school, and the faculty and administration are to be commended on their efforts in this regard. Professional development has been enhanced also by giving in-house programs in a number of areas, and by providing teaching teams with common time for planning. Professional development opportunities this year have been many and varied. With the current financial restructuring, the professional development budget has been temporarily frozen for next year, and provision will need to be even more creative.

This recommendation is **completed**.

In addition, the visitors would like to refer to the following recommendations in the subject reports.

ICT Recommendation 1:

“That the school develop a clear direction that IT instruction is to take, especially in the light of the new IT building that is to be completed for the next school year.”

The School reported that no action had been taken on this as the members felt the School had yet to properly define ICT’s role within the School. It seems to the visitors that a primary or whole school written ICT plan or general planning document incorporating ICT development would be of benefit in this regard. It would also be important to develop a clear IT philosophy in the primary school to help define its importance as a discrete subject area. It may help to identify a person or a role as “owning” responsibility for Primary ICT and authorized to ensure its implementation.

The visitors see this as part of the larger picture and believe the development of a school-wide overall strategic planning document would resolve many of the debates and discussions and would enable everyone to focus on development in the same direction to commonly held ends. An IT strategy could be embedded in a school-wide strategic plan.

ICT Recommendation 5:

“The school provide in-service training for classroom teachers so that they may use technology effectively as a teaching/learning tool.”

In November 2008, the MIS (Management Information Systems) department added a part-time staff-member and later added a full-time staff-member. With the additional personnel, it is able to offer limited in-house professional development. The Educational Technologist, and the Director of MIS, will meet regularly with staff in small and large groups to improve skills in areas such as image manipulation, office suite, publisher, outlook email, mail merge. They will also use these opportunities to explore new academic software with the teachers.

PE Recommendation 1:

“The school considers the possibility of employing an additional full-time specialist Primary P.E. teacher.”

The addition of a full-time specialist for Primary PE has made a major difference to both the quality of teaching and a more balanced teaching timetable for the teachers and the Athletics Director. All of the teachers have recently gone on Professional Development Courses related to Physical Education, thus continuing to increase their knowledge and expertise.

It is noted by the visitors that this had not led to any additional PE time for primary classes at the time of this report, although it is anticipated this will be the case in the future.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The visitors commend the excellent progress made in the areas noted in the School's report, including the number of teachers and support staff, the development of programs and resourcing, the common planning time made available, the links with the middle school and the very real commitment to the philosophy and thorough implementation of the PYP. It is clear, too, that resources have been committed to the development of teaching and learning in the primary school. The overall view is extremely positive in the on-going work that is itself evidence of a continuing commitment to excellence.

It is the view of the visitors that the existence of a strategic planning document, agreed by the school community, would help promote and give a framework to the drive for improvement.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the primary administration and faculty develop a documented drama scope and sequence, which is accessible to teachers and can be incorporated into the units of inquiry
- the board and school administration ensure the costings for the primary art teacher are included in financial projections for when the school will need to assume this cost
- the administration and faculty find more opportunities for primary and middle school faculty to collaborate and reflect on best practices, curriculum development, teaching and learning methodology, and transition issues
- the primary administration and faculty review and revise the current ICT curriculum giving strong consideration to reorganizing within strands, and separating ICT from the Library
- the primary administration and faculty review the organization of the primary school in terms of considering the possibilities of creating a position for a person to own Primary ICT, or assign that role to an existing position
- the primary administration and faculty review and revise the current Spanish curriculum paying particular attention to authentic assessment and inquiry based instruction, as appropriate, within the area of second language learning
- the primary administration and faculty consider ways in which to utilize the extensive backgrounds/experiences and expertise of its current teaching staff in the light of their interpretation of the IB PYP recommendations and of financial constraints on the professional development budget

SECTION F: MIDDLE CURRICULUM PROGRAMME

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 8 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 4 were completed and 3 are in progress, with 1 being rejected.

In the separate subject reports relating to the middle school curriculum, there were 34 recommendations, and the School indicates 11 have been completed, 19 are in progress, 1 had no action yet and 2 were planned for the future. Planned for the future were construction of an indoor sports facility (PE) and re-timetabling of IT classes in connection with affording greater use of IT in the maths curriculum (maths). In addition, 1 was rejected. The visitors note that a great deal of progress has been made towards the recommendations made and pursued by the School.

Recommendation 1:

“The Head of the Middle School establish a Transition Committee for years 6-7 composed of the Head of the Middle School, Head of Primary, Primary Curriculum Coordinator, and a representative from the teacher, parent and student community to identify and facilitate ways to promote a smooth transition from Primary School to Middle School.”

The transition committee, formalized meetings between curriculum coordinators in primary and middle schools, discussions held by primary and middle school teachers on curriculum and teaching strategies, and the activities devised for the transition from Y6 into Y7, have all clearly made an impact on easing transition difficulties for students. Y7 students the visitors met with reported that they felt prepared for the changes, with the exception that, although they were told there would be more work to complete in Y7, they did not know what this meant until they experienced a gradual increase in their workload through the year. The ongoing commitment to easing this transition is most commendable.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“The head of the Middle School establish a Transition Committee for years 9-10 comprised of the Head of the Middle School, Head of Secondary, Deputy Head of Curriculum for the Middle School and a representative(s) from the teacher, parent and student community to identify and facilitate ways to promote a smooth transition from Middle School to Upper Secondary School.”

A number of innovations have been made related to this recommendation since the last report. Of course, work on a transition such as this will be in constant development and evolution. Students reported to visitors that the transition from middle to high school was harder than the transition from primary to middle, with the amount of work involved and the need for self-discipline in completing it being cited as aspects providing most difficulties.

It was also recognized that middle school teachers have different approaches and styles, and there was not felt to be a “single” or “general” middle school approach.

The transition committee has been established and many actions have been put into place. The Middle School Student Council is clearly a source of pride for students and members are ready to assume leadership roles. Middle School Prefects are selected by their peers and teachers as student leaders in Year 9.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 3:

“Staff development opportunities be provided for professional staff who teach in the Middle School that address the unique characteristics / needs of the Middle School students.”

A number of professional development opportunities have been utilized since the Visiting Team’s Report and clearly a great deal has been achieved in this area.

Students and some staff indicated that middle school teachers have different approaches and styles, and there was not felt to be a “single” or “general” middle school approach.

The Middle School Improvement Team (MSIT) was formed last year to develop a shared vision specific to St Andrew’s Middle School and explore best practices in middle school with a view to developing an action plan for ongoing middle school improvement. Membership is entirely voluntary and currently stands at an impressive 14. It has produced a consensus on essential agreements.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 4:

“Staff development opportunities be provided in the Middle school to broaden and vary methodology for delivering the curriculum and for assessing student progress.”

There has been a clear commitment to enhancing professional development provision in the middle school, and the faculty and administration are to be commended on their efforts in this regard. Professional development opportunities this year have been many and varied. It has been enhanced also through some in-house programs and by providing teaching teams with some common time for planning. With the current financial restructuring, the professional development budget has been temporarily frozen for next year, and provision will need to be even more creative.

During the 2007/8 school year learning outcomes were reviewed in each subject area. In 2008/9, the focus has been on assessment. Each Middle School department chair has met with the Middle School Curriculum Coordinator to establish a curriculum action plan for the 2008/9 school year. Many of the established curriculum goals relate to instructional and assessment strategies. The Curriculum Coordinator is working with Department Chairs and teachers to provide the resources and professional support necessary.

A significant difference could be made from the establishment of more common time for middle school teachers to meet together and also to meet with primary colleagues, particularly those in the older primary grades to collaborate and reflect on best practices, curriculum development, teaching and learning. Where this has happened, it seems to have been very successful.

Another aspect of importance to the middle school lies in the hiring of faculty. Many middle school teachers' assignments cross middle and high school. Not all current middle school teachers are trained to meet the unique developmental needs of early adolescent learners and not all are enthusiastic about teaching early adolescents. If the School is committed to a defined middle school approach then a definite policy of hiring middle school specialists would support this.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 5:

"The feasibility of creating and organizing homerooms for the development of links with the PSE curriculum be investigated."

This year, the middle school began using the Second Step program, as used in the Primary School, for the MS PSE program. All middle school students meet for a 20 minute advisory period three times per week. All students have one PSE lesson of 60-65 minutes each week. The committee reported that the development of links between PSE lessons and advisory has been hindered by confusion regarding who is responsible for overseeing the middle school PSE program.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6:

“The feasibility of creating team leader positions of responsibility in the Middle school be considered.”

This recommendation was rejected in both the two- and five- year reports as the School believes the current structure which gives responsibility to middle school department chairs in each discipline area to be the most effective structure for St Andrew’s middle school.

This recommendation was **rejected**.

Recommendation 7:

“That once the vertical curriculum is coherently and formally articulated horizontal links for cross-curricular instruction be formalized.”

Most subject areas have coherently and formally articulated curriculum, though some departments still need significant work. The middle school is working on the two greatest challenges perceived in this: time for department chairs to plan the curriculum and teacher transition. In Year 7, cross-curricular units have been formalized. In each one of three trimesters, students participate in units that integrate English, Science and Social Studies instruction. This year, common planning time has been introduced in Year 8 so that possibilities for curriculum integration can be explored. Faculty and administration reported benefits to this time to the visitors and expressed a wish for it to be extended across the middle school.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 8:

“That consideration be given to relieving the Guidance Counsellor of some of her teaching duties to ensure students have access to guidance counselling.”

The Dean of Middle School has a reduced teaching load and, in collaboration with the School Psychologist, has taken on the responsibility Middle School Guidance counselling and pastoral care.

Middle and high school students who met with the visitors reported clearly and uniformly that they were happy with the guidance arrangements and availability in school for them, and also said they knew who they could talk to in school if they had a problem, whether an official channel or another members of staff.

This recommendation is **completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The visitors commend the excellent progress made in the areas noted in the School's report, including curriculum changes and developments; the development of departmental curriculum goals and action plans; the development of the Middle School Improvement Team; the structural changes in administration, leadership and direction, with the appointments of an overall Head of Secondary, along with, specifically in the middle school, a middle school curriculum coordinator and dean; the links with the primary school and the transition committees for Years 6-7 and 9-10.

It is the view of the visitors that the existence of a strategic planning document, agreed by the school community, would help promote and give a framework to the drive for improvement.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the middle school administration and faculty consider ways in which to utilize the extensive backgrounds/experiences and expertise of its current teaching staff, especially in the context of financial constraints on the professional development budget
- the administration and faculty find more opportunities for primary and middle school faculty to collaborate and reflect on best practices, curriculum development, teaching and learning methodology, and transition issues through weekly common planning time
- the administration seek to recruit teachers who are willing and qualified to teach middle school students if the goal of a middle school identity and organisation is felt to be important

SECTION G: SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 3 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 are in progress, and 1 is rejected.

Recommendation 1:

“The School look into increasing the learning support / special needs structure of the secondary school.”

The School has reported that the Learning Support Department has been increased from one full time teacher to one full time teacher plus one 50% teacher. The middle school dean also provides support to students with learning difficulties. Classroom teachers continue to provide learning support for their students outside of regular class time. The learning support programme now plays a larger role in the Secondary School. Learning support teachers and their students and our two guidance counsellors are located in the same block of classrooms and offices. The learning support team meets on a regular basis to analyze learning problems of individual students. All secondary school departments have file that is updated regularly, which outlines teaching strategies and tracks the progress of students with special needs.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The Secondary School considers increasing the IB Higher Level class times to five fifty minute periods per week.”

The School responded that the secondary school has a 25 lesson week, in which the average length of each period is 60 minutes. Having six IB subjects plus two lessons of ToK and three compulsory classes coupled with teacher contractual contact time makes this difficult for year 12 students. However, in year 13 the three compulsory subjects mentioned are no longer part of the programme and ToK usually ends in November allowing these extra lessons to be used by HL classes. Presently in year 13, eight IB HL subjects Biology, Chemistry, Physics, English, French, Spanish, Math and Psychology have more than the recommended 250 minutes per week.

This recommendation is **in progress**. It is unlikely to be fully completed for year 12 without changes to compulsory requirements or a contractual change of hours.

Recommendation 3:

“The School looks into developing an ESL programme in the Secondary School and considers adding English B to its menu of IB offerings.”

The School reports that the number of students who need ESL at this level does not justify adding staff or the costs of a full ESL Programme. Students needs have been met on an individual basis by existing staff in the cases where an ESL Programme was beneficial to students. In the recent past, one student was given the English B IB curriculum on a private tuition basis, paid for by the school, and passed the examination. However, there does not appear to be a need to add English B to the IB Programme of the school at this time.

This recommendation was **rejected**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

Changes in scheduling have separated the breaks for Middle and Upper School students and helped to ease end of the day traffic congestion. School staff has increased by adding a fourth Physical Education teacher, another Guidance Counselor and increasing the Learning Support Department from one full time teacher to one full-time teacher plus one half-time teacher. New course offerings include BGCSE Commerce and BGCSE Keyboarding, and a Regular Course (non-IB) in each of the six IB groups. Two new “overflow” science labs were adding to the four state of the art labs built prior to the last report. The School recently reconfigured the IB coordinators office for easy access to the year 13 IB students’ common room. More data projectors and printers have been added to classrooms. In addition to individual off-site professional development, on-site programs were offered for all teachers on differentiation of instruction and curriculum integration.

A recent issue for the Secondary School that was previously mentioned relates to the small number of students who remain at the school for year 13. Reasons for this include that the school’s diploma is granted at the end of year 12, consistent with what is done in other schools in the Bahamas. Many of the excellent students in the current year 12 class have been accepted into competitive colleges and universities in North America, despite having not finished the IB Diploma Programme. The College of the Bahamas has recently announced that they will offer free tuition for the coming year to any student who successfully passes the BGCSEs. Many students at St Andrews have spent most or all of their school years at the school, some beginning at age 3. They report that they are eager to leave the school and the island. Despite recent efforts to educate students in the earlier grades and their parents about the value of the IB Diploma and education, the number of students who will stay next year for year 13 is projected to be 9 – 11. This would have a negative effect on IB classes and the school’s finances. The School is concerned about this issue and is

studying it in great depth. Some creative solutions to the problem are being discussed. This is a significant issue for St Andrews.

Other areas of concern are training for teachers new to the school and common planning time for teachers to participate in curriculum development work.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration and board continue to study the issue of students not finishing the IB Programme and leaving at the end of year 12
- the administration develop a mentoring programme for teachers new to St Andrews
- the secondary administration continue to explore ways to schedule common planning time for teachers to develop curriculum

SECTION H: SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 4 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 1 is completed and 3 are in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“The school consider a full-time staff position in the Upper School as well as designating support time for students who need organizational and study skills.”

As was previously mentioned, a full-time learning support teacher has been made available in the Secondary School, bring the total special needs teaching staff to four full-time equivalents. In addition, a part-time learning support teacher specializing in mathematics provides support across the Secondary School both as in-class support and withdrawal support. Students whose learning differences have been identified in a psycho-education assessment have available designated support time to concentrate on organizational and study skills. This time is usually accommodated in the curriculum during modern foreign language lessons.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“The school find a solution so that a licensed psychologist may aid the special needs teachers in the primary school, so that it can better serve the needs of their students.”

The School has employed a licensed psychologist on a contracted basis. The School supports the services provided by the private psychologist and provides the use of School facilities for on-campus referral and assessment. Teachers report that the service is very effective.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The school study alternatives with which to provide in-service training on differentiation to all teachers, as well as specialized professional development for the Special Needs Staff.”

Workshops on differentiation for all teachers have been planned, and one was presented by the Gurian Institute on gender differentiation in August, 2008. Planning is taking place for an agency from Florida to present a specific School workshop on understanding the unique learning needs of students. Further, teachers have attended specialized professional

development workshops in the United States and England. They continue to be able to choose from a variety of professional development opportunities and do attend workshops, fairs and conferences with specialized training in this area. However, the recent freeze of funding in this area has placed plans temporarily on hold.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 4:

"The School develop a specific curricular outline for addressing the needs of ESL students."

The School continues to review the current practice with respect to the limited number of non-native English speakers who enter the school each year. These students are placed in a discrete ESL program as deemed necessary. This program is delivered within the current personnel resources in the Special Needs section. Due to the limited number of such students, a full curriculum is in the developmental stage, and individual cases are reviewed as they arise. There is no specific curriculum outline, but a programme exists for use with non- native speakers of English in Years 4 to 12. Presently there is one student in Year 4 and one in Year 9 using the programme.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

An Enrichment Programme has been added to the Primary School, serving students in Years 4 through 6. This programme is delivered by the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) Coordinator in an approximately half-time capacity. Also, for the first time year 9 students will be attending "SIR" Seeds in Residence at Queen's University, Canada a special enrichment programme encompassing all academic areas.

Procedures for developing Individualized Education Plans for students needing academic assistance and for distributing information about their learning needs to their teachers have been implemented for years 2 to 4 and 7 to 13. Regular support team meetings are scheduled for special needs students. Learning support programmes for students continue to be developed and strengthened. The growth of the special needs staffing and programming has created a need for coordination and monitoring of the Special Needs Programme.

As was previously mentioned, special needs staffing has increased. Additional space allocations were also made to accommodate the additional

staffing and increased services. Resource materials on how to deal with learning differences have been added to the school's professional library.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- The administration create a Special Learning Needs Department in the School
- The administration create a Special Needs Department Chair to provide coordination and leadership
- The administration expand enrichment programming into the Secondary School
- The administration review the admissions procedure to ensure that the School can meet the learning needs of students who are enrolled

SECTION I: GUIDANCE SERVICES

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 6 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 were completed and 4 are in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“Guidance services and programmes be provided to the Primary School by professional staff.”

The dean of the junior years has guidance qualifications from Canada and is now in a position to provide more personal counselling for the primary students. Within her responsibilities as dean and special needs teacher, she has also introduced a personal and social programme in year 6 this year and plans to include year 5 in the future.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“All student records be stored in fireproof cabinets.”

Fire-proof filing cabinets have been replacing older cabinets in most areas of the campus. The primary school filing cabinets have all been replaced. The secondary school filing cabinets will be replaced as soon as funds are available. The visitors recommend this be continued as planned, with back up files being kept.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The School considers relieving the Middle School guidance counsellor of some teaching duties to provide counselling on an as needed basis.”

The Dean of Middle School has a reduced teaching load and, in collaboration with the School Psychologist, has taken on the responsibility Middle School Guidance counselling and pastoral care.

Middle and high school students who met with the visitors reported clearly and uniformly that they were happy with the guidance arrangements and availability in school for them, and also said they knew who they could talk to in school if they had a problem, whether an official channel or another members of staff.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 4:

“Staff development opportunities for homeroom teachers in areas of identifying students in need of social or psychological counselling.”

The School Psychologist provides some services for staff development. The special needs teachers and the guidance counsellor hold appropriate awareness sessions for the homeroom teachers. Teachers who have attended relevant sessions at professional development conferences have shared their knowledge to colleagues through in-house discussions and workshops.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 5:

“A formal evaluation process for the Guidance program to be strengthened.”

The School reports there is no formal evaluation process for the Guidance programme. The visitors believe this should continue to be strengthened.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6:

“The position of School Psychologist be evaluated to assure students in crises and at-risk students have access to services.”

As of the 2008-09 school year, there is a School Psychologist who is a full time faculty member with 50% time for guidance and 50% for teaching IB Diploma Psychology. The deans refer students who are in crisis or at risk to the School Psychologist. The School Psychologist refers students to outside therapists for assessments and evaluations when necessary for clinical diagnostic reports. Those reports assist the School in determining what action to take at school in assisting the students academically, socially and emotionally. The School Psychologist meets with the Secondary School Deans and University Counsellor on a weekly basis regarding student issues. It is noted that high school and middle school students who met with the visitors reported they were happy with the level of provision for them in this area.

While the School believes, therefore, this recommendation to be **completed**, the visitors feel it would now be worth evaluating the current provision in the light of experience after one or two years.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

Counselling services have been strengthened by changes in faculty qualified time allocated to them and by the addition of an on-site School Psychologist. Record keeping has been improved with greater use of technology.

It is the School's intention that, as soon as funds become available, secondary student academic files will be replaced with fireproof cabinets as has already been achieved in the primary school. The School also states that, as soon as funds become available, the School will provide a guidance counsellor in the primary school.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the secondary administration provide fireproof cabinets for secondary student academic files as soon as funds become available, as planned
- the administration provide a guidance counsellor in the primary school as soon as funds become available, as planned
- the school psychologist continue to provide and develop services for staff development
- the administration strengthen a formal evaluation process for the guidance programme

SECTION J: HEALTH SERVICES AND SAFETY

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 9 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 6 are completed, 2 are in progress, and 1 is rejected.

Recommendation 1:

“The School consider relocating the Nurse’s office to the ground floor, allowing for adequate space and furniture to service her patients adequately.”

The School has responded that this has been done.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“The School enforce the mandatory health form and doctor’s report from all new students.”

The School indicates that although the policy exists, its enforcement is not consistent. Students should not be admitted to classes until proper medical documentation has been received.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“The administration consider delegating the attendance record control to another department, allowing the Nurse to dedicate herself solely to medical needs of students as well as keeping accurate records of their visits and upgrading their files electronically.”

The School reported that the administration has utilized an electronic system of keeping school attendance which is a minimal burden on the Nurse who has a strong need to have the attendance data.

This recommendation is **rejected**.

Recommendation 4:

“The school implement a solution so that the air conditioning units in the Main Office no longer pose a safety hazard.”

The School reports that the units have been replaced and raised.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 5:

“The Administration consider training in first-aid/ CPR for additional faculty and staff, especially the staff member that operates the Nurse’s station in the Early Learning Centre.”

The School offers CPR training annually to all staff and teachers. Those already certified are reminded to be recertified every 2 years as recommended by the AHA. It is not mandatory for teachers and staff, though 50% of teachers and staff are presently certified. In 2007, 17 attended the course offering, mostly from the Primary School. In 2008, there were 23 in attendance, and in 2009, there were 20. There is no nurse’s station in the ELC but 100% of teachers and staff are trained.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 6:

“The Administration consider strengthening student supervision on campus outside the classrooms.”

The School has done this in the following ways. All Primary teachers are required to escort students to “specials.” Infant playtime supervision has increased by one additional teacher at afternoon playtime. Junior lunch and playtime have been split so Years 3 and 4 have lunch while Years 5 and 6 have recess and vice versa. The number of supervisors has remained the same while the number of students has decreased. The Secondary School has also split the breaks so the Middle School and the Upper School are separated while the supervisory numbers remain the same. Additionally, the Secondary School has 20 prefects, 2 of which are on duty at all break times. This includes the Middle School, which now has its own prefects as well.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 7:

“The Administration improve campus security in case of visitors.”

The School reports that three security personnel are on campus between the hours of 8am and 4pm. Two security officers are present between 4:00 pm and 12 midnight. There are also two security personnel on duty from 12 midnight to 8:00 am, plus a guard dog and its handler from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am. The Yamacraw Road and Nassau East gates are manned during school hours. Security cameras throughout the campus have been activated with monitors in the security office at the gatehouse and in the Campus Manager’s office.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 8:

“The nurse oversee that proper safety kits are available to the PE teachers, the science teachers, regular teachers during field trips, etc.”

The School responded that all PE teachers and coaches have first-aid kits for lessons and games. The science lab has a first aid kit and appropriate safety equipment. All team leaders in the Primary School have first aid kits. There are also first-aid kits in the main office, the Secondary School office, two in the ELC and the PE office. The Nurse has a first-aid kit available for field trips.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 9:

“The administration assures that access to the construction site is completely and safely sealed off, better insuring student safety.”

The recommendation is no longer applicable. The administration will commit to doing this for any future building project.

This recommendation is **completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

Most significant developments have been highlighted in the implementation of the recommendations in the report. In addition, the cafeteria vendor is new this year. The vendor is offering healthier choices that previously were not available. As proper nutrition is vitally important to learn and work effectively, this is a great development. The students and staff have embraced the new selections. Students have also lobbied for these healthier selections.

The junior and infant playgrounds have been upgraded to meet CPSA guidelines. Climbing equipment has been reinforced and renovated. Older equipment has been discarded when deemed unsafe. Sunshades have also been provided for areas of the Primary School playground areas. Additional lighting has been installed across campus.

The Campus Manager has carefully monitored health and safety issues on the campus. He has worked closely and well with the contracted security services to improve traffic safety in the drop-off area. A campaign to educate parents about safe driving in this area will be instituted at the beginning of the next school year.

a) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- faculty increase efforts to have students use sunscreen during outdoor activities
- in addition to continuing to offer healthier lunch options, portion sizes should be monitored
- the administration upgrade changing rooms to have non-skid floors and greater privacy for students
- the nurse and administration ensure students are not admitted to classes without proper health records being on file

- **SECTION K: STUDENT SERVICES**

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 11 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 5 were completed, 5 are in progress, and 1 is planned for the future.

Food Services

Recommendation 1:

“The director ensure that copies of health certificates are provided to the School and posted near the facility.”

The cafeteria has been run by Ali Gaitor's Catering Services since August 2008. All staff members employed with Ali Gaitor's Catering Services are qualified to handle food and have completed the Ministry of Health Food Safety Program. Health certificates are available and posted.

This recommendation **is completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“The director continues to conduct regular surveys on services offered by the food services program and adjust the menu or service accordingly and that he enhance direct communication with parents.”

A Campus Manager was appointed in September, 2008. He meets with the Student Council to receive feedback from the students and Ali Gaitor's Catering Services meet with the Campus Manager on a regular basis. Most students the visitors talked with at snack and lunch times indicated they were satisfied with the food services. One area of interest highlighted by the School is from an environmental concern, as a large amount of Styrofoam is currently being used for packaging of food. The Caterer and Campus Manager are open to suggestions.

This recommendation **is completed**, though obviously ongoing.

Recommendation 3:

“The director consider providing satellite stations for the delivery of specific items such as drinks only.”

A vending machine stocked with water and juice is available near the changing rooms. Plans for the new cafeteria include satellite stations for a variety of items.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 4:

“The director investigate ways to provide milk as an option.”

Chocolate milk is provided, though milk as a separate drink is not.

This recommendation is **partially completed**.

Recommendation 5:

“The faculty supports the use of the pre-ordering system by students.”

Parents pre-order for the students in the Primary School. It would be difficult to manage large scale pre-ordering in the Secondary School, but students are able to do this.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6:

“The school plan for the installation of an electronic purchasing option in the new cafeteria.”

The plans for the new cafeteria include electronic purchasing options.

This recommendation is **planned for the future**.

Recommendation 7:

“The school should study the feasibility of assuming responsibility and control of the food services operation.”

The School has outsourced the cafeteria service to a professional caterer, who is overseen by the School’s Campus Manager. When the new cafeteria is built, the School indicates it will then decide how the School should assume responsibility and control.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Transportation

Recommendation 8:

“The administration explore the possibility of providing bus service for student activities.”

Private bus service is always provided for school trips and after school activities.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 9:

“The administration explore the possibility of providing a plan for student drop-off and pickup that ensures the safety of all concerned.”

There are safe drop-off points on both sides of the school and the visitors believe the regular drop and pick-up arrangements are adequate, enhanced by the patrol provided by the security personnel at drop-off and pick-up times.

Regular emails are sent out to the community, although some individual parents still ignore the signs that are there for the safety of the students. The Health & Safety Committee provide safety training for students during assembly. The Campus Manager is looking into bringing in a traffic management company to study traffic flow and seek recommendations for short and medium term improvements.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Security

Recommendation 10:

“The administration continues to monitor the need for additional security given the turmoil in the world and the school's place in International matters.”

Since the last report, CCTV cameras have been installed. There are now three security staff on duty during the day. Central monitors in the security booth allow security personnel to monitor persons entering and leaving the campus, and activities taking place on the campus.

Each classroom has been provided with a PA system so that teachers can be contacted by the main office in the event of an emergency, and messages can be transmitted. Shatter-proof resistant film has been placed on all windows around the School. A high frequency radio link between the School and the US Embassy has been installed.

ID cards are gradually being introduced across the School and a number of other developments and enhancements are in progress.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Cleaning Service

Recommendation 11:

“The cleaning service should continue to establish verbal communication with St. Andrew's personnel in their assigned cleaning area, in order to ensure that all duties are carried out effectively.”

The cleaning service has been replaced by a system of cleaners directly employed by the School and under the direction of the campus manager.

This recommendation **is completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

Ali Gaitor's catering service, which is currently running the school cafeteria on a one-year contract, seems to have been well received and successful. Most of the funds needed for the planned building project, including a cafeteria, have been raised by the Foundation, though this phase of development has currently been put on hold because the board has felt it unwise to proceed with capital project development in light of the size of the School's overdraft and the consequent cuts in budget.

There was clear evidence to the visitors that appointment of the campus manager has made a significant difference to the maintenance and operation of the site and to the provision of student services. There is also a school-wide drive to conserve electricity and to make the campus more eco-friendly.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the campus manager review job descriptions, undertake a task analysis and reassign them as appropriate
- the administration and campus manager provide badges to faculty and parents for car windscreens so that security can stop unmarked cars

SECTION L: STUDENT LIFE

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 6 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 1 is completed, 3 are in progress, and 2 are rejected.

Recommendation 1

“That the school investigates ways in which it can develop further links with other schools in the region to increase intercultural exchange.”

The School has made some progress in this area, working with other schools on Habitat for Humanity as an example, but more is planned for the future.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2

“That the school considers adopting a student representative to the Board.”

The School considered and **rejected** this recommendation. The School feels that there are confidentiality issues with having a student on the Board. The Visitors are aware of schools in which students participate on the Board and are excused during discussions of a confidential nature or relating to personnel. It is recommended that the School reconsider this issue.

Recommendation 3

“That the school canvas student opinion when adopting policies which directly affect them.”

The School responded that there are student councils at both the middle and upper levels, which meet monthly with administration to voice concerns and issues. The students in the Upper School Council report that their voices are heard, but that their suggestions were rarely put into place.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 4

“That the school considers the provision of a school bus for trips or team events.”

The School responded that the contracted bus service currently being used was adequate and at less cost than purchasing a bus.

This recommendation is **rejected**.

Recommendation 5

“That the School continues the planned development programme to provide the students with enhanced facilities for extra- curricular activities.”

The School has had to put the programme on hold, as described in other sections of this report, but the facilities are planned for the future.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6

“That the School considers ways in which it can provide facilities/ opportunities for student to socialize during and after hours.”

The School has provided opportunities for students to be involved in many activities during and after school hours that provide opportunities for socialization. These include drama, music, sports, clubs, community and world service activities, and competitions in a variety of curricular related areas. There are also general social activities, such as dances, including the Secondary School Prom. Students perceive a need for additional social activities.

This recommendation is rated **completed** by the School, but is considered **in progress** by the Visitors.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The School reports that number of activities in the school increased since the last visit of the team as a result of more teacher involvement in student life and IB CAS (Community Action Service) inspired activities. External success with sporting teams and civic organizations have shown a significant increase. However it has become difficult for many of these clubs to meet during school hours due to the logistics of the new school timetable, which has shorter in-school breaks. A Middle School Student Council has been added.

The School excels in outside athletic and other competitions, such as speech and Model UN. There are a variety of activities available in the School that enrich student life at St Andrews. However, the older students in the School have spent as many as fourteen years as a student at St Andrews. Students often feel the need to leave the School and to leave the island. The activities offered by the School are appropriate for all age groups and are well-attended, in general. They meet the needs of most ages of students and are a source of pride in the school. Consideration

should be given to finding more activities for the older students, consistent with surveys of their interest.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- continue to support new activities for students, especially for students in the Upper Secondary School
- reconsider having a student representative on the Board who would be excused from discussions of a confidential nature
- allow students in the Upper Secondary School to assume more responsibility for social activities that are initiated by the student council

SECTION M: LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 5 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 were completed, 2 are in progress and 1 is planned for the future.

Recommendation 1:

“The school consider utilizing primary and secondary library volunteers.”

There is a dedicated core of Primary parent library volunteers who assist with book exchange and re-shelving materials. The Secondary library uses present and former student volunteers to help with re-shelving materials and other duties.

This recommendation **is completed**.

Recommendation 2:

“A process be developed that assures all students on the secondary level have equal access to information and literacy education.”

This year, the library curriculum has expanded to include timetabled formal library lessons for the majority of students. Years 7 and 8 have a trimesterly course called MY Search, in which they are taught library skills, database and internet searching, effective citing and referencing of sources, and how to avoid plagiarism. Year 10 has a quarterly Research class in which they study library skills and proper researching. Year 12 students have weekly Extended Essay classes, in which they learn research and writing skills of the type that they will be expected to know at university. Because of the schedule imposed by the BGCSE, Year 11 students have research lessons only as necessary to assist with preparations for BGCSE coursework. There is no time at the present to schedule Years 9 or 13 for lessons other than on an informal basis. The secondary librarian continues to coordinate library skills and research lessons with other faculty members as necessary, using flexible scheduling.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 3:

“There be adequate funding for collection development in the primary and secondary libraries.”

Given the state of the world economy and the fiscal state of the school, the librarians have looked at the current requisitions for ways to use resources more effectively.

This recommendation is **planned for the future**.

Recommendation 4:

“The information and literacy skills curriculum be articulated Pre-reception through Year 12/13.”

Draft information and literacy skills curricula are in place for both Primary and Secondary Schools, but need to be updated to reflect the changes that have taken place.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 5:

“The Primary information skills curriculum and services be fully implemented and broadened to include the Pre-reception to Year 2 students.”

The Primary teacher librarian visits the pre-reception classes in the ELC for story time and book talking from September through December. From January to June, the children come to the library for book exchange and story time. In Reception and Year 1, the classes come to the library for a weekly book exchange and story time, during which they are also taught library skills. There are no formal computer research lessons given by the librarian to these students, but the Primary computer lab is available if the class teacher wishes to use it. Year 2 classes have a weekly book exchange and story time with the class teacher, and computer research and IT lessons.

This recommendation **is completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

Since the last report, the number of computers in the library has increased significantly. The primary and secondary labs now have 20 computers each and there are 10 computers at the ‘drop-in’ bank in the centre space. There is also a dedicated computer for the online catalogue, Follett Destiny. The library has a TV, a DVD player, a VCR, a data projector for use in the library, and one which can be borrowed.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the librarians meet with curriculum personnel to plan and develop a curriculum which transitions from infant to junior to middle and upper schools more effectively
- the middle school administration consider including opportunities for regular programmed book exchange within the curriculum
- the librarians include further materials for students with learning differences in future requisitions
- the administration and librarians consider ways in which primary school students can have more supervised access to the library during break times to strengthen their involvement with, and enjoyment of, the materials in the library

SECTION N: SCHOOL FACILITIES

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 8 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 2 are completed, 2 are in progress, 3 are planned for the future and 1 is rejected.

Recommendation 1:

“The Foundation continue to move forward with its planned construction of a cafeteria and auditorium. The Board and administration carry on their work in obtaining adequate and secure changing facilities near the pool and athletic fields”

Although nearly \$750,000 was raised by the Foundation to begin the auditorium project, the current financial situation in the School has stopped the project. The Board does not feel that it would be fiscally responsible to move forward with the project until the operating budget situation is more stable. For the same reason, no planning has been done for the new changing facilities.

The current status of this recommendation is that it is **planned for the future**.

Recommendation 2:

“The school provide physically handicapped access to all common areas of the campus.”

Although this is desirable, the cost of completing this as an independent project is high and would be a wasted expenditure in areas of the campus that will be changing in subsequent building projects. The issue of handicapped access will be dealt with in future building projects.

For this reason this recommendation is **rejected**.

Recommendation 3:

“The school provide for, in its long range plan, the refurbishment or new construction of facilities to address the currently inadequate faculty and staff room, especially with regard to lavatories and the kitchenette facilities”

The School has made some initial plans, but this project is on hold until a long-term plan is developed.

This recommendation is **planned for the future**.

Recommendation 4:

“The administration give consideration to relocating the health suite to a ground level location”

The School has done this, moving the health suite to a main floor location in the middle of the campus that is accessible to all.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 5:

“The administration study and make recommendations for the remediation of the potentially hazardous drop-off and parking situation in front of the school”

The School has addressed this issue, as previously mentioned in the Health and Safety section of this report.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 6:

“The administration seal or block off the septic drain in the Home Economics room”

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 7:

“The administration form a committee to consider the need for an indoor/covered sports area”

The School has included this item in a list of future facilities needs, but as with the other facilities improvement items, it has been placed on hold.

This recommendation is **planned for the future**.

Recommendation 8:

“The School replace and repair ceiling tiles as appropriate”

The School reports that this is part of ongoing maintenance. This recommendation is **in progress**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The School has made many changes and upgrades to facilities in the past three years. Most of these have been funded through the Board’s budget,

although some have come from other sources, such as the United States Embassy providing for a security camera system, public address system, and shatterproof coating for all exterior windows across the campus. As programs have expanded, classrooms and other learning spaces have been developed. The technology infrastructure has been improved in some areas, while others still need more attention. A new swimming pool was built and other athletic facilities renovated to reflect changes in programme needs. The PTA and Foundation have been supportive in providing funding for some facilities improvements. Maintenance projects, such as painting deteriorating concrete areas of the buildings that are 35 years old with bonding paint, have helped to maintain appearance along with improving the structure. The campus is attractive and gives the appearance of being well cared for. The current state of the facilities at St Andrew's is good.

The School faces significant facilities issues in the future. Many of the buildings were built 35 years ago and are beginning to need significant maintenance. The cost of refurbishing these buildings might be as high as \$2,000,000. Plans are in place for a new building that would house a cafeteria and auditorium, but these have had to be scrapped because of the present financial situation. Athletic facilities are in need of improvement, including the changing rooms. Faculty and staff facilities need upgrading. Handicapped access should be upgraded as these projects are completed.

There is presently no plan or timeline for completion of these identified and needed projects. While it is understandable that this kind of planning is not a priority for the Board until the management of finances is stabilized, it is not clear why large scale plans had not been developed prior to the discovery of the financial problem. The Board needs to work with the administration and the Foundation to develop a Strategic Plan for the School which includes facilities development and maintenance.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration, board and foundation develop a long range plan for new facilities, renovations, and maintenance of facilities that is included in a Strategic Plan for the School

- **SECTION O: FINANCES AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 6 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates 4 were completed, 1 is in progress and 1 is planned for the future.

Recommendation 1:

“The school continues to plan future budgets to provide a surplus on operating costs, including depreciation.”

The School indicates that it has begun capturing historical recurrent income and expenditure to facilitate the development of realistic budgets for the future. Given the financial situation the School faces at the moment, the focus has been on developing short-term budgets. The board has been seeking to reduce costs in an attempt to reduce the current deficit and move towards planning for surpluses on operating costs. While the School indicates that financial information as of February 2009 suggests a return to profitability, it is noted that a number of items, including the professional development budget, have been cut or frozen for the coming financial year.

The visitors believe that strategic planning is an urgent priority.

The School indicates this recommendation is **completed**, but the visitors believe it is rather still **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The School set aside sufficient funds, in the light of experience and taking into account new buildings, to provide a rolling proactive programme of maintenance to ensure efficient operation of facilities and the appropriate Health and Safety conditions.”

Again, the current situation of the School highlights the urgent need for the board and administration to undertake a strategic planning process.

This recommendation **is planned for the future**.

Recommendation 3:

“The School attempts to make maximum use of its cash flow by early payment of fees and making best use of opportunities for earning income from deposits.”

Fees are billed termly with payment required in advance of the start of each term. Students with past due fees are not permitted into the classroom until such amounts have been settled. This creates the potential of short-term investment for return, but the School has not experienced periods of excess

cash and funds have been needed service the School's debt as well as used to enhance and maintain facilities, develop and continue educational programmes and.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 4:

"The School gives guidance as to cost of additional expenses such as trips, exams and activities to aid families in their planning."

This has been achieved, with parents being notified in advance of such additional expenses.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 5:

"The School makes clear in its statement of fees the total percentage of fee income (including capital levy) used to service debt."

The total percentage of fee income used to service debt appears on the published Statement of Annual Fees. However, it is not clear whether the servicing of debt includes the cost of maintaining a high and presumably expensive overdraft facility.

This recommendation is **completed**.

Recommendation 6:

"The School continues its review of insurance to ensure the most appropriate and cost effective cover for students and staff."

The School continues to review its insurance programmes to ensure that the most appropriate and cost effective cover is provided for students, staff and the School in general. The insurance programme also covers students and teachers during travel on School-sponsored trips.

This recommendation is **completed**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The recruitment of a new financial controller officer seems to have been very successful. The visitors were impressed with her knowledge and vision. The School expects her to review and improve internal controls over financial reporting, treasury management and overall fiscal management. It seems this is well underway. It is also a significant development that the role of the previous business manager, who some of the board members the visitors met felt spent more time on maintenance work than managing the

finances, was also split into two with the additional hiring of a campus manager. This seems to have improved the efficiency of site management and maintenance work.

The quality of the financial information available to the board of directors has improved, enabling the board and administration to plan in the more secure knowledge of the accuracy of the School's financial position.

There is an urgent need for the board of directors of the School and the trustees of the Foundation find a way to work together so that goals for development are part of the School's strategic planning. There are many constituents of the School and it is clear to the visitors that they are all in their own ways committed to advancing a successful School, but they are not always working in the same direction and there is evidence of some division and confusion. The board of directors, trustees of the Foundation and the School administration need to work together to establish priorities for improvement and to determine a unified direction.

c) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration and board begin, with some urgency, a strategic planning process involving the Foundation, parents, students, staff and faculty leading to the agreement of a strategic plan that establishes the goals and objectives of the School for at least the medium if not longer term, and that this be supported by financial projections
- the board of directors, trustees of the Foundation and the school administration devise and implement formal ways in which they may work together, and formalise a common approach to the development of the School
- the board move with urgency to eliminate the overdraft by restructuring the existing loan arrangements
- the board and administration continue to work with staff and faculty on devising ways of moving into budgeting for operational surpluses, including depreciation
- the board promote participation by administration, faculty and other staff members in the development of budgets
- the board ensure the professional development program be reinstated at the earliest opportunity and that priority be given to this
- the financial controller continue to develop and improve internal controls over financial reporting to ensure that consistent completeness and accuracy of financial information is available to administration and board

SECTION P: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING AND PERFORMANCE

a) Comments relating to the Recommendations of the Visiting Team

There were 2 recommendations by the Visiting Team and the School indicates both are in progress.

Recommendation 1:

“The school examine ways of defining, monitoring and moderating standards across the disciplines in an effort to create a consistent assessment scheme.”

The School responded that in the Upper School [years 10 through 13] initial planning and assessment review is done at the beginning of the School year by the Head of Secondary School, department chairs and faculty. The results of internal and external assessments are examined at this time (BGCSE, IB Diploma and IB Certificate). Rubrics are set for subject areas to determine consistent assessment. Regular department meetings are held throughout the year and planning decisions and curriculum delivery are addressed. Year 13 students are involved in the IB Diploma and Certificate exams, with the IB’s assessment boundaries used by classroom teachers for internal assessment during the academic year.

During 2007/8 School year, all Middle School departments reviewed discipline area learning outcomes. In the 2008/9 school year all Middle School departments are reviewing assessment strategies. As part of this review, the unique developmental needs of early adolescents and research into best practices in Middle School assessment is being discussed. Several departments have set curriculum development goals for the school year that focus on improving assessment strategies. This includes the introduction of portfolios, rubrics and a wider variety of assessments. The challenge of the Middle School is to continue to meet the needs of all students by employing a variety of authentic assessment strategies that are appropriate for middle level learners, while adequately preparing students for external examinations in the Upper School. The International Schools Assessment (ISA) is given in Years 7, 8 and 9.

The teachers of the Primary School consider assessment to be a key component in assessing student learning. There are many forms of assessment that take place in the Primary School. Every subject domain is considered. Teachers work collaboratively within Year levels to design authentic, rigorous, real-world assessments. Ongoing formative assessments are developed mostly by the classroom teacher and vary in style. At the end of a unit, such as a math concept or a unit of inquiry, a summative assessment is created. Within each assessment criteria is established on which the student will be evaluated. Teachers create rubrics

that follow the report descriptors for the Primary Report Cards (Exceeds, Achieves, Progressing towards, Needs improvement). The teachers work together to build consistency in grading and evaluating. Currently, teachers are working to collect anchor or exemplar papers to use with the students to show what is expected. Consistent common planning and additional half day team releases help to provide the monitoring and defining of these assessments and practices.

The Curriculum Coordinators of the school align assessment across levels by sharing best practices and building in common assessment tools, ideas presently including: writing rubrics for Years 5-7 and an open-ended problem-solving math rubric.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

Recommendation 2:

“The administration establish a formal system of enhancing and improving the teacher performance using assessment results.”

The School responds that at the Secondary, Middle and Primary Levels, test results are analyzed by curriculum leaders and teachers alike to help inform instructional decisions. External and internal test results are used to determine programme strengths and weaknesses at all levels. The teachers use these to develop instructional strategies and support programs to help all learners achieve. Department meetings at the Upper and Middle School levels and common planning time at the Primary level are often used for these discussions, leading to improved instruction in the classroom.

The School has also administered the ISA tests in Years 4-9 for the past two years. It is expected that one more year of data from these examinations will provide valid data for looking at program strengths and weaknesses.

Further, the Teacher Appraisal Committee is working on developing an improved system of teacher appraisal that could include student performance in teacher evaluation.

This recommendation is **in progress**.

b) Observations, including responses to significant developments

The School takes pride in its assessment programmes and test results, which are among the highest in the Bahamas and enhance St Andrew’s reputation. Improving assessment and using the results of assessment is a high priority for the school.

Recent improvements in this area include portfolio assessment in the Middle School, review and revision of the report card and portfolio assessments in the Primary School, expansion of the IB Programme to include Certificate candidates, and the ISA testing in Years 4-9. Also the recent creation of the Primary and Secondary Curriculum Coordinators has greatly increased the focus on assessment and provided more leadership in this area. The Visitors commend the School for its strong focus on using assessment data for improvement of the School's programmes.

d) Suggested Areas for Attention

The visitors suggest that:

- the administration involve teachers in the review and revision of the Assessment Policy document
- the administration and faculty include the use of assessment results in changes in the School's Appraisal Programme

CONCLUSIONS

The Visiting Team was impressed with the many actions taken by the School in response to the recommendations which resulted from the Team Visit. The School has made good or excellent progress on implementing a high percentage of the recommendations in the report from the Team Visit.

Of particular note is the recent restructuring of staffs which has led to a more efficient and effective management of the facility and the School's finances, along with improvements in curriculum coordination and articulation. St Andrew's has a long tradition of commitment to excellence in academic programs and the social development of its students. All associated with the School demonstrate a willingness to continue to improve the School in whatever ways are necessary for the betterment of its students.

However, recent developments outlined in this report have created great anxiety among the Faculty and Staff about the future of the School. The recent financial crisis, although seemingly on its way to being corrected, has led to freezes in spending in important areas, such as staff development, and forced staff members to make financial concessions. Along with the issues of the world economic crisis, there is considerable uncertainty about the future of the School for many involved with its work. Lack of clear planning and direction for the immediate and long-term future contributes greatly to this anxiety. It is essential that the roles and responsibilities of the School Administration, Board of Directors, and Foundation be clearly defined and that these work together to complete the planning necessary for the School to move forward in the positive way that each of these constituencies would want to happen.

Another issue of serious concern is the small number of the current year 12 students returning to next year to complete year 13 and the IB Diploma Programme. If this trend continues in the future the School will be forced to make some difficult decisions about the IB Diploma Programme. This issue is one which demands study and attention in the coming year.

St Andrew's enjoys the reputation of being the preeminent school in the Bahamas. It has a long and proud tradition that makes it the school of choice in this country. While nearly everyone interviewed by the Visitors felt that St Andrew's continues to be at the top and was optimistic that the School will move forward, doubts were expressed in the light of the current financial plight and apparent confusion of direction between the Foundation and the Board of Directors.

The Visitors are pleased to recommend that St Andrew's continue with its accredited status and with the excellent work and progress that has been a constant feature of a clearly evident desire to seek and implement improvement. However, there are two issues which greatly impact the future of the school and require immediate attention.

In particular, the Visitors recommend that progress on these two key issues be reported to the respective associations within one year of this report:

- the School Administration and Board of Directors begin, with some urgency, a strategic planning process involving the Foundation, parents, students, staff and faculty leading to the agreement of a strategic plan that establishes the goals and objectives of the School, including financial planning with respect to the large overdraft and operational and capital budgets, for at least the medium if not longer term, and that this be supported by financial projections
- the School Administration, Board of Directors, and Foundation clearly define their roles and responsibilities and implement formal ways in which they may work together to complete a common approach to the planning necessary for the School to move forward in the positive way that each of these constituencies would want to happen

It has been a pleasure to conduct this visit and to prepare this report. We would like to thank all members of the school community for welcoming us to St. Andrew's School. We extend our best wishes to them as they continue their work to prepare for the next Team Visit.

Respectfully submitted to NEASC and CIS.

CIS Representative: Daryl Barker

NEASC Representative: Jerome Auclair

Date: 15 May 2009