



LÉMAN CHENGDU
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL

Open Forum Notes on March 30, 2019

In Attendance

Faculty: Mr. Mindorff, Mr. Wilkinson, Mr. Pass, Ms. Chen, Ms. Mindorff, Ms. Wilkinson, Ms. Colling, Mr. Brown, Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Kusmierski

Number of Parents in Attendance: 33

Communications

Primary is moving to use SeeSaw, which will provide more personalized information. WeChat's access is limited to parents and caregivers of official class accounts. Parent Conferences will also occur more frequently, with an additional one being added in the upcoming school year.

Learning

All the IPC units are designed externally. Regarding textbooks, in Primary a range of resources are used including some textbooks. The Diploma Program uses electronic texts. MYP will use more text books next year. Mr. Mindorff stated that if the information is too much, the teachers can change that as it should be enough that the student can work independently. If the information is too sparse on ManageBack, the parents should contact the teacher and Mr. Brown. He said that the information given should be enough to spark conversation between the child and parents. The information on the internet is enormous in variety so the students are taught how to sift out low quality references.

Parent Question (Q): A parent voiced concern that PowerPoint presentations are not enough information and the answers they receive from the internet is inconsistent. They maintained that textbooks are a solid informational resource for which there is no substitute. Some parents wished that there was a textbook so that they can know the background of what is being taught to better be able to help their child learn.

MYP

MYP forums are held at noon on the first Wednesday of every month, although Mrs. Mindorff and Mr. Brown would be happy to meet after work hours to talk with parents that cannot attend. The MYP focuses in 21st century, organizing information skills, collaboration, designing, and inquiries. The expectations are communicated to the students and four criteria are to be met in each subject. These subjects involve deeper conversation. The criteria information is available on ManageBack.

Assessment

Assessment varies for each grade group. In the Early years PLP is used to measure individual growth of the students, Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) and reading benchmarks are used in Primary, in grades 9-10 they use the PSAT, and grades 11-12 IB Diploma is used. Compared with other schools, Leman is doing very well. The average score for IB Diploma is 30, Leman's average score last year was 35.

Clubs

Early Years students will not be able to attend clubs now or in the future as they are too young. Older kids in the IB program are able to help the younger kids in clubs as long as it fits into their CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service) program. Study hall is also an option for the IB students as long as it fits into their CAS.

Transition to Secondary

The main difference for students that are moving from Primary to Secondary is that they have more teachers and they will each have an advisor to keep care of the student's portfolio. In May grade 5 students have a "fly up" day where they get to meet grade 6 students and learn more about the upcoming year.

Secondary school has the lowest teacher-pupil ratio. Next year in grades 11 & 12 there will be a business management course. DP music is not offered because no one chooses it, but it can be taken after school. There will be a Spanish class offered in grades 11&12 next year also.

Music

Next year music classes will be more keyboard oriented as the new music instructor is a pianist. Friday afternoons are Juilliard time for grades 5-10. Juilliard provides visiting artists, and high-quality lessons for the teachers. For Orchestra students can pick an instrument plus keyboard.

Q. What is the benefit for the student?

A. Teachers get the training and lessons designed by Juilliard and pass that on to the students. Ms. Heyres would be the best to answer this question.

Charity

Mr. Jarrett Brown has been working to establish coordination of charity drives/bake sales this school year. The students themselves choose charity organizations that they want to support. If parents want to help the kids think of the charity rather than the baked goods, ask them what the money is going towards so they can see the connection.

Q. When the money and goods are raised for the charities, is there any follow-up so the school can see what has been done with the money?

A. Right now the students are in charge of their organization, including banners and spreading the word. A follow-up can be arranged.

Budget

NA schools are private and for-profit schools. However, LIS is not the most expensive school in Chengdu if you factor in the bus prices, which are covered at Leman but not elsewhere. More programs are being added each year. A Special Education coordinator will be added next year. The bulk of the budget goes to the salary and benefits of the teachers so as to draw exceptional teachers to our school. Nord Anglia and the Administration also receive a large portion of the budget. Other budget items were the lease, rent, and tax to the Chinese government for the campus, the building upgrades and renovations take a smaller amount, as does the transport. Others included staff training as well as technology for the school. Mr. Richard shared that another PMP room will be added to the school for the following year, new books for the library, new classrooms (including air filtration), more iPads, a new primary playground, and hopefully changes to the gymnasium, pending approval.

Lunch

Although some parents were concerned that the lunch time was too short, it seems to the administration that lunch is actually too long as most kids are waiting to leave.

Q. Is it possible to add some vegetables to the menu that don't include meat?

A. There is a committee for the cafeteria that is open to suggestions for vegetarian food. Please send your ideas!

Teachers

It takes 4 months to get a new teacher here due to interviews, background checks, and visas. There will be several new teachers coming for the next school year and their biographies will be given at the end of this school year. The standard class size is 14 to 15 with a maximum being 22.

Facilities

There will be 150,000 rmb going to towards library upgrades. Completed already are the Tower, the retaining wall, air filtration in the new classrooms, building facade, and currently the bricks on the outer walls. Upcoming there will hopefully be renovations to the roof of the gymnasium. Adding an air filtration system in the gym is a high priority as is sound proofing the gym. All these things are pending approval from Nord Anglia.

Further Questions from Parents.

Q. Can more language options be available so students in Primary can learn their mother-tongue in addition to or instead of Mandarin?

A. We can respond to this issue by having your student work with Mr. Sonya, the language coordinator. He works to support student's and parent's language goals. We do try to give the younger kids Chinese language because they can learn it so quickly while young.

Q. What is the standard for teacher's background checks?

A. The teachers must undergo a police check in their home country as well as a safeguarding training. All off-campus or specialists that have not undergone this safety check are always supervised whilst on campus.

Q. Is there an outline or reference for what are the academic expectations for the child in ManageBack and/or SeeSaw?

A. We use MAP Test Benchmarks per international norms. Each grade will have specific levels and you can talk to your child's teacher to find out what they are for your child.

Q. At what age should a child start reading?

A. It varies from child to child. We don't have a set standard at Leman. We work, instead, to make sure that each child is progressing.

Q. Is it possible to get better alignment of school holidays and Chinese holidays so that my children will have the same days off as working parents?

A. Absolutely. Please send your feedback on where there is misalignment and it can be corrected.

Q. Can we have CCTV in public areas? Some things are stolen.

A. There are a number of cameras throughout the school currently. However, the best way to find your child's items are to make sure they are properly labeled?

Q. If Leman has sister schools is it possible for students to swap and learn at another school for a few weeks?

A. Recently one of our sister schools in Dubai sent some students and teachers to Leman for a few days. It is definitely possible.

LFA Meeting

The meeting began at 10am and ended at 12 noon.

After School Clubs

Cindy shared that parents would like more Julliard music clubs such as dance, music, choir and theatre. Mr. Mindorff noted that, in the past, when these types of clubs were offered there were no students to fill them. The club choices are selected from what has been most popular among the students.

Open Forum

The meeting began at 10:30am and ended at 12 noon.