

ISHCMC

Secondary Coffee Morning

Core Topics: Outdoor Education Camp and Sports

30 November 2022

ISHCMC Leadership: Kim Green, Head of School
Caleb Archer, Secondary Principal
Ramon Ornelas, Head of Athletics
Catherine Nguyen, Director of Community Engagement

Approx 25-30 secondary parents in attendance.

The following are notes from the Secondary Coffee Morning. PTO and Secondary Leadership will do a recap and review outstanding actions / necessary follow-up in their next monthly meeting.

Outdoor Education Camp

Topic	Parent Comments	ISHCMC Response
Food	Major issue this year particularly in G10 and G7. <i>[Many of these issues are documented in the PTO exec- Leadership Nov 2022 meeting notes recently released.]</i> G10 vendor did not have enough food – from distribution of food, quality of food, lack of food, appropriate nutrition, and more aspects. G7 food did not have appropriate food for kids to eat. Please consider students who have dietary restrictions and be more inclusive in their food choices and how they eat. Separating them from friends and putting them at a table, making them feel like “special needs” – some students instead opted to sit with their friends and not eat.	For G10, while the menus were reviewed in advanced – it is acknowledged that the menus are satisfactory while in a normal school day environment were however not sufficient for students who have been active outdoors for long periods of time. ISHCMC leadership regrets this oversight. Parents countered that the outdoor education provider should have known this. ISHCMC acknowledges that the vendor did not appear to be prepared for a higher # of students (vs. smaller international schools in Vietnam who have used the provider). For G7, there was plenty of high-quality food, yet it was acknowledged that it was “adult food” and food that students would be uncertain on how to cut and eat (versus small bites to grab). G7 had full fish platters, okra vegetables, etc. that went untouched (thereby per parents – many just ate rice with soy sauce). ISHCMC did not verbally respond to the dietary restriction comment but did write notes/ nod head in acknowledgement. <i>[NOTE: Since this meeting, a camp feedback survey was sent out in ISHCMC notices for parents to provide additional feedback.]</i>
Vendor Change	Why switch vendors this year after Covid? There is an appearance that ISHCMC is looking for ways to reduce cost. Last year the camps were great- student comments of “best ever”. Why change what works?	The lens in choosing a new provider was a focus on the broader exposure learning for the students – push their boundaries a little bit and be a little more prepared for what happens “in the real world” when they are off to college, etc. Many have never hiked before or only hike once a year. The G10 provider is accredited with the Outward-Bound organization. It was noted that the vendor is relatively new

	One parent was very satisfied with the G10 camp experience and staff of the vendor and expressed awareness that other parents were as well, while also acknowledging that food was a major issue.	in Vietnam (launched in 2019 before Covid) while they have longer-standing programs in Malaysia and Singapore.
Pushing boundaries	Parents welcome pushing boundaries – however we live in HCMC – not much nature here and even for active outdoor families, the push to the extreme, even if its just a taste of it – does not seem carefully considered.	Comment acknowledged.
Camp Update Emails and other comments	Felt extremely disrespected by administration who sent out emails during camp that “the kids are having a wonderful time” while students are calling home with the opposite. It felt like secondary was dismissing student/parent feelings.	RE: emails, ISHCMC acknowledged the feedback.
G11 and G12 upcoming camps	Are appropriate measures in place for these camps? Halong Bay is on the table for G12 and have concerns about this.	G12 students decide on their locations. At this point these are all ideas, not options. ISHCMC also will have concerns about Halong Bay as an option. All G12 student ideas are taken and reviewed carefully with programs and options provided back to students for their review.

Sports

Topic	Parent Comments	ISHCMC Response
Participation in Sports Conferences	Why is ISHCMC not participating in sports conferences – other schools in HCMC are active in engaging – we want our students to play and be exposed to more competitive tournaments. <i>[NOTE: This was discussed in detail in the most recent PTO exec-Leadership Nov 2022 meeting; notes already distributed]</i>	ISHCMC outlined where it stands with the following conferences: *MRISA = Mekong River International Schools Association *SEASAC = Southeast Asia Student Activities Conference *ASAC = ASEAN Sports of Activities Conference *SISAC = Saigon International Schools Athletic Conference Overall, Kim, Caleb and Ramon are unified that they want -the kids to play, - to build a program where students can play year-round - have parents involved and ISHCMC can help to train parents as parent coaches on health and safety for weekend sport gatherings There are planning challenges, other host challenges and safety concerns for reasons why ISHCMC is not active in some of these conferences. For others, ISHCMC is an invitational school (not part of original set up) and at times, adding another school adds to the complexity of conferences to engage hence they may not extend an invitation. It is ISHCMC’s high intent to get the sport community back to high engagement and where possible- ISHCMC will host and lead so that the students can have the opportunities to play.
Lack team spirit	We don’t celebrate our wins. The community doesn’t know about big wins (e.g., being undefeated or	Some of the leadership stated they honestly did not know these concerns even though it was sent to school appropriate

	conference champions). We've asked the school about medals for the kids and a celebration party (pizza) and we get no response – though we are communicating in the school appropriate channels. Is there a cost issue for celebrations? We (parents) are buying the medals for the kids.	channels. ISHCMC reiterated this is not a budget issue and will revert about how schools celebrate conference wins.
Additional sports such as U13 basketball for seasons 2 and 3	Are sports only seasonal? Can't sports be year-round? Will there be, for example another chance for U13 basketball to play later this year?	From a conference participation perspective and current calendaring – there will be no further sports play for those sports that were in Season 1. ISHCMC is open to engaging how such sports can continue in other ways – for example with parent coaches and will revert on this.
Use of facilities after school/ weekends	Can our athletes play volleyball or basketball at ISHCMC facilities on the weekends? Weekday evenings?	While possible, it takes considerable planning and ensuring resources are available. To use our facilities, for ISHCMC (and Cognita) safety guidelines – a nurse and a coach (could be parent coach) need to be on site and have appropriate safety training.
Professional Coaching	Breakdown in communication and organization of sports for our athletes, especially U19. Lack of coach is a major issue. School not providing communication on this and hearing our concerns.	ISHCMC is working on this. Talking with Kevin Fox / Fox Football and working on execution of agreement now. Talking with coach(es) from Saigon Heat for basketball. <i>[Note: Since this meeting, coaches have started and ISHCMC is receiving positive feedback thus far.]</i>

Overall

Topic	Parent Comments	ISHCMC Response
Length of time to meet	A meeting like this coffee morning has been asked often and noted in PTO/Leadership minutes/agenda and yet it took so long to happen. Parents are asking in the right channels, yet nothing happened. It should not have taken a louder frustrated group to get to this point of meeting.	Kim Green acknowledged this – from the opening of the coffee morning with apologies to repeating this during responses to questions -- this is something that should happen and happen regularly and will be scheduled with frequency.