

End of Year Report
School Advisory Committee/Installation Advisory Committee/School Board
Ankara, George C. Marshall School (GCM)
School Year 2007-2008

1. SAC/IAC/Board Membership:

Voting Members:

Non-Voting Members:

2. SAC//IAC/School Boards Meetings held during the reporting period:

September 6, 2007, 10 present. We were missing a third teacher and student reps., so arranged elections for these slots.

*October 11, 2007, 14 present,
November 7, 2007, 18 present,
December 6, 2007, 15 present.
February 7, 2008, 13 present.*

*March 6, 2008, 19 present.
April 3, 2008, 13 present.
May 1, 2008, 18 present.
June 5, 2008, 15 present.*

3. The goals and objectives of the SAC/IAC Board:

- a. CSP Goal 1: High Student Achievement
- b. CSP Goal 2: Performance-Driven, Effective Management Systems
- c. CSP Goal 3: Motivated High Performance, Driven Workforce-not a high priority for Ankara's SAC, given excellent mechanisms in place
- d. CSP Goal 4: Network of Partnership Priority Achievement
- e. GCM Goal 5: Not a CSP Goal. To continue being the most compelling school of choice for the non-DOD US (USG, US Contractors) and diplomatic community in Ankara
- f. GCM Goal 6: Not a CSP Goal. Develop community service in the school. The SAC identified this as a major goal for the year.

4. Measures of success in achieving each goal or objective listed above:

- a. Goal 1: High Student Achievement. Teacher representatives have provided briefings on the School Improvement Plan and SAC recommended that each month parents receive ideas for how they can reinforce reading and writing goals at home. SAC chair has worked with SIP coordinator to develop and distribute these tips through the school newsletter. SAC has encouraged publicizing notification of particular achievements such as Math Counts, Academic Games and Model UN, through the school newsletter. In terms of Opportunities and Citizenship: SAC has continued to stress the need for extra curricular activities in the Middle School. We also identified community service as a separate goal (see no. 5 below). School administrators briefed the SAC on testing results to ensure continued high achievement by the student body. Most standardized test results, such as SATs, remain above the average.
- b. Goal 2: The base commander briefed at every meeting on facilities and plans. SAC identified the need to improve IT systems for communication. In particular, we saw the need for a school events calendar to help parents and teachers plan and to avoid conflicting events. To our relief an electronic events calendar was produced this year. For past years we have also discussed the need for an electronic tool that will provide students and parents access to homework and progress reports. It was great news to us, per Dr. Curtis, that GradeSpeed will be introduced for all schools this coming year.
- c. Also Goal 2: Student support services: The new guidance counselor briefed twice both on her overall role in the school and also specifically on college counseling for high school students. Parents were reassured and informed on both accounts about new services and opportunities.
- d. Also Goal 2: Secure and Safe environment: we organized a briefing on the DARE program and, through this initiative, the DARE officer from Incirlik will lead a student training unit in the fall. Our transportation officer attended meetings to respond to parents' concerns about bus safety and issues were referred to the base and OSI for resolution. Most questions were resolved; however, a request by foreign parents' for bus monitors on their contracted buses was not settled, because costs for hiring monitors are too high.
- e. Goal 3: Motivated Workforce. SAC did not see this as a high priority for our school, since the student, staff and administration have remained motivated through this year due to on-going programs that support morale and teacher development. At the request of international families, our "good bus behavior" awards were expanded to include foreign students as a morale

booster. SAC also discussed opportunities for input into the selection of a new principal and sent a letter to the district headquarters recommending the qualifications we believe important for our school.

- f. Goal 4: In response to parent and teacher requests, SAC continued to make it a priority to enhance communications among parents, teachers and school staff. This is particularly important given the international nature of our school and differing degrees of English competency among parents. We continued to hold regular, scheduled monthly meetings at a set time and place and encouraged parents to attend through announcements in the school's weekly newsletter and postings on a special SAC bulletin board at the entrance to the school. We also placed announcements in the US Embassy newsletter which reaches much of the American community. In addition, we encouraged international parents to participate in SAC and expanded the number of student reps in order to get broader input. We posted our minutes and results of meetings on our bulletin board. We also held joint meetings with the PTSO Chair on particular issues of concern as they came up. Finally, we met in March after working hours, and this turned out to be our best attended meeting.

- g. Goal 5: GCM goal to continue being the school of choice for non-DOD US and diplomatic community. Early in the year Ms. Ohman visited to look into the possibility of closing our school. SAC and PTSO jointly organized a meeting with her and parents. She announced that the school would not be closed, but it is clear that we need to keep our enrolment up. For this we need to increase marketing. A brochure will be updated over the summer for distribution to new prospective parents. Thanks to the efforts of our athletic coach, who has arranged tournaments with other foreign schools in Ankara, more families are aware of our school.

- h. Goal 6: SAC has worked on encouraging community service in our school for a couple years. In the past this has focused on the high school with mixed results, since the students at our small school are already loaded with other activities. This year we started identifying projects across the community and posted them on our bulletin board. The daily announcements advertised upcoming events and called for volunteers and our NHS coordinator and SLO reached out to middle and high school students. The system improved with the year and a community run on May 31 was well supported.

5. Other matters addressed and any outcome from the work of the SAC/IAC/Board:
(Please note as above if the item matched one of the goals of the DoDEA CSP):

a. School policies regarding students, parents and student activities:

Goal #2 – As a result of specific incidents, we reviewed school discipline policies to generate better understanding and encouraged dissemination of policies to parents.

Goal #4 - Parents complained about the lack of notice for upcoming sports trips, so SAC worked with administration and sports program to develop a uniform notification letter. The Athletic director briefed on the upcoming sports' year, tournaments, etc.

Goal #2 –Parents requested that coaches be accessible during sports trips for emergency calls. As a result, a decision was taken to provide cell phones for all coaches as funds permit.

Goal #2 – Two non-military USG parents requested that the school drop the use of Social Security numbers to identify identity students in the school in order to protect against identity theft. They pointed out that foreign students are not required to have SS#s, but rather assigned a new ID. The administration researched this request and determined that the DODDS-wide School Maintenance System requires US citizens to use SS# and they could not find a way to get around this. They did take measures to protect students' SS#s better and limit their use wherever possible, for example dropping them from sports forms. The SAC and parents felt more reassured.

Goal #2 - Last year our students and teachers requested that the lunch period be lengthened to allow time to eat and hold meetings. The Administration researched the issue and turned down the request due to logistical and financial reasons.

b. Allocation of resources within the school to achieve educational goals:

Goal # 2 – Parents requested that the school open a pre-school. Research indicated that this would not be possible given that DoDDS schools traditionally only provide pre-school for U.S. military ranked E-5 or below. It was also decided that such a school would not be cost-effective, given the small community and availability of good alternative pre-schools in Ankara.

c. Pupil services (such as health, special education, testing, evaluation, counseling, and extracurricular activities):

Goal #2 – Our counselor briefed SAC and PTSO and kept her door always open to students and parents. Her manner helped resolve issues from past years and questions that arose this year.

Goal #1- The request for more extracurricular activities, particularly for the elementary and middle schools, is repeated from year to year. This year as usual, we were limited by such things as a small number of staff already covering activities and transportation issues.

Goal #2 – Question was raised about whether there should be more differentiation between middle and high school students. While the P.E. classes are separated, size of the school and costs dictate that most facilities are shared. An earlier plan for a separate middle school wing will probably not be possible.

d. Other:

6. List the major achievements of the committee during the reporting period:

-We continued to improve communications by holding regular monthly meetings, sending emails, advertising of meetings and publishing minutes. Our new SAC bulletin board also helped, as did the new calendar of school events the administration started circulating at the end of the year.

-We started promoting community service in a more effective way this year. We encouraged the community to identify opportunities and publicized these on the bulletin board and through morning announcements. One teacher and the SLO reached out to students to get more participation. These methods help improve participation and should be institutionalized and strengthened in the coming year.

-Timely briefings arranged with the administration, staff and detachment over concerns such as security, school/base discipline policies, and sports trips helped diffuse some difficult issues.

-Parents' requests for an online student progress tracking and assignment system continued through this year and may be solved by a new system, GradeSpeed, we have been told will start across all DoDEA Europe schools this coming year.

7. List any concerns requiring additional review and recommendations for the succeeding SAC/IAC/Board. We recommend the new SAC:

-Promote the school more in the international community in Ankara amongst foreign embassies and businesses to ensure that new parents consider the school as they are moving here. Use the school web site and make sure that parents can find it when they make a general search for schools in Ankara. Ensure that a brochure is updated and distributed. Use international day as a way to reach new families/embassies.

-Ensure there is a Student2Student email address and description of the program's goals on the school website. These steps could help students and parents moving to the Ankara area gather information and make acquaintances before their arrival.

-Continue to promote parent awareness of SAC, its mission and purpose. Try particularly to reach our international parents. Consider holding at least two meetings after working hours or at lunch time.

-Continue to encourage community service for the middle and high schools and identify someone at the start of the year who will be the point person to support service in the school and community.

-Follow through with information technology goals to promote use of progress tracking systems and expand communication between all stakeholders.

-Continue to work closely with base leadership, the School Liaison Officer and US Embassy liaison to support communication and security goals.

8. List actions taken to strengthen and improve the local SAC/IAC/Board: *We expanded the number of student representatives elected by the student body and thus assured that at least two attended most meetings. This also meant that more students could participate and learn from this experience. We also encouraged parents from outside the US community to run for SAC and achieved better representation across the school, with members from the US military, US Embassy and international families.*

9. Recommendations for the improvement of the Local Education Advisory Program: None.

10. Additional comments (optional): None.

Questions regarding the content of this report may be addressed to the undersigned at (90312-457-7530) or School Principal, E.B. Stafford, at (90312-287-2532).