



TASOK Guiding Principles

Our Mission for Excellence: The American School of Kinshasa provides dynamic and individualized educational challenges and opportunities that promote diversity and empower each of its students to develop into independent global community leaders.

At TASOK we believe in the following concepts: Excellence, Integrity, Inclusivity

International Baccalaureate Learner Profile: As TASOK learners we strive to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective.

TASOK Strategic Planning – *Investing in Excellence* 2021-2026

- *Strategic Intent Area #1: Academic Leadership and Development of a Quality Educational Program*
- *Strategic Intent Area #2: Inclusive Community*
- *Strategic Intent Area #3: Recruiting, Developing and Retaining Quality Faculty and Staff*
- *Strategic Intent Area #4: Physical Infrastructure Development*
- *Strategic Intent Area #5: Financial Sustainability*

Area #1: Academic Leadership and Development of a Quality Educational Program

Rationale:

A school is evaluated on the strength of its program and the opportunities it provides for students in higher education through development of critical thinking skills, inquiry, and becoming positive members of a global society. We are on the path to be a great school, finding balance in the academic and social development of our students.

Our newly authorized IB Programs (PYP, MYP, DP) develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people that are determined to succeed.

Strategic Intent Area #1:

The written and taught International Baccalaureate Curriculum is continuously designed, reviewed and assessed, to provide dynamic and individualized educational challenges for our students aligned with our TASOK Mission and IB Learner Profile.

To accomplish this Strategic Intent, TASOK will:

- (1) Create opportunities for all students to engage in physical fitness, sportsmanship, and activity through a quality Athletic Program that includes both local and international tournaments, meets, and matches.
- (2) Capitalize on our location and campus to become leaders in environmental sustainability, and service learning through the MYP and DP Service as Action and Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS).
- (3) Continue to develop the IB Programs to provide all students with access to the knowledge, problem solving, and inquiry skills they will need to thrive in a complex and changing world including: technology integration, research skill development and use of resources, areas of creativity supported by the arts and design.

Identified Priority for 2021-2022 school year with action to be taken and supporting evidence: Item 3 above, specifically:

Review feedback from the 2020/2021 PYP and MYP Authorization Virtual Visits to identify next step areas from program development and inclusion of Common Core and NGSS Science Standards.

SMART GOALS:

Action to be taken in Elementary (PYP):

- Strengthen teachers' understanding of inquiry-based and transdisciplinary learning.
- Continue to define and document the elements of the action cycle across all disciplines.
- Work collaboratively to refine unit planners within the programme of inquiry.
- Prioritize the collaborative development of unit planners for stand alone language and mathematics units of inquiry.
- Ensure the assessment policy and related guidelines are implemented across all disciplines for fair and valid assessment.
- Begin to explore how mother tongue language can be supported in elementary.
- Strengthen the library collection aligned with IB PYP philosophy and practices.

Evidence to demonstrate progress in Elementary (PYP):

- Wednesday afternoon meeting times used for collaboration and professional development to increase knowledge of inquiry and raise awareness of transdisciplinary connections.
- Teachers and students apply the PYP action cycle (reflect-choose-act) systematically to all areas of learning.
- Teachers submit thorough unit of inquiry planners that respond to reflections from the previous year and in which assessment for, of and as learning is fully addressed.
- Stand alone language and mathematics units of inquiry are documented in MB.
- Wednesday afternoon meeting time scheduled to explore the possibilities (within the host country context) for mother tongue language in elementary.
- Sufficient annual budget is allocated to the purchase of materials for the library collection.

Action to be taken in Secondary (MYP):

- Ensure the taught and assessed curriculum is aligned with the written curriculum and philosophy of the IB.
- Continued development of Approaches to Learning (ATL's).
- Interdisciplinary Units (IDU 's) opportunities extended across grades and subject areas.
- Review of new IB Programme Standards and Practices.
- Separation of the Middle Years Programme and Diploma Coordinator's position and responsibilities.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher coaching by experienced faculty. Continue the curriculum review process. <p>Evidence to demonstrate progress in Secondary (MYP/DP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom observations and walkthroughs. Appraisal Process. Professional Development Plan for Wednesday's collaborative meetings with a focus on teaching and learning. Moderation of subject assessed work. ATL planning chart for vertical and horizontal articulation. Unit planners clearly reflect ATL's . IDU collaborative planning within departments. More IDU Unit Planners created. Action plan created to focus on the new thematic approach to the IB Programme Standards and Practices. Find an appropriate and preferably experienced MYP Coordinator. Review Job descriptions IB Category 3 training workshops for experienced staff members to train as future coaches. Subject curriculum reviews, as determined by the IB. <p>Identified Priority for 2021-2022 school year Conduct the self-study review process in preparation for our 5-year IB Diploma review to take place during the 2021/2022 school year. Evidence identified during this 5-year review to prioritize planning for the next 5-year cycle.</p> <p>Create opportunities for all students to engage in physical fitness, sportsmanship, and activity through a quality Athletic Program that includes both local and international tournaments, meets, and matches.</p> <p>Action to be taken in Secondary (DP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a DP programme Development Plan. Focus on an overall common need across all Programmes grounded in the Programmes Standards and Practices. TOK integration within the subject areas. Improve student performance on internal assessments. Further align subject practices with the requirements of the DP. Improve differentiation across all programmes. DP scope and sequence Implementation of an Athletic Handbook and local sports association. <p>Evidence to demonstrate progress in Secondary (DP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 Development Plans are required to be written over 5 years. To be based on a minimum of 2 standards per plan. Collaborative work across the 3 Programmes to develop needs. Unit plans integrating TOK. Training of teachers in integrating TOK within their subject areas. Promoting Cat. 3 training on AI's and subject coursework. Regular review of internal DP calendar deadlines. More academic rigour in assessments. Moderation of work within subject areas. Development of Support Services processes and practices. PD sessions on differentiation. Unit plans reflecting differentiation. Updating of the present Scope and Sequence. DP Unit Plans created

Area #2: Inclusive Community

Rationale:

TASOK is first and foremost a community of students, faculty and families living together in Kinshasa. We need to live our mission and build a strong sense of collaboration among all groups, and the desire to contribute and participate. The school must be inviting and welcoming to nurture and sustain all relationships in service to the school's mission and beliefs and garner the community's full support.

Strategic Intent Area #2:

School development and community engagement shall support the TASOK mission and be a welcoming environment for all those connected to the school

To accomplish this, TASOK will:

- Ensure the health, safety, and well-being of students and staff remain at the forefront of decisions made during challenging times.
- Maintain and promote effective and sustainable communications through our new TASOK website and ManageBac to enhance dialogue between home and school, among parents, and between the current school community and alumni.
- Implement post-COVID plans for access to the campus during non-academic hours that simultaneously allows the community overall to benefit from the incredible natural environment that TASOK's campus provides while protecting the physical infrastructure and maintaining security for those that live and work on the campus.
- Expansion of our Financial Aid Program and added Scholarship Program to assist TASOK families financially impacted by COVID-19.
- Ensure a supportive culture built on mutual respect, transparency and opportunities to learn together regardless of the instructional model, with all constituents in the TASOK community.

- (6) Set goals to bring back pre-COVID events and introduce new events specifically designed to build the sense of community, engaging with those in the wider Kinshasa community through service learning projects, athletics, and cultural exchanges once vaccination rates reach a majority.
- (7) Continue to review admissions practices and services we offer at TASOK to ensure that the needs of the wide range of students align with the level of support services available for English language development and those with learning challenges.
- (8) Further development of our Service and Action and CAS programs in the secondary school.
- (9) Encourage greater parent involvement through offering a wider range of information sessions.

Identified Priority for 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year with action to be taken and supporting evidence: item 7 above

SMART GOALS:

- Conduct parent and faculty surveys each year with an area of the survey focusing on communication to receive data on how our current communication systems are working and suggestions for improvement. (A Stakeholder Survey was completed during 2020 as part of the Board Goals).
- Improved training for ManageBac with the Registrar, Admin Assistant, and IT support team for continued development of ManageBac proficiency and training. Training to include workshops for teachers during orientation, and parents during New Family Orientation and ongoing.
- Continue to explore the expansion of our recently upgraded internet provider for added reliance on cloud based services. This will allow for increased student device access and paperless initiatives. The new students internet network has been very successful in allowing students to bring their own device.
- Continue to work with the IT team for expansion of network proficiency and work with the Finance Committee on increased funding allocation. **(ongoing – we now have a faster connection as of January 2021)**
- Continue to build our online resources and presence for short-term toggling due to COVID and/or travel restrictions, and long-term access for students and families.
- **Ongoing – connected to the internet options in the points above.**
 - o Our ideal platform is Google Applications for Education and we have slowly migrated resources and tools to online/cloud based learning over the past year. Next year we will migrate all emails and Google resources to the TASOK Google Suite, eliminating the reliance on Exchange for communication.
- We are now part of an AISA Blended Learning group and had representation at the AISA Blended Learning conference in November 2019, and ongoing through the development of our Virtual Learning Program which began in April of 2020.
- Increase the interactivity of the new TASOK website that was introduced in 2020 with more ongoing updates, and our social media presence.
- Work together with the PTC coordinators on their annual goal of creating and implementing a welcome program for new families to TASOK (To be established for the August 2021 school year).

Evidence to demonstrate progress:

- Benchmarking data from the parent and faculty surveys on the areas of communication (this survey will be conducted twice annually so that areas for improvement and growth can be observed).
- A comprehensive alumni database completed and increased communication between alumni and TASOK.

Area #3: Recruiting, Developing and Retaining Quality Faculty and Staff

Rationale:

Human resources are our most valuable resource and research demonstrates this area having the greatest impact on the quality of student learning. Our ability to attract and maintain high quality faculty and staff in our context and current global pandemic has challenges and therefore we must focus on having a competitive salary and benefits package including living conditions and a commitment to a high quality professional development program.

Strategic Intent #3:

Quality faculty and staff members shall be recruited and nurtured through ongoing professional learning and retained when they add value to the community and programs.

To accomplish this Strategic Intent, TASOK will:

- (1) Continue to hire, develop and retain a diverse group of enthusiastic, well-qualified and experienced IB teachers and staff to provide a teaching and learning environment aligned with the attributes of the IB Learner Profile and TASOK Mission of Academic Excellence.
- (2) Allocation of ongoing financial support to improve living conditions through replacing outdated on-campus housing. The Stakeholder Survey from 2020 identified faculty housing as an area of concern and ongoing maintenance by faculty.
- (3) Maintain competitive salaries and benefits along with improving living conditions in the context of our TASOK campus and Kinshasa to ensure that the school is staffed and guided by a team of well-qualified, competent and engaged professionals.
- (4) Promote excellence in teaching and learning by supporting faculty and staff to develop and advance their professional practice aligned with the school objectives and IB implementation.

Identified Priority for 2021-2022 school year with action to be taken and supporting evidence: Item 1 above.

Associated SMART goals:

- Director will present a recruiting strategy for the 2022-2023 school year to the board in September of 2021 prior to contract discussions.
- Tasok will continue to implement the updated personal and professional growth guidelines with faculty and continue to update and implement the Professional Learning Guidelines with faculty to align with school programs.
- Tasok will solicit faculty feedback with questions related specifically to personal and professional growth and professional learning, and conduct an exit survey for departing faculty. **(meetings scheduled for June, 2021)**

Identified Priority for 2022-2023 school year: Item 3 above

Associated SMART goals:

- Director will present a recruiting strategy for the 2023-2024 school year to the board in September of 2022.
- Tasok will continue to implement the updated personal and professional growth guidelines with faculty and continue to update and implement the Professional Learning Guidelines with faculty to align with school programs.
- Tasok will solicit faculty feedback with questions related specifically to personal and professional growth and professional learning, and conduct an exit survey for departing faculty.
- Director will work with the finance committee and the board to understand priorities for improving quality of life on campus and the compensation package based on benchmarking data from other similar schools and taking into consideration cost of living and the Kinshasa context. **(ongoing see discussion paper for the finance and strategic planning of the 5-year financial plan)**

Evidence to demonstrate progress:

- Benchmarking data from the faculty survey and exit survey of departing faculty.
- Results of the finance committee review of compensation packages.
- Summary of Professional Learning implemented in the school year with feedback.
- Summary of Personal and Professional Goal implementation at the end of each year.
- Director's Report on recruiting along with summary and background of new hire faculty. Track faculty length of stay at TASOK and identify reasons for leaving, along with statistics on the hiring process.

Areas #4: Physical Infrastructure Development

Rationale:

TASOK campus development began with the construction of the high school in 1967, elementary school in 1971 and the middle school in 1989. The Master Plan was created to develop a vision for present and future development and has included:

- New secondary school classrooms
- New secondary library
- Early Years Center (Preschool)
- New elementary classrooms
- New TASOK Community Center (TCC)
- New security entrances to campus (main gate & side gate)
- Remodeled outdoor learning space/lunch area in secondary.
- New security camera system.
- New COVID related safety fencing, hand washing, and checkpoints.
- New secondary performing arts building.

The ultimate goal is the creation of an inviting, environmentally sustainable campus for living and learning that supports our TASOK mission and IB Learner Profile.

Strategic Intent #4:

Continued development of TASOK's physical infrastructure following the original Master Plan, created in 2010 and updated in 2015, providing for TASOK to be a leader in environmentally friendly classrooms, restoring our campus facilities, and aligning with best practice in creating effective learning spaces.

To accomplish this, TASOK will:

- (1) Improve the overall quality of our learning and living spaces to ensure all health and safety needs are met.
- (2) Continue to maintain TASOK's garden-like campus while maintaining the safety of students, staff, and integrity of our school infrastructure and facilities.
- (3) Preserve the rainforest areas outlined as preservation zones in the Master Plan.
- (4) Restore and revitalize outdated campus facilities to respond to the demands of a quality global education in the 21st century in line with the TASOK mission and to support the IB learning principles.
- (5) Restore and revitalize outdated campus safety and security components that are in disrepair.
- (6) Identify incremental investments that accommodate short-term needs, support long-term goals and are flexible enough to meet an uncertain future.

Identified Priority for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school year with action to be taken and supporting evidence: item 3 above

SMART GOALS:

- Use the updated (March 2022) Master Plan and feedback from the 2020 Stakeholder Survey as a basis for decision making and continue the development of the campus.
- Prioritize the remodeling and updating of on-campus housing on an annual basis.
- Review the tendering process with the Finance Committee to be presented to the Board for future projects.
- Review decisions made in terms of allocating funds for making learning spaces more attractive/useful in the short-term as we wait for buildings to be completed versus all funds going into new building projects.
- Continued incorporation of facility related wish lists in Stakeholder Surveys for 2021/2022 to solicit community feedback on athletic & activity improvements to aid in fund allocation.
- Revisit Fundraising and grant proposals/applications process, and how this could impact the pace of rebuilding.
- Align strategic planning and Finance Committee to review allocation of surplus and any additional revenue or savings.
- Create a list of physical education related items (all weather sports field, track, tennis court, elementary gym, remodeled pool area, disc golf course, etc.) and associated costs and implementation timeline for stakeholder awareness.

Evidence to demonstrate progress:

- Progress towards our bank of projects aligned with the TASOK Master Plan.
- Benchmarking data from faculty and parent surveys on the quality of facilities and priorities for development.



Area #5: Financial Sustainability

Rationale:

Financial sustainability for TASOK will ensure the school has the means and resources available now and in the future to achieve its mission and to see our Master Plan fully developed.

Strategic Intent #5:

Financial planning and resource allocation procedures shall be adequate to ensure the short and long-term financial sustainability of the school. Short-term financial planning should incorporate changes in Health & Safety needs and reduced enrollment of the school with associated expenses.

To accomplish this, TASOK will:

- (1) Continue to develop an operating surplus that enables the school to provide a high quality educational experience for students aligned with the IB Program. Operating expenses must be appropriately controlled and matched to expected levels of enrolment and tuition and fee revenue. Once normal tuition numbers resume, a reasonable operating surplus should be targeted each year.
- (2) A system for regular review of the budget through the lens of efficiency to determine if there are any areas where costs should be reduced.
- (3) Establish additional sources of income that will provide other revenue streams for school operations and to support the TASOK Master Plan. Development revenue and other income should adequately supplement tuition and fees.
- (4) Provide for an adequate unencumbered cash reserve to meet potential economic, pandemic, and political challenges or other unforeseeable circumstances.
- (5) *Continue to evaluate expenditures and operational costs to maximize efficiency in budgeting during a fiscally conservative year(s) due to reduced enrollment. Research additional sources of income and/or grants that will increase revenue streams for school operations to support the TASOK Master Plan and current Health & Safety Procedures. Once enrollment numbers return to our 5-year Financial Plan estimates, development revenue and other income should adequately supplement tuition and fees.*

Identified Priority for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school year with action to be taken and supporting evidence: Item #5 above.

Action to be taken:

- Continuation of the 20% reduced enrollment worst case scenario (WCS) budget planning for 2021/2022.
- Monitor enrollment and operational short-term needs.
- Collaboration with the U.S. Office of Overseas Schools on available Soft Target and Mitigation Grants.
- Strategic Planning with the Maintenance Team and Finance Committee for ongoing evaluation of operational costs & practices.

(research ongoing)

- Together with the finance committee review efficiencies and other ways to allocate revenue and identify potential savings.
- Finance committee to prepare proposals for Capital or (one-time) Initiation fees to finance physical improvements, for consideration for the 2022-23 year.

Evidence to demonstrate progress:

- Ongoing evaluation of budgeting and monthly tracking.
- Based on research and security inspections, submit additional grant proposals.

(ongoing)

- Review feasibility of gala and local fundraising campaigns with action plans for fundraising for the next school year.