

SIS 2020: Roadmap to Excellence

Slide Narrative

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My name is Dale Cox and I am the director of Shekou International School. At SIS we recently completed a comprehensive review of our progress as a school and prepared plans to guide our growth for the next six years. The resulting plan is called “SIS 2020: Roadmap to Excellence.” This presentation outlines what we have learned through this process and overview actions that will lead us to increased success in the coming years.

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At SIS, our work is focused on three key beliefs:

- We believe each student deserves a rigorous education, one that is challenging and personalized
- We believe each student deserves to belong to a caring, nurturing community
- We believe that each student deserves to be inspired to be an innovative contributor to the world
- Our school improvement efforts are guided by these beliefs as we work to fulfill this mission at SIS.

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- SIS is accredited by three important international and Chinese institutions: The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (based in California in the U.S.), the International Baccalaureate Program, based in Geneva, Switzerland, and the National Center for School Curriculum and Textbook Development, of China. With these organizations we participate in regular processes to review our progress in achieving our mission. This has led us thru steps that included:
 - First, a full year self study—a comprehensive review of all we do against established standards.
 - Second, a strategic planning process to create challenging new goals for our school
 - Third, the creation of detailed action plans to guide our efforts each year toward achieving these goals.

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- In March of 2014, an international team of accreditors conducted a thorough review of our school and prepared a detailed report about SIS. The report includes a description of what they found, commendations of success, and areas for further improvement.
- We are very pleased that they found SIS to be a vibrant, successful, and growing school, providing a strong educational experience for its students. (A link to the full text of the report is available at the end of this presentation.)
- The accrediting team noted several school-wide strengths that have helped create the past 25 years of success at SIS. These included:
 - A caring and committed professional teaching staff and highly-respected educational leaders who focus on student learning

- A supportive and positive school culture that supports comprehensive student growth
- A school community that values learning
- Strong professional learning opportunities to improve teaching and school programs.
- Broad opportunities for extracurricular activities: SIS works to ensure that there is something for every student
- An effectively managed, well-resourced and financially stable school that constantly seeks to improve the quality of its facilities to support student learning

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Specific program commendations included:

- Highly qualified, experienced teachers who are continually growing in their profession
- Small class sizes; focus on individual students
- Strong curriculum, continuing improvement of curricular strength
- Top quality facilities and technology
- Emphasis on teacher development and program improvement
- Emphasis on literacy (writing and reading), and EAL student support

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In terms of our efforts to provide a caring community, the team commended the school's:

- Continuing emphasis on partnership with parents
- Many on-going opportunities for parents to be involved in learning and school activities of their children
- Use of technology to increase parent/school connections and communication
- Strong Parent Support Association (PSA)
- School collaboration with the community in charitable and educational activities.

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In terms of inspiring our students, the team commended:

- Strong, consistent emphasis on helping students become:
 - Effective Communicators
 - Independent Learners
 - Successful Collaborators
 - Complex Thinkers
 - Global Citizens
- The variety of innovative student learning experiences that utilize technology to enhance student learning
- Strong mentoring and support programs
- Opportunities for individual and group service and engagement with the larger community

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- The result of this extensive process has been the creation of a roadmap for the next six years at SIS which, as previously noted, we call: SIS 2020: Roadmap to Excellence. This roadmap challenges us to not only provide a challenging education for our students, but also to inspire them to engage the world as innovative contributors.

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Our plans are centered on these three goals, all of which focus on improving student learning:

- Continue to improve student learning thru refining the curriculum.
- Continue to improve assessment and reporting of student learning.
- Continue to improve support for learning for advanced students and those needing additional help in learning.

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Our first action plan focuses on refining our academic program and providing each student deserves an education that is challenging, authentic, and personalized.

This Action Plan for Curriculum refinement includes steps to accomplish the following:

- Continue to increase personalized and challenging learning experiences for students
- Continue to refine the curriculum for all units of study and grade levels
- Continue focus on literacy skill development: writing and reading
- Focus on enriching mathematics instruction
- Integrate innovative learning approaches, including technology
- Continue Chinese Program enhancement

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The second action plan, which focuses on improving assessment, includes the following steps:

- Develop a consistent school-wide philosophy of assessment
- Implement a more effective school-wide method to track student learning
- Develop more consistent assessments in each subject and grade level
- Continue to refine effective reporting processes

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The action plan for improving student support includes the following steps:

- Provide additional student support in both academic and English language areas
- Increase teacher training in supporting both advanced and special needs students
- Expand resources for students needing enrichment or additional support

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Our strategic planning focused on how we inspire students and relates to our belief that each student should be inspired to contribute to the world. We included steps toward this goal in all of our action plans, including these steps:

- Emphasize collaborative approaches to teaching and learning
- Build appropriate community engagement opportunities into the curriculum
- Increase student service opportunities in the greater world community
- Increase leadership opportunities for students with regional and global organizations

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We look forward to moving forward toward these challenging goals as a community and fulfilling the mission of SIS. We encourage you to learn more about SIS 2020: Roadmap to Excellence. On our website we have posted links to:

- Written overview of SIS 2020
- Full text of accreditation report
- Summary of action steps
- Full text of this presentation (for translation if desired)