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DATE: March 23, 2003

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
EMIRATES INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

**RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO IMPROVED STUDENT SERVICES
AND DEVELOPMENT**

In accordance with the Belief Statement of EIS which clearly states that education is an all encompassing development of the individual as a whole, the following recommendations have been put forward:

After carefully exploring various possibilities in improving student services at Emirates International School, it is recommended that a new department under the auspices of the Dean of Students be implemented. The Dean of Students plays a central role in supporting the wellbeing of individuals and group needs. The core of the services provided by the Dean's office is to ensure optimal program development while enriching students' academic and social development.

The new **Student Services Department** would enrich the overall curricular and extra-curricular experience of EIS students by incorporating other Life Skill activities/services. For example, Life Skills/Learning Support, Counseling/Disciplinary, Academic and Career Development and Student Life Activities are ideal services that would be part of the new department and further enhance academic achievement.

Student Services Department

Life Skills and Learning Support Curriculum
Counseling Services
Academic and Career Development
Student Life – Program Activities
Disciplinary Board

The **Life Skills** courses offered at EIS requires additional support in meeting the social needs of students. Presently there are 12 teachers offering instruction, but each teacher is not following a structured curriculum. Students and teachers have indicated that more structure is required in making sure that program instruction and materials offered are not overlapping. Unfortunately, upon reaching grade 9, students are no longer involved in

Life Skills instruction. In order to be fully prepared for meeting life's challenges, it is recommended that students throughout high school receive on-going instruction/preparation.

Learning Support and Intervention Program is being administered by a single teacher who coincidentally forms part of the regular teaching staff while simultaneously provides services for Life Skills, Learning Support and preparation for IGCSE in the Business Department. Again, this demonstrates that to offer adequate student support which includes remedial teaching, testing/assessments, parental/teacher feedback, referrals to outside agencies, etc., there is a requirement to bridge the services with other professionals in the proposed Student Services Department.

Life Skills courses are offered at EIS, but students do not receive credit or grades for their participation. Upon graduation, a **Life Skills - Certificate of Achievement** is recommended to honor those students who have excelled in their Student Services involvement. The certificate will also demonstrate that the student received a balanced education and is prepared for further advanced studies and/or the work force. The certificate will be used as a professional and/or academic achievement reference. No high school to date is offering a certificate of this nature upon graduation. The program would enhance the accreditation and world-wide status of Emirates International School.

Counseling is an integral part of a student's development and should be viewed as an opportunity to gain support academically and socially. The counseling services offered must reflect a supportive link to the student experience. Also, it is imperative that all referrals made by teachers regarding academic and/or discipline should be addressed through the counseling screening process. Each student should be screened by the Counselor at various stages during the school year. The majority of our students remain in our school system throughout high school. This fact alone is evidence that student counseling and other support services (Life Skills, Career Development, Student Life Activities – Extra-Curricular, Discipline, etc.) would be effectively met through a new departmental format.

For the record, the Counselor is presently engaged in therapeutic support not only in the high school, but is delivering services to the primary and junior school. Our Counselor is also engaging in parental guidance that often requires Marriage, Family and Child Guidance. Teachers are also an integral part of the counseling process (i.e. classroom strategies, student transitions/adjustment, etc.). This fact is another reason why Student Services needs to be managed under one central department. The program cannot realistically be managed by one person, but requires an organized structure to meet admissions, referral and on-going history/assessment.

Academic and Career Development is an on-going process assisting students in learning organization techniques and study skills. Grade 12 has an Academic Advisor, but only meets the needs of the senior class. Career development from grade 6 to grade 12 is an important process in preparing students in making the correct subject choices.

Student Life at EIS is disjointed in that there are several activities offered, but not under the direction of a central office or umbrella. Student Life plays an important role in the extra-curricular development of a student. Upon graduation, students will be asked what activities they participated in during high school. Universities and employers today are looking for students who were highly active and participated in diverse activity programs. Student Life also offers teachers and administrators an opportunity to get more involved with the student body and community.

It is recommended that a **Student Life Activities Fee** be introduced in the tuition. The fee will enable students to participate in as many activities that they desire and will also remunerate coaches and instructors who manage the activity. The activities fee will eliminate questions students and staff ask in trying to understand what is a “fair payment” for participating or coaching an after school activity. In order to control the activity payment structure for coaches and instructors, a set-fee will be determined for each activity.

Also, the **Student Services Department** could assist the Accounting Department in managing rental contracts for our after-school facilities program.

A Dhs 200 activity fee will be required from each student to participate in the **Student Life Program**. The budget to pay for all Student Life activities will come from the additional Dhs 200 assessed to each student. The Student Activities fee for 900 students will total approximately Dhs 180,000. The additional DHS 180,000 would support the school’s Student Life Program in diverse ways not presently being offered (i.e. coaching/instructor remuneration, equipment purchase, school improvement/beautification programs, yearbook, International Day, Sports Day, theatre productions, professional development, etc.).

The **Disciplinary Board** will be comprised of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Dean of Students, Counselor and Life Skills – Head of Department. Teachers should address student discipline problems/referrals to the School Counselor. To date, referrals are received by several different sources that diminish the role of the Counselor considerably. The board members would present their findings on individual cases to the Head of the Discipline Board (Principal) for final punishment (i.e. detention, suspension, expulsion, etc.).

Recommendation

Staff and students at EIS are not fully aware of the role/services being provided by the Dean of Students and Counselor. Also, there are special requirements in Life Skills/Learning Support and Academic/Career Development that need to be incorporated

under one support department. The referral system and services offered needs a format that is consistent.

Student Life Activities and facility/rental procedures are also not clearly understood.

In order to fully utilize our exceptional staff and offer EIS students opportunities for consistent growth and development, it is recommended that a new **Student Services Department** be implemented to meet the expanding needs of our high achieving students.

There is no greater tool in education than one that involves learning by participation. In order to achieve our goals as professional administrators and educators, we need to manage and implement the resources available in innovative ways that maximizes total learning/developmental support.

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