

**MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF  
COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS**



**REPORT OF THE  
*INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL*  
VISITATION TEAM**

**Walworth Barbour American International School  
Tel Aviv, Israel  
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# INTRODUCTION

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools is a non-governmental, nonprofit, peer-administered organization of diverse educational institutions committed to the highest quality education for students. Its purpose is to ensure the continuous improvement of its member schools through effective leadership, self-study, peer evaluation, accreditation, exemplary programs, and supportive services. For more than 75 years, the Association has provided leadership in school improvement for its member schools in six states in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East, the subcontinent of Asia, and Africa.

As educators, all of us are keenly aware of the increasingly interrelated global society in which we live and the concomitant need for students to have knowledge and understanding of world cultures. Students of our modern society are more likely to meet and interact with people of other backgrounds, religions, and perspectives. Thus, they need to be able to evaluate these differences with both an open mind and keen analytic skills. Having deep knowledge about different parts of the world is now considered essential for the economic survival and national security of the United States.

Our educational institutions are increasingly attended by peoples from around the world, many of whom come to the United States with hope for a better future, but with limited English language skills or backgrounds in the fundamental principles we take for granted in a democratic society. As administrators, we are asked to work with parents with differing expectations for the schooling we provide. And our institutions are asked to teach about different cultures and histories and put measures in place to allow students from many parts of the world to be integrated seamlessly into our school cultures.

The Middle States Association took these compelling changes in our world as a “call to action.” Tapping the knowledge and experience of leaders in our more than 150 member institutions located around the world, we began developing criteria and indicators that would effectively identify and celebrate institutions that are “international” in character. Our belief is that such efforts by schools should be identified, acknowledged, celebrated, and shared among the MSA educational community. Thus, the *International Credential* was born.

The evaluation program which schools must undergo is a threefold process: the self-study which is conducted by the local professional staff with input from representative stakeholders of the community, the visit by the Commission’s evaluation team to validate the self-study, and the follow-up program carried out by the school in response to the findings of its own self-study as well as the recommendations of the visiting evaluation team.

The Middle States Visitation Team consists of professional educators appointed by the Middle States Association to visit a school using the *International Credential* process.

The member of the Visitation Team to Walworth Barbour American International School (WBAIS) used the three day visit to review written documents regarding the school and its international character. The team member interacted with as many of the school’s stakeholders as possible regarding their knowledge, understanding and support for the international character

of the school. The groups interviewed included board members, administration, selected teachers, library staff, students, parents and counselors. The team member concluded that she had a full and rich experience of the school leading to the following report and assessment.

This report of the findings of the Visitation Team will be forwarded to the Commission(s) of the Middle States Association which will make a decision regarding the award of the *International Credential* to WBAIS.

Careful planning and good organization for the team member's visit made the activities of the team member both efficient and effective. In the short space of time allotted for the visit, the team member was able to gain a sense of the commitment of faculty and students to effective education via immersion in worldwide cultural history, their focus on intercultural dialogue and engagement in the global community, and the feeling of caring and enjoyment that students, faculty, administration, and staff share.

## SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

WBAIS\*\* was founded in 1958 by the American Embassy. The school began in a rented space in the area of Kfar Shmaryahu and in August, 1963, the WBAIS campus was opened. In 1975 the school was officially named Walworth Barbour American International School in Israel after the founding American Ambassador. In 1995 the decision to move to a new campus allowed for expansion and additional space for the 500+ students WBAIS served. Finances from the sale of the old campus help to offset costs for the new campus. August 2007 saw the opening of the new campus in the town of Even Yehuda, located 15 km north of the original campus. The school lost a few of their early childhood and elementary students as a result of the new location however; WBAIS has recently opened a preschool program near the 'old location' of the school. The preschool has 35 students enrolled. It was felt by the board and the administration that the preschool initiative was a strategic decision in hopes that the preschool will feed into AIS' kindergarten program.

WBAIS is a private, co-educational K-12 institution offering an American college preparatory program leading to an American high school diploma. The school currently enrolls more than 550 students and employs 115 faculty and staff. Israelis labor law insists that all of WBAIS employees are either American or Israelis but many have dual nationalities, which provides the school with a diverse international teaching faculty. The school consists of an elementary section (K-5), a middle school section (6-8), a high school section (9-12) and a Jerusalem campus entitled Jerusalem American International School (JAIS includes PK- 5).

The faculty consists of 75 educators of whom 44 hold Master degrees and 5 doctoral degrees. The student: faculty ratio is 8:1. The four administrators all hold a Master's degree.

WBAIS' student demographics reflect 59% of American and Israelis students and the remaining 41% reflects 26 diverse nationalities. The administration believes that the demographics of the student body is changing and that more and more of an international student body will be the norm for the future. There is evidence that the Russian and Indian student population is on the increase.

Most of the graduating students attend universities in the United States and students in last year's senior class were also accepted into universities in the UK, Canada, Israel, and France. The high school college counselor explained that efforts are made to adjust transcripts in order for international students to be accepted by a host of universities and colleges around the world. There is considerable sensitivity and attention given by all four of the school's counselors to the needs of the international students for both transition to Israel and WBAIS and reentry to the students' home of record or university destination. The school employs an elementary counselor, middle school counselor and two high school counselors to attend to the diverse needs of their international student body. The elementary counselor travels to JAIS every two weeks to attend to the needs of the school and its students.

*\*\*For the purposes of this report, WBAIS will refer to AIS and JAIS.*

The Mission and Values of WBAIS reflect a commitment to the beliefs of international education and celebrate the international character of the school. As stated in the WBAIS Mission Statement and Core Values, WBAIS is committed to providing an educational landscape that encourages "...each student to cultivate a respect for diversity...assume leadership, contribute actively to society, and resolve conflict through dialogue and understanding." Furthermore, their core values, state the following beliefs:

- a. Our community's strength resides both in its unity and in its diversity
- b. Each person as a member of the human family has a responsibility to contribute to the common good of society
- c. A community is strengthened when individuals take responsibility for their own choices and actions
- d. Each person is of equal worth and has the right to be treated with respect, compassion, and honesty

WBAIS constantly reviews its Mission and ensures that it meets the needs of their international student body. As the only secular school in Israel it was felt by the administration that the school "*...has a responsibility to 'exploit' the International ethos in its name in order to meet the needs of its international community. We as an American International School are in a unique position to bring international students together through student activities and community service projects.*" The board felt the most important aspect of the school's Mission was its firm commitment to its secular nature, which allows for diverse opportunities for international activities and interactions for the students and staff.

The team member saw evidence that the Mission of the school had been translated into eight languages (including English). Newsletters are also written in several different languages for the convenience and comfort of the international families and highlight the diversity of various cultural celebrations.

With the exception of the senior students who must fulfill their Israeli army duties, 95% of the graduating class of 2007-2008 attended colleges and universities in the United States, the UK, Canada, Israel, and France. The high school college counselor explained that efforts are made to adjust transcripts in order for international students to be accepted by colleges and universities around the world. The integrity of the transcript is protected within these adjustments.

The high school student council felt the school was far more international in its nature than American. One student commented "*if I had to give the school a rank I would place them at the very top*" [in terms of the culture of the school demonstrating respect for cultural and religious differences in the backgrounds of students]. The students felt the school was extremely supportive of the international students' needs to be excused from classes for their respective religious celebrations. The student council hosts an annual holiday breakfast for students just before the Christmas, Hanukkah and Eid celebrations. Student activities include Student Council, Newspaper, Model United Nations, Literary Magazine, French Club, Spanish Club, Hebrew Club, Yearbook, Drama Club and Productions, Math Radicals, and National Honor Society. The Athletics Program features a wide variety of sports and intramural sports such as

baseball, basketball, softball, soccer, tennis, field hockey, floor hockey, cross country running, swimming and volleyball. The school is considering adding a Rugby sport and a Cricket Club already exists outside the school.

The school hosts the 'Peace League' which engages several local schools every Sunday in sports competitions (including soccer and basketball). The Peace League invites Arab Israelis, Christian Israelis and Jewish Israelis to join WBAIS students in competition. The Peace League was the inspiration for the Model United Nations. The Model United Nations inspired the development of the International Relations Club and the Middle East History course in the high school.

The elementary students have an opportunity to learn Spanish, French, and Hebrew. Elementary and Middle School students visit with local Bedouin tribes to expand their understanding of the cultural diversity of the people of Israel. The libraries order annually several international publications and books, which the students felt "...provide the comfort of knowing that [their] country was represented in our library".

International trips for students have been organized for Hague, Paris, Prague, Frankfurt, Vienna and the United States. Opportunities for students to engage in international trips are numerous. In most cases students stay with host families, which contribute to the student's rich cultural experience.

The administration and library staff have arranged for Russian and Chinese authors to meet with students regarding their work and are hoping to arrange for an Indian author to visit the school in the near future. The team strongly encourages WBAIS to accommodate, whenever possible, the JAIS campus in its author visits. The librarian believes that the international collection in the library should be enhanced however; the display of books reflecting different cultures, religions and languages was extremely impressive. The library is an inviting and engaging center for multicultural resources.

WBAIS provides a generous professional development fund for all staff and provides opportunities that enable teachers to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to provide instruction that ensures an understanding of international mindedness. Recently a teacher attended the Alliance for International Education at the University of Bath and returned to share the conference highlights with her colleagues.

WBAIS' American curriculum is enhanced with international themes and units. The high school social studies program has been enhanced with World History in addition to American History and Middle Eastern History.

The elementary and middle school teachers have the autonomy to connect their students' learning of the American curriculum to any international theme or unit which they feel will enhance their students' knowledge and help their students to bring clarity to a topic because of their background experience.

There is a perception by the administration that the International Credential would validate the school's commitment to its Mission and provide comfort to the school's international community's need to have their students attend an international school. In addition, if WBAIS is successful in achieving the International Credential it will promote the Credential with potential students, as well as in its quest to recruit high quality American/Israeli teachers.

## THE INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL

An International Credential Committee included the Planning Team Coordinator and Head of School who prepared the school's application. The *International Credential* review team used information from the application, documents, and interviews to assess the compliance of WBAIS with the requirements of the *International Credential*.

Recommendations found in this section are supplied with a spirit of collegial interest, and are not meant to be construed as criticisms of individuals within the school. All comments are to be viewed as suggestions from critical friends, designed to help the school in its improvement processes.

As part of the accreditation maintenance process, the school will be expected to respond to all recommendations found in this section during their next scheduled accreditation maintenance activity. While it is valid for a school to reject a recommendation for implementation, the school should be prepared to provide logical and well-reasoned arguments why the recommendation is not appropriate for the school.

The description of the *International Credential* is provided, along with a statement as to whether the Visitation Team believes the school has or has not met the criteria necessary to earn the credential. This is followed by the team's assessment of compliance with each of the indicators and a list of strengths and weaknesses. This information will be used by the Commission(s) of the Middle States Association in determining the award of the *International Credential* to WBAIS.

The team assessment of compliance with each indicator is rated as follows:

### Team Assessment of the Indicators of Quality

1	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
2	<i>Needs improvement</i>
3	<i>Adequate compliance</i>
4	<i>High compliance</i>
NA	<i>Not applicable</i>

**The Criterion:** *The philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives reflect the international character of the institution and are accepted and understood by the governance, staff, parents, students, and broader educational community. Through the institution’s educational and extracurricular programs, students have the opportunity to learn about, experience, and understand cultures different from their own. Principles of tolerance, respect, and inalienable rights are reflected in policies, practices, curriculum, and instruction. The institution shows its commitment to international education through its hiring practices, staff development offerings, and dedication of resources that promote the international character of the institution. The programs and services provided meet the needs of students from different cultural and religious backgrounds.*

**The International Credential is met.**

**THE INDICATORS OF QUALITY**

**PHILOSOPHY, MISSION, BELIEFS, AND/OR OBJECTIVES**

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
1 2 <b>3</b> 4 NA	IC1.) The philosophy, mission, beliefs and/or objectives reflect a commitment to the principles of international education and celebrate the international character of the institution.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WBAIS Mission highlights its secular nature and the importance of cultivating in each student “...a respect for diversity...and resolv[ing] conflict through dialogue and understanding”. With 28 nationalities represented in the student body it is believed that the Mission provides the necessary foundation by which principles of international education can be introduced through the curriculum and school activities.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC2.) The institution ensures that the international character of the institution, as outlined in the philosophy, mission, beliefs and/or objectives, is generally understood and accepted by the governance, staff, parents, students, and broader educational community.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In most discussions with the various stakeholders the Team was satisfied that there was a common understanding of the international character of WBAIS. However, the term “American International Curriculum” was normally thought of by parents, students and staff as an American International education and not a curriculum.</li> </ul>
1 2 <b>3</b> 4 NA	IC3.) The international character of the institution informs the daily operation and instructional decision-making as well as long-range planning.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There was evidence that the daily operations of the school influences its international character (eg. School activities and curriculum enhancements)</li> </ul>	

**GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC4.) The institution demonstrates, through its policies and procedures, that children are protected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>from practices which may foster racial, religious, or any other form of discrimination.</li> <li>against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.</li> </ul>
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the school’s strategic goals is ‘Conflict Management’ which incorporates the various aspects of the above mentioned indicator.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC5.) For institutions located outside the United States, policies are in place that ensure respect for the laws and customs of the host country.

<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence through policies and school practices that all laws and customs of the host country are respected and acted upon.</li> </ul>	

**ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN AND STAFF**

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
1 2 3 4 NA	IC6.) The institution makes clear efforts to recruit, hire, and retain members of the faculty and staff that demonstrate both sensitivity toward students from international backgrounds and an understanding of international education.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The faculty and staff whom we interviewed were all extremely knowledgeable about their international students and highly sensitive to incorporating aspects of their students’ unique backgrounds in their teaching methodologies and their students’ learning environments.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 4 NA	IC7.) The institution provides staff development opportunities that enable teachers to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to provide instruction that ensures an understanding of international issues in the classroom.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WBAIS does an exceptional job of providing staff with professional development opportunities that create a deeper understanding of international issues in the classroom.</li> </ul>	

**CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT**

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
1 2 3 4 NA	IC8.) The institution has a written and taught curriculum that provides international education learning experiences, including opportunities to understand other cultures.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school’s American curriculum is enhanced by the faculty with international education learning experiences and with opportunities for students to understand other cultures (e.g. student international and local trips).</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 4 NA	IC9) The educational program’s attention to international education (including the institution’s curriculum, instruction, and assessment) is clearly defined, approved by the governing body, and is consistent with the philosophy, mission, beliefs, and/or objectives of the institution.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WBAIS’ written education program is defined and approved by the Board as American. It is recommended that some thought be given to the above stated criteria as the school moves forward in its quest to be seen as an American International provider of education.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 4 NA	IC10) The educational program of the institution is tailored to meet the needs of the various cultural and religious backgrounds of the student body. Where appropriate, provisions are made for students whose backgrounds, cultures, or religious beliefs make the regular program inappropriate for them.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As one student so adequately stated in a meeting with the team member, “If I had to rank the school against this indicator I would give it top marks!” The team member agrees.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 4 NA	IC11.) The curriculum provides adequate academic preparation for those students who desire to make application for study at colleges and universities around the world.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thoughtful and tireless planning is completed by the high school college counselor in order for student applications to be accepted by universities and colleges around the world. Acceptance of applications is of course based on students meeting the criteria of the respective university and/or college.</li> </ul>
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC12.) The institution demonstrates that the following inalienable rights are embraced by stakeholders and taught within the educational program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the right to life, liberty, and security of person.</li> <li>the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.</li> <li>the right to freedom of opinion and expression.</li> <li>the right to education.</li> </ul>
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school exemplifies these rights in everything they do and say. The students are actively engaged in Conflict Management techniques and strategies that emphasize the above listed rights. The high school introduced Western Civilizations which led to the course Comparative Cultures and eventually developed into Global History. Global History's outcomes focused on gender issues, religious dissonance and consonance, and a person's right to education and freedom of expression.</li> </ul>	

## RESOURCES

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC13.) The institution shows its commitment to international education through the dedication of resources (financial, human, physical, time, etc.) that promote the international character of the institution.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence that the school is willing to contribute resources of any kind to promote the international character of the</li> </ul>	

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
	<p>school. This is highly visible through the staff’s professional development opportunities, library international publications, classroom resources, and the keen desire of the administration to hire international educators within the mandates set by the local government in regards to the hiring of Israelis and American teachers. English resources used throughout the school reflect a diverse group of international authors.</p>

**STUDENT SERVICES**

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
<p>1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA</p>	<p>IC14.) The institution tailors the student services (such as guidance, health, transportation, food, special needs, etc.) it provides to meet the needs of students from different cultural and religious backgrounds.</p>
<p><b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence that significant work has been done to support transition of international students to WBAIS and Israel. The cafeteria provides vegetarian dishes for the Indian students (and anyone else who desires vegetarian food) and all dishes are Kosher.</li> </ul>	
<p>1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA</p>	<p>IC15.) The admissions process provides for the needs of a highly mobile student population.</p>
<p><b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parenting classes are offered to support new families to the school; testing is completed to assess the needs of new students; reentry strategies are discussed and provided for students and their families; buddies are given to every new student to support their transition to the school.</li> </ul>	
	<p>IC 16. Clearly written guidelines are in place to allow for smooth transfer of students to and from institutions inside and outside the United States, including the transfer of course credits from other educational institutions,</p>

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	as well as assistance required by students that are exiting the institution.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is an area in which the school excels.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC17.) Guidance and counseling services are available to help students adjust as they move into the host country, as they prepare for return to their home country or another country, and/or as they deal with a changing social network.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school provides four counselors for the 531 students at WBAIS and 64 students at JAIS. The team believes that the counseling services are exceptional for the transition needs of the schools' students.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC18.) College admissions and guidance processes designed to support students' desire to enter colleges and universities around the world are available, as appropriate.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent support is provided by the full time high school college counselor. Handbooks outlining procedures and processes for college/university applications are simple, meaningful and understandable. These serve as excellent resources for the students and their parents.</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC19.) The institution has programs in place to serve students with limited English language backgrounds.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is evidence that the English Language Learner (ELL) programs are well resourced and provide services for international students in a compassionate and professional manner. The students were very positive about their ELL experiences.</li> </ul>	

## STUDENT LIFE AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator	MSA Indicator of Quality
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC20.) The culture of the institution demonstrates respect for cultural and religious differences in the backgrounds of students.
<p><b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural celebrations are a part of the school’s natural landscape. It is expected that religious differences of the students are respected and honored by all stakeholders. The Conflict Management program should continue to emphasize the necessity to honor religious differences and respect diversity (as stated in the Mission of the school).</li> </ul>	
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC21.) The institution takes into account the cultural and religious diversity of the student population when planning and implementing its student activities program.
<p><b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The students were positive about the variety of student activities on offer at the school, which compliment the cultural and religious diversity of the student population. Several students, at different times during interviews, stated : “There’s something for everyone if they want to take advantage of the after school activities program.” The JAIS campus ensures that there is at least one afterschool activity every day to service its 64 students.</li> </ul>	
1 2 <b>3</b> 4 NA	IC22.) The institution takes advantage of local resources and culture to educate its students. For those institutions in non-English speaking areas, the foreign language curriculum provides opportunities for education and immersion in the local language.
<p><b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hebrew for native speakers and Hebrew as a world language is on offer for all students beginning in grade 3. Spanish and French are also on offer. The Modern Languages Department has developed a three year strategic plan that reviews and</li> </ul>	

<b>Team Assessment of Compliance with the Indicator</b>	<b>MSA Indicator of Quality</b>
	proposes improvements and changes to the existing foreign language curriculum. The team would strongly recommend the school consider offering Arabic to compliment its foreign language curriculum.
1 2 3 <b>4</b> NA	IC23.) Opportunities for international travel, international experiences, and student exchange programs exist, allowing students to experience other cultures firsthand.
<b>Findings and Comments Regarding the Evidence Observed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are ample opportunities for students to travel internationally and to stay with host families in order to experience other cultures firsthand.</li> </ul>	

## **MAJOR AREAS OF STRENGTH:**

WBAIS is commended for:

- Providing exceptional K – 12 counseling services for all students' who transition to and from WBAIS
- Providing outstanding counseling leadership with the processing of student college/university applications for WBAIS and local students to institutions around the world.
- The Board's and Superintendent's commitment to the school's Mission of 'secular education' and 'respecting diversity'
- The Administration's Vision and Belief that WBAIS has an obligation and responsibility to bring AIS and local students together in an environment of intercultural understanding and respect
- The teachers' passion and dedication to connecting their students learning to international themes and units.
- JAIS' commitment to international education for its diverse and international student population
- The Planning Team's decision to apply for the International Credential and the belief that as a secular American school they have a responsibility to emphasize the International in the school's name in order to bring local and international students together in an environment of intercultural understanding and respect.
- The library for the welcoming and inviting multicultural environment it strives to promote

## **SUGGESTED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

The Visiting Team recommends that WBAIS:

- Consider offering Arabic to its foreign language curriculum
- Consider offering additional language programs as they relate to the changing demographics of the school (e.g. Hindi and Russian)
- Consider creating a written policy with attention to international education (including the institution's curriculum, instruction, and assessment) which is clearly defined, approved by the governing body, and is consistent with the Mission and Beliefs of the school.
- Consider changing the wording of an 'American International Curriculum' to an 'American International Education' to reflect the common understanding of all the stakeholders
- Consider adding to the international collection in the library

## INTERNATIONAL CREDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION

As a Visiting Team we are asked to make a recommendation regarding the award of the *International Credential* to the Commission(s) of the Middle States Association at the conclusion of our visit. Our team has unanimously concluded that

- 1.) The school has sufficiently conducted a comprehensive review of the *International Credential* that *describes* the current status of the school, *reflects* on and *evaluates* what the school does well and where it can improve, and *prioritizes* these findings for future planning efforts.
- 2.) The institution has demonstrated a commitment to the philosophy behind the *International Credential*.
- 3.) The institution has demonstrated that it meets the criteria established for the *International Credential* and shows a commitment to educating its students for a global society. Students in the institution are ready to experience other cultures with an open mind which will allow them to understand differences and respect the people within that society. Professional staff within the institution support this goal and work to gain the knowledge and skills to provide these skills to their students.

The Visiting Team will be pleased to recommend awarding the *International Credential* to WBAIS.

## CONCLUSION

The term international education can mean many different things and has been debated by various organizations and educators for decades. It has been said that international education can be defined in regard to education that transcends national borders through its student body (for example student international trips such as those on offer at WBAIS) but more importantly, as a comprehensive approach to education that internationally prepares students to be active and engaged global citizens, which the Team believes WBAIS' practices reflect.

WBAIS' Board and Administration believe in the importance of the school's secular nature and the need for students to respect and embrace cultural diversity. Through the school's educational and extracurricular programs, students have the opportunity to learn about, experience, and understand cultures different from their own. Principles of understanding, respect and inalienable rights are reflected in the international themes, courses, interschool athletic and academic competitions and community service programs on offer at WBAIS. Resources that compliment international education themes and/or units are readily available and all teachers feel a responsibility to meeting the needs of their students, who represent a variety of different cultures and religions.

The Team believes the bringing together of Arab Israelis, Christian Israelis, and Jewish Israelis for both the Peace League and the Model United Nations is the hallmark of the school's identity as a leader in international education in Israel. In the words of the Superintendent, "As the only secular American school in Israel we have a responsibility to bring the international community together and to exploit the International in the school's name".

The challenge for WBAIS as it moves forward in its quest to provide opportunities for its own students and students from local schools to develop cross-cultural friendships and relationships will be clarifying what it means to be American and International in Israel. The Team believes that ongoing dialogues and discussions between and amongst all stakeholders will be healthy and invaluable in developing consensus for future revisions to the Mission of the school. This is no longer an option but an obligation at a time when the most recent research indicates that students will need the tools necessary to work as adults in global teams. In the final analysis, WBAIS must continue to analyze what it is the school is doing to make a difference in the lives of its students and how the international fiber of the school is moving the world 'one step closer to world peace'.

The Planning Team's decision to include the International Credential in the Accreditation for Growth protocol is a reflection of the school's desire to emphasize and highlight the international components of the educational program on offer and the American international culture of the school. The generosity, openness and welcoming spirit of the entire WBAIS community was appreciated by the Team Member. The extraordinary opportunities for students to develop an understanding of their role in a multicultural society, and how that role can contribute to a more humane world was very impressive and provided new learning for the Team Member. Thank you for the opportunity to learn what can be done when dedicated like-minded individuals collaborate to produce future world leaders who can ensure a better future for all.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**Through a rigorous and dynamic American International Curriculum, AIS a private secular school in Israel, inspires each student to cultivate a respect for diversity, develop a passion for life-long learning, achieve academic potential, assume leadership, contribute actively to society, and resolve conflict through dialogue and understanding.**

### **Belief Statements**

- Our community's strength resides in both its unity and its diversity
- Each person as a member of the human family has a responsibility to contribute to the common good of society
- A community is strengthened when individuals take responsibility for their own choices and actions
- Each person is of equal worth and has the right to be treated with respect, compassion, and honesty
- Human accomplishment is achieved through rigor, perseverance and a commitment to life-long learning
- A safe, nurturing environment is essential for human development

## **VISITATION TEAM ROSTER**

Name; Mona Nashman-Smith  
Superintendent  
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