

AASCA General Directors' Meeting Minute

LOCATION:

Marriot Dadeland, Miami, Florida

PRIMARY FACILITATOR:

Mr. Ron Vair, AASCA President

DATE:

April 30-May 02, 2015

TIME:

9:00 am- 4:00 pm



AASCA GENERAL DIRECTORS' MEETING



LOCATION: Dadeland Marriot Hotel Miami, FL
PRIMARY FACILITATOR: Mr. Ron Vair, AASCA President
DATE: April 30th - May 2nd, 2015
TIME: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

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25	Rajiv Bhat	International School of Panama	PAN	rbhat@isp.edu.pa

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Approval of GD meeting minutes from May 2014
3. Child protection measurement at AASCA events:
4. Security issues at AASCA events:
5. Graduation Party, policies in place for school staff to participate.
6. Payment of students whose parents have passed away.
7. Future of AASCA
8. AASCA divisions.
9. Icebreaker: What is happening at AASCA schools
10. Summary of committee that worked this morning:
11. Report of Student Activities
12. AASCA Calendar for 2015-2016
13. Community Service Award- Presentations and discussion
14. Principals' Report and recommendations
15. AASCA Professional Development
16. Treasurer's Report
17. New Membership Criteria
18. Members retiring from AASCA
19. Membership of Discovery School and Happy Days School
20. Some Books recommended by AASCA GD

1. Welcome and Introductions

Ron V. opened the meeting welcoming everybody and asked all directors to introduce themselves. After that, Ron V. explained the agenda for the following days.

2. Approval of GD meeting minutes from May 2014

Ron V. mentioned the last meeting minutes to see if anyone had any objections to them. *Linda N. moved to accept last meeting minutes from the GD May 2014 meeting, Karl W. seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.*

3. Child protection measurement at AASCA events

Jeff K. began the discussion on this topic providing a brief introduction. Child protection is a broad topic and has gotten a lot of attention lately. Consumption of alcohol by school students is culturally accepted and schools are somehow drawn to also accept it.

After a brief discussion regarding one incident this year, Ron V. asked if directors could share if policies were in place in their schools. Most schools already have policies in place, in fact, everyone mentioned that they have a similar policy in regards to alcohol consumption.

Directors shared some of the practices and policies in place at the different schools. Overall, there is a big concern regarding alcohol consumption and substance abuse. As mentioned, last year, there was only one incident and that school has written policies and procedures according to AASCA regulations.

Ron V. asked for other alternatives that the directors might consider effective? Some of the ideas included:

- Call an attorney and request advice.
- Invite school alumni (who are AA members) to speak to students.
- Use Freedom from Chemical Dependency (FCD) programs, testimonials and surveys, in addition FCD has great data support. Their approach is that they understand that children will be curious and the focus of their programs is to extend the time for any experimentation.
- Provide opportunities where students come to school with their parents and then they switch partners and talk about alcohol and drugs.
- Use motivational speakers such as Efren Martinez from Colombia (who has been very effective at some schools).
- Have effective consequences.
- Invest time and effort in on-site service learning clubs. These projects help the community and can change completely attitudes in students.
- Keep students busy at home and with after school activities.
- Find interesting things for teenagers to spend time.
- One aspect of the FCD program is that it is based on the assumption that all children will be curious and their focus is how they will extend the time that they will not experiment (if you are going to try it maybe later in life, they have a different approach).

After much discussion it was agreed that AASCA schools need to have specific policies/expectations/requirements in place if they want to participate in AASCA events and reinforcement of those policies needs to come from each school participating. This issue was discussed during the days of the meeting and at the third day the group got into an agreement on a new policy (Steve H. read the motion, Tony P. seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously::

All AASCA events are tobacco products, alcohol and drugs free for all students and accompanying adults. All students, faculty, staff, coaches that have custodial or supervisory duties, and accompanying family members or adults are not allowed to consume alcohol, tobacco products or drugs during AASCA events, including on campuses, hotels, and while travelling to and from events.

Member school are responsible for the behavior of their delegation including accompanying adults.

4. Security issues at AASCA events:

Ron V. indicated that due to the Soccer tournament in Honduras, he had to answer many e-mails regarding safety of traveling delegations. Next academic year, Honduras will not host any event. Robert R. indicated that it is a shame that Honduras will not host this year. Honduran schools have hosted many events and they have been a success.

There was also a discussion about what happens if hosting school cancel events. Tony recommended that in such a case, the hosting school should contact AASCA officials and together with them see possible options or cancelation of the event. Ron V. agreed and then it would be an AASCA decision not a school decision.

5. Graduation Party, policies in place for school staff to participate.

Jose O. requested information from other school in regards to participation at the Graduation party (by school staff and faculty). Some schools indicated that they do not participate. Douglas indicated that they have a five point criteria, if the event does not meet all five points, school personnel cannot participate. He will send a copy to the group.

6. Payment of students whose parents have passed away.

This questions was raised in order to see if any schools have policies in place to help or support those families. Tony indicated that the foundation associated to the school subsidizes the fees for those student. It is not 100%. Other schools mentioned that they revise case by case, there are cases that there is no financial impact but others are supported, usually as a percent discount of the total tuition. Ken T. told the group that his school offers a specific type of insurance (created for those situations) and parents can take it if they want to. In addition, they have a committee that revises those cases. Robert R. indicated that in Costa Rica there is a similar insurance and

parents must pay it. They also have a special fund for short term need (around three months of assistance). Ron V. indicated that his school has their own in-house insurance. It is also a source of revenue.

7. Future of AASCA

The group divided in small groups for discussion. What criteria we are going to have from now on for new members? Is AASCA going to grow? What new school can bring to AASCA?

Group 1: AASCA participation is valuable for the students. Students in Central America should be able to participate and take advantage of what AASCA has to offer. So, AASCA should grow. On the other hand, there are some schools that just want the AASCA label (for marketing). This group suggest that we follow similar criteria as the Apple School of Distinction Award.
English as primary language
Democratic values
Physical well-being
Schools that apply to AASCA should demonstrate proficiency in those requirement. Include an essay on what the school will bring to improve the association.

Group 2: Similar as group 1. They also talked about once schools are in, how to they continue in good standing, and how can schools make the association stronger.

Group 3: In addition, if there is something illegal or unethical there should be a probation for schools. Membership should be on hold. They prefer to maintain the number of schools as of this year, and if one leaves then there is option for schools to apply. AASCA should maintain its reputation and some schools do not belong, even though they might apply.

Group 4: What is good and bad about growing, there is no agreement why we should not grow? They looked at the core values. One option could be that schools that want to join should show evidence in accordance with AASCA core values, demonstrate how they adhere to those values. Prior to become members, schools should show us what their commitment is.

Jeff added that when we have the criteria, those schools have to tell AASCA why their membership would be positive to the association. Maybe they can be placed in a two year probation period, they do not participate in sports events, let's see how committed they are to AASCA values and after the two year term they will become full members

8. AASCA divisions.

Ron V. indicated that the Athletics Director and the Principals did not come to a conclusion on a division for AASCA. Discussion continued on how divisions should be, there were many ideas but not a final decision.

Other ideas, probationary period for schools that do not comply with expectations and for new schools (two years). Ron V. requested participants to form a committee to work out those issues and in two days report back to the AASCA directors.

9. Icebreaker: What is happening at AASCA Schools

Ron V. began the day session requesting directors to share positive outcomes of the year. Some were:

- Maria P., they are starting a new campus, so they are very happy and looking forward to that.
- Lilianna J. finally doing phase two of their master plan and two story garage (traffic issue).
- Linda N. Linda, solar panels to cover 90% of their energy consumption.
- Adolfo G. A/C plan for the entire school continues with phase two.
- Martha C., the school survived their first year with 7th and 8th graders bringing their own device school, 9th to 12th grade will do it next year.
- Ron V., solar panels, led lighting, power bill coming down substantially, finishing the soccer field project. Students love the new wifi streaming project.
- Alegria L., IB diploma, so students will have to graduate with an IB diploma. Construction project (small one) adding to buildings and labs. They will begin with 12th grade. Calendar change (so they had to start 3 weeks before).
- Rajiv B., 8 million dollars project (whole complex of buildings). It will become the center of the school, the new Art Center.
- Douglas A., his school celebrated their 70th anniversary. It gave them a shot to draw attention to projects they want to do. They will start a pre-kindergarten program. Calendar change. Looking at STEM initiatives. Building a STEM lab to be use a makerspace.
- Kathleen S., makerspace project started this year, 3rd to 12th grade have time to go and work in projects, right now is on a small scale but they are looking to expand it.
- Greg M., building a new campus on a different location. Elementary has a new project with sting bees, working with a US college on a pollinator garden.

10. Summary of committee that worked this morning:

Robert R. indicated that they looked at AASCA values and discussed the following:

- a) 5 values where they can produce rubrics.
- b) April 1st could be a deadline to send applications, a committee will score them based on the rubrics, and at the May meeting the group can decide on those application.
- c) There should be a site visit to each school.
- d) All schools in 2-5 year period would have to demonstrate good standing.
- e) 70% instruction in English.

The committee did not talk about the structure if the organization becomes larger. So that discussion will come in the future. Ron V. also indicated that they talked about the idea of two year candidacy status, and the possibility that in those two years no sports participation.

11. Report of Student Activities

- Leadership at Interamericana, there was an extra day, and there is a suggestion to keep it that way for the future. The quality was good and it was really well organized. Breaking up the tournament was good.
- Large school basketball in Guatemala, no significant issue about security.
- Small basketball in CR, Linda N. reported that everything was smooth and there were no difficulties at all, it went very well. Great event according to other participants.
- ISP MUN, Rajiv B., indicated that they had 650 students from 15 school (9 countries represented), the keno was the president of the country. Rajiv B. invited all schools to participate. Next one will be the last week of October.
- Knowledge bowl, it was a great experience for Jorgelina G., and her school in El Salvador. Students worked together, they had fun and interacted. Knowledge bowl is very intensive and extremely competitive.
- Invitational Cross Country, ISP, Rajiv B. said that 10 school participating. 45 minutes from the city. It was a great adventure for the students, they felt like in a Survivor episode.
- Music festival, Liliana J., in Copan, only four school participated. Security issues were raised by other school and having the festival in Copan scared families. At the end, instead of canceling, they went ahead and it was a beautiful festival. At that time Ms. Honduras was killed and brought a lot of attention to security issues and that was one of the factors why there were only four schools. Discussion followed on how to increase participation on arts activities. Ron V. indicated that this is a recurring issue and the group will discuss this in the next days.
- Invitational track and field, Ron V., they decided not to cancel and invited a local school. For the students who participated, it was a success. There is a suggestion to combine Cross Country and Track and Field to have more participation.
- Invitational soccer, Ron V., It was a good tournament but there are always issues with referees. There was a question on having non AASCA schools participate at invitational tournaments? There will be more discussion about it.
- AD meeting, Claudia P., the school AD told her that they worked on all things that AASCA requested. Overall was really good.
- Invitational swim meet, ISP hosted, Rajiv B., there were 3 school for a total of 120 swimmers. It was a great tournament, ISP has a great pool and they just installed a state of the art timing score screen. ISP is willing to host it the next five years, they were really happy about it. It should continue as an invitational.

- Large school volleyball, EA Salvador, Ken T., very well organized, 10 schools 18 teams 9 girls 9 boys. Everyone was really pleased with the tournament. They broadcasted it.
- Small school volleyball, Martha C., it was an enjoyable tournament. Because of such small participation they had to invite a local school in order to have the tournament. They had no injuries. It was a well-run event.
- Principals' Meeting, last week, CR, Interesting professional development, they visited 4 schools in San Jose and those schools provided PD to them. 23 schools attended. The visit of the other school was a great idea.

12. AASCA Calendar for 2015-2016

EVENT	DATE	SCHOOL
HS Leadership Conference	SEPT. 16-20, 2015	International School of Panama
MS Leadership Conference	SEPT. 24-27, 2015	Colegio Maya Guatemala
Tri Association Conference	OCT. 07-09, 2015	Bogotá, Colombia
Large School Basketball	OCT. 21-25, 2015	American Nicaraguan School
Small School Basketball	OCT. 21-25, 2015	American International School (CR)
ES Principals' meeting	OCT. 22-25, 2015	Colegio Americano de Guatemala
PANAMUN	OCT. 28-30, 2015	International School of Panama
Knowledge Bowl	NOV. 11-15, 2015	Colegio Americano de Guatemala
Inv. Cross-Country & T. and Field	NOV. 18-22, 2015	Colegio Maya Guatemala
Drama Festival	JAN. 27-31, 2016	International School of Panama
Athletic Directors' Meeting	JAN. 28-31, 2016	Pan-American (Costa Rica)
<i>Math Counts (Middle School)</i>	JAN. 27-31, 2016	EAS (El Salvador)
Large School Soccer	FEB. 10-14, 2016	EAS (El Salvador)
<i>Invitational MS Sport Festival</i>	FEB. 24-28, 2016	Lincoln School (Costa Rica)
Invitational Swimming	FEB. 25-28, 2016	American Nicaraguan School
Small School Soccer	MAR. 02-06, 2016	St. Augustine Prep. School (NIC)
Invitational Volleyball	APR. 13-17, 2016	Lincoln School (Costa Rica)
MS/HS Principals' Meeting	APR. 20-24, 2016	Panama Balboa (Rita's house)
General Directors' Meeting	APR. 27-MAY 01, 2016	Miami, (Dadeland Marriot Hotel)

After, there was a discussion on different type of competitions (golf, tennis, surf) and some agree that if students can come up with a team there should be options to have them as invitational. Anyway, invitational tournaments are set in a way that if schools don't go they don't pay anything. There were some issues (financial and logistics) regarding the swim meet. If schools participate in these events it will be hard to find the time to schedule other events. Douglas A., indicated that both arguments are compelling, but who decided what sports/events are decided as invitational, Ron V., clarified that the only way new events come to the organization is by approval at the GD meeting. Would tennis be the next one? The AD wanted it but Principals said no.

Jose O. indicated that AASCA should incorporate other events in addition to sports, maybe a science fair, a robotics competition. Douglas A. agreed because just the same events are promoted over and over. Discussion followed on the purpose of invitational tournaments/events. Ken T., agreed to have all sorts of events, but he thinks that we have enough events as of right now. In addition, we do not have an Arts meeting, just AD meetings, let's listen to the Principals. Otherwise let them be invitational events. Discussion continued and there were comments that somehow AD or Principals feel sometimes that no matter what they suggest, it will be changed by the GD anyway. There was an idea to have a single meeting, which was quickly disregarded. Ron V., indicated that maybe prior to the AD or Principals, AASCA officials should talk to them and work more in coordination.

Ron V., clarified even more about invitational events: "A school can just invite for an event. So if any school decides to do an invitational and if it gains enough support it might become an AASCA event. If the school wants to make it as an official event then they bring data to the GD meeting and tries to make it an official event." Jeff K., added then that schools can make events, and eventually, if successful you make it as a de facto AASCA event.

A discussion continued with the topic of sports for school girls. Jorgelina G., indicated that small schools have the problem that if a team is just starting, then the school decides not to go because they are not ready. Martha C., indicated that is a reality for all small schools. Jose O.'s case was a bit different, their girls began the AASA participation and they motivated the boys to participate. Robert R. continued the discussion emphasizing why do we need divisions, just make it AASCA soccer, etc. Martha C, liked the idea and talked about the possibility of just one division. Jeff K., yes, one division, but there should be rules for mercy. Ron V., maybe we keep this for discussion and see where this all leads. Robert R., reminded us that the idea is to expand in other activities and have a calendar more suitable to host other types of events.

There was a motion that for the 2016-2017 AASCA events calendar to have the AD modify the calendar to have a single events open to all AASCA schools. Motion did not passed and discussion continued. Jose O. indicated that a measure like that could affect participation of small school. Douglas A. suggested to request AD to look for

ways to accomplish this. Linda N., maybe suggest it to have an option in two year or so.

During the last day of the meeting, some other dates were decided (they are already included in the above calendar): Robert R. told the group that he has the guidelines for the MS festival, 12 team delegation, and those students will have a day for each sport, a lot of games. Date for this new event was a concern in CR with the rain so Robert R. proposed to change it (already changed above). In total, they will accept 12 boys 12 girls, \$900 per delegation. 8 schools only, so first come first served. The motion to accept this event was made by Karl W., Lilianna J. seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. There was another date issue with the small soccer tournament but Jose O. decided to accept this event at his school (date also included in the above calendar).

13. Community Service Award- Presentations and discussion

After presentation and discussion on the presentations sent by the Principals, Carl W. motions to give each school \$500 for the Community Service Award. The motion was seconded by Kathleen S. and it passed unanimously with only three abstentions. The Community Service Award is then presented to:

- **School wide project:** AST- The Honduras Project and LIA- Aproquen
- **Club project:** Balboa- RISE and EIS- Misión Internacional Voces Esperanza

14. Principals' Report and recommendations

Evaluations form are not return after each event. Important note. Ron V. requested all to make sure that each school evaluates each event in which they participate. you evaluate events you attend.

Tri- has increased fees, Ron V. suggest that as soon as he gets the fees they will distribute among different schools and send that to all. Fees have to increase due to the Tri increase. Steve H. moves to accept the increase as long as it does not exceeds \$5000 dollars, Douglas A. seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ron V. also reminded all the Tri Conference will take place in Bogota, Colombia. Pre-Conference institutes are world class and it is recommended that all schools take a look at what is offered by Tri and take advantage of some wonderful opportunities for their faculty and staff.

15. AASCA Professional Development

Linda N. indicated that other regions have done different PD but AASCA has done nothing in this regard. Linda suggest as a topic "the use of data for decision making", train AD, EBBSCO, how to use it more effectively. After a brief discussion the following topics were proposed:

- Holistic Data analysis how to improve the use of data in the classroom.

- Innovation makerspace, STEM.
- Social media
- PBL, Jimmy High Tech High
- Pd for athletics director or coaches
- Balanced learning (how much do we use tech/traditional methods)
- Blended Learning

Of the seven topics proposed, the group voted on the two priorities for this academic year 2015-2016 as follows:

- a) Holistic Data analysis how to improve the use of data in the classroom.***
- b) Innovation makerspace, STEM.***

16. Treasurer 's Report

Summary of Finances: Ron V. indicated that every school paid this year. He also reminded the group that the AASCA policy indicates that school must pay by January (if not the fee goes up by \$500 dollars). 12 schools would have been fined this year if the policy would have been apply to the letter. So the reminder for all schools is the following: **AASCA fees are due in September, by January the school that has not pay the fees will incur in a \$500 dollars late fee fine.** Also, as soon as school pay, send note to Ron V. indicating how to identify that the payment was done by the specific school (sometimes money arrives but there is no clue who paid).

17. New Membership Criteria

Discussion followed on the topic of new membership criteria. There were ideas such as "Candidacy period of two years", including the no participation in events during those two years. Others wanted participation in order to see those schools in action at AASCA events. Another idea was to keep participation at cultural events only (for those two years). Number of participations: 4 and 2, similar to what is expected from AASCA schools. Discussion continued including participation: 2+1 a year (two sport and a cultural) or 2+2. Discussion continued and finally Greg M. as part of the committee for new membership would present the group a draft rubric for new membership. Greg. M. and the committee presented the new membership rubric and it was approved by the group unanimously. Please refer to last page of minutes for the approved draft.

18. Members Retiring from AASCA

Liliana J. spoke on behalf of the association and thank Martha Maristani, Karl Wieburg and Alegria Lores for their time served and contribution at the AASCA meetings. The whole group wish them good luck on their new life journey.

19. Membership of Discovery School and Happy Days School

Last year, Discovery School application was frozen. Now that there will be a new process, all schools will have to follow them including the Discovery School. Happy Days School will be placed in probation starting this academic year 2015-2016. Linda N. motioned to open the new application process for the year 2015-2016, Ken T. seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

20. Some Books recommended by AASCA GD

To close the 2015 AASCA General Directors' Meeting, member of the group recommended the following books:

- *The Teaching Brain: An Evolutionary Trait at the Heart of Education.* Vanessa Rodriguez and Michelle Fitzpatrick
- *17,000 Classroom Visits Can't Be Wrong: Strategies That Engage Students, Promote Active Learning, and Boost Achievement.* John V. Antonetti and James R. Garver
- *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: Why Business Thinking is Not the Answer.* James C. Collins
- *Make Just One Change: Teach Students to Ask Their Own Questions.* Dan Rothstein and Luz Santana
- *School Culture Rewired: How to Define, Assess, and Transform It.* Steve Gruenert and Todd Whitaker
- *Better Learning through Structured Teaching: A Framework for the Gradual Release of Responsibility.* Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey
- *The Learning Leader: How to Focus School Improvement for Better Results.* Douglas B. Reeves

Ron V. motioned to adjourn the meeting, everyone agreed and the meeting ended Motion to adjourn at noon on May 02, 2015.

Applying to AASCA

Schools in Central America that strive towards the values and goals of AASCA are encouraged to apply to become members and engage in an association of schools committed to collaborate for the enhancement of learning, social responsibility, international mindedness and professional growth.

In order to become members of AASCA, schools are required to do the following:

1. Application: Submit a digital application that fully demonstrates a commitment to the following values:

E	C	I	D	W
Classes delivered English instruction in English (at least 75%) and accredited to by an international accreditation agency	Building community through a variety of activities and experiences and serving others in community	Education that promotes internationalism, inter-cultural awareness and interconnectedness with the environment	Democratic values such as rule of law, respect, pluralism and the common good.	Commitment to the physical and emotional well-being of students.

Applications must be submitted by April 1 each year. After the application is received, it is reviewed at the following General Directors' meeting; applying school directors may present their application at the AASCA General Directors' meeting. If the candidate is approved, schools are placed on a two-year candidacy period; if the application is denied, the school will receive communication as such and can apply to

2. Candidacy: Once an application is approved, schools are considered a 'candidate school' for a two-year period prior to being accepted as a full member. During the period, schools must:

- Send students to attend AASCA events per year, including an athletic event and one as a leadership/cultural event. Minimum large schools =4 events, small schools=2 events
- Director attends the annual directors' meeting each year (May).
- Host a site visit by members of the AASCA Directors to validate application.
- Pay annual AASCA fee.
- Uphold the values of AASCA.

During the directors' meeting at the end of a candidate's second school year, the school's compliance will be reviewed. If the application remains valid and candidacy requirements are met, schools will accepted as full members. Candidate schools that have not complied with requirements during the two year period will not be granted full membership and must wait two years before re-applying.