Hi Pat,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with an overview of the Technology landscape at BIS; I'm thrilled you realize the enormous potential that Technology has to enhance student learning.

I know you've likely heard about the school's IT infrastructure in general, but I've put this brief together to offer you a unique perspective from someone who over the past year and a half has engaged with literally every IT stakeholder/IT user at BIS who thoroughly understands our strengths and weaknesses as a technology-centric school.

I came to BIS with over ten years of Technology integration and teaching experience at International schools in Asia, Africa and the US. Prior to switching careers, I spent a decade working in technology, management and sales in corporate America. My partner, our School Psychologist, Karin Shipley and I had a baby girl two and half months ago this Sunday. We're super happy new parents and Karin is on maternity leave.

I present my take on the past and present so it is clear why my ideas for the future are what they are.You'll notice that no "technology devices" are mentioned. Our current technology mix is based on an iPad implementation which repeated a common mistake in schools where the implementation of devices (in our case iPads) came before the necessary infrastructure and teaching and learning practices were established. We've done a lot of work in the past 1.5 years to remedy that and make a good technology program better, but there is still a lot of work to do. I look forward to building on a strong program while diversifying our stable of technologies.

I have organized and continued to build a detailed, comprehensive set of examples and recommended changes we can begin making (next August and beyond) to bring a new IT vision to life. I will forward the detailed recommendations as requested/when appropriate. In some regards, what our next steps are depend heavily on my ability to secure limited time amongst Administration/leadership team members to get dialogues started and decisions made. In the short term, this is one of my biggest challenges.

BIS Technology Background:

Infrastructure
Prior to my arrival (2014) the school's iPad program had stalled due to limited slow internet and inadequate wi-fi coverage in many classrooms and throughout common areas of the buildings. We identified problem areas and added dozens of access points in both buildings as well as purchased additional internet capacity (bandwidth).

As a result we've made significant progress in physical/digital infrastructure functionality in terms of iPad/Wi-fi/Apple TV usage as well as in core information systems changes: taking on and training all to use new Virtual Learning Environments (ManageBac/Google Apps), a new school database (3sys) and a new website (Schoolyard) beginning in 2015. *For 2016-2017 our core IT infrastructure will not need major focus or require any changes.* **In general, everything is working well from a technical/connectivity standpoint. Some issues exist but are minor and exceptions rather than the rule.**

Virtual Learning Environments
When I started at BIS the school was just beginning the transition to using ManageBac as the core grading/curriculum environment (from EDU 2.0 and Atlas Rubicon). My first year involved heavy setup of classes and systems using ManageBac, completing the iPad rollout throughout the entire Secondary school, reworking the Primary iPad distribution/setup/storage system, creating new training resources for every type of BIS IT stakeholder and providing extensive training for staff/students/parents on our new systems.

While those activities were going on, in the background I restarted the school's use of a mothballed Google Apps for Education account and along with other Admin and staff, incrementally made Google Apps a central feature of the BIS IT infrastructure. We now use Google Apps schoolwide for communication (Staff Portal/Daily Bulletins), collaboration (Google Docs/Slides/Sheets) and classwork of all kinds. (Google Classroom, Calendar, etc.)

We continue to make progress, streamline and add functionality to our platforms. This year (2015-2016) saw the expansion of the Primary iPad program moving grades 4 and 5 to 1 to 1 class sets and every other classroom supplied at least 1 to 2. Also this year we built and implemented cabinet storage facilities to house the Primary iPads safely and effectively. (Prior to my arrival, the Primary iPads were kept in plastic buckets.)

Technology Implementation
My report to the Board from November 2015 can be found here. (The recommendations I made will be fleshed out further in this document and in subsequent reporting.)

The aforementioned software implementations all started on **the first day of school** the last two years and the rollouts threatened the competence of every staff member.   ManageBac, 3sys, Google--none of them were ready on time and/or worked as expected when initially rolled out by the ICT department.   While these system changes were necessary to bring about better functionality, the implementations were less than optimal from timing/training standpoints and it is key for 2016-2017 that no new, large, untested systems are rolled out.

Given these massive system changes each year for the past two years, our limited time and resources have overwhelmingly been devoted to IT training in largely administrative, teacher-centered technology platforms. The creative/innovative/skills based/student centered side from EL to Grade 12 has languished as there had been no formalized IT curriculum/training time allotted in Primary, and in Secondary only as a tiny part of a relatively obscure mini-subject; Personal Health and Development. The dearth of prescribed IT training time for students is a major sore point among staff and students. It's as if we expect them to learn by osmosis and the students of teachers with weak IT skills simply miss out altogether.

Technology Integration
Our IT plans/goals in Primary and Secondary for 2015-2016 were largely to continue to help shift our focus from IT implementation to a focus on classroom integration by building greater confidence with systems/apps/workflows. We're moving beyond simple substitution and augmentation of instruction using IT (along the SAMR continuum) with more and more progress toward modification and redefinition among increasing numbers of staff. My original outline/overview of the IT plan for 2015-2016 is here.

In addition to changing out the "implementation" mindset (devices/apps coming before needs assessments) it's been necessary to bridge large gaps in staff proficiency with technology and their ability to deploy IT effectively. We've done a great deal to expand core IT literacy among staff (especially in regards to the new administrative IT systems 3sys/ManageBac) but "IT integration" as a whole clearly suffers from a lack of a cohesive, shared IT vision and more specifically as a result of the lack of vision, we lack of set clear expectations for staff and the willingness to commit to them.

What could/should a new BIS vision for IT look like?

> *Technology should facilitate student inquiry, innovation and independent thinking both within and beyond the four walls and teachers should feel confident they'll have affable, effective support whenever they need IT.*

It might not seem like it, but even this basic vision statement could have a profound impact on the status quo at BIS. The work we've done in the past year and half has brought us much closer to realizing these ideals but there is a lot of work to do. Where our Technology does not meet these ideals--to the extent it can within our budget constraints- I have assembled recommendations broadly categorized as follows, in order of importance, the most important first:

1. **FACILITATING AND INSPIRING STUDENT LEARNING AND CREATIVITY:** Begin 2016-2017 with an **emphasis on IT *integration* for learning/digital competence and creativity with a Student focus (**moving away from an IT *implementation mindset* focused on devices/administrative systems development with a *Staff focus)*. This entails an emphasis on helping staff and students personalize learning as well as continuing to work on my original mandate upon being hired at BIS: To challenge the legacy of control exerted by our ICT department where ICT department interests/control are out of alignment with teaching and learning needs.

2. **FACILITATING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP AMONG STAFF:** Agree upon and communicate a vision for IT at BIS. From that vision, create a set of clear IT responsibilities and expectations. Based on those responsibilities and expectations, make sure that the necessary systems, resources and time are allotted to help staff meet or exceed those expectations.

3. **INCREASING CAPACITY TO ACCOMPLISH 1 and 2: STAFFING TO HANDLE THE NUMBERS OF STUDENTS/STAFF AND DEVICES.** Compared to schools our size, we lack the breadth of administrative support and staff to make a robust technology integration vision a reality. One Integration Coach for two schools/800 devices/770 students/130 staff and admin is a totally unprecedented reliance on a single individual to do as much as I do, wear as many hats, etc., compared to similarly sized/equipped international schools.

4. **INCLUDE A TECHNOLOGY REPRESENTATIVE ON THE LEADERSHIP TEAM (AT LEAST SEMI-REGULARLY as has been the case in the past):** We had to disband the school's Technology Committee last year due to lack of attendance by both Admin and Staff so it's critical that at minimum going forward you have someone who can speak about Technology for teaching and learning who is not only completely comfortable with Technology, but also has solid relationships across every department in both schools.

My role will continue to be to support our Technology initiatives as decided upon by you and the Board in collaboration with me, the Leadership team, staff, students and the BIS Community. As I proposed and we wrote into my job description created mid-year last year, **my core duties are to impact student achievement by enabling others, influencing policy and enacting change.** As the school is expanding and my roles and responsibilities have expanded since coming to BIS, my role will continue to change going forward.

I look forward to continuing to solve problems, connect resources and lead the design and integration of the systems necessary to meet the school's vision under your leadership.I am more than happy to help and be of service to you in your transition. Feel free to call on me anytime.

Best regards,

Matt Brady
Instructional Technology Coach