



St. Mary's International School

CIS/WASC Accreditation: Five Year Review Report



Component One: Introduction

March 2013

- *Comments to put this report into the context of the school's accreditation history.*
- *A brief description of the process undertaken to create the report including the process taken to ensure school-wide reflection on the school's status and how the school ensured broad community contribution*
- *A summary of accreditation visits such as a Special Visit or Additional Grades Visit undertaken since the Team Visit*
- *A brief description of any relevant factors which may have had an impact on the findings recorded in the report.*

Introduction

St. Mary's International School was founded in 1954 to provide a Catholic education for boys in the Tokyo area. Since then the purpose has expanded to include boys of all faiths. St. Mary's offers an international, K-12 college preparatory education to over 800 students representing nearly fifty different countries.

In its 57th year, St. Mary's provides an academically challenging program for international and host country students culminating in a college preparatory curriculum and the International Baccalaureate Program. The school is divided into elementary, middle, and high schools. Each division offers an enriching core curriculum as well as a wide selection of extra-curricular programs. Virtually all of our graduates go on to higher education at many of the finest colleges and universities in the world. Parents are actively involved in supporting the school through their work as classroom volunteers, fund-raisers, and participants in advisory groups. The school's financial base rests solely on tuition fees and fund-raising.

Seventeen nationalities are represented among the faculty and staff. St. Mary's currently employs 88 full-time teachers and 11 part-time teachers, 29 full-time support staff and 12 part-time support staff. Support staff members include the assistant librarians, assistant aquatics coaches, and recess supervisors in addition to the office staff and custodians.

Accreditation History

St. Mary's International School has been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) since 1972 and by the Council of International Schools (CIS) since 2001. The School underwent a Mid-term Visit using the WASC protocol in March 2006, a CIS Preparatory Visit in September 2006, which was followed by the 2007-2008 Self-Study conducted under the CIS 7th Edition protocol, leading to the Team Visit in April 2008. The school was awarded full terms of re-accreditation by both organizations in July 2008. The recommendations being addressed in this Five Year Review are from the *CIS/WASC Visiting Team Report, April 2008*.

Five Year Review Process

The process undertaken to create the Five Year Review Report began in the spring of 2012 with an introduction of the 8th Edition Conversion protocol to faculty and parent groups. Beginning in August 2012, schoolwide, division and subject area committees with their Heads of Department met regularly to discuss, reflect on, and prepare information for the various components. Members of the administrative team were responsible for chairing the seven schoolwide committees. In order to provide continuity, the schoolwide groups were organized to include faculty and administrators who served in the same areas during the 2008 Self-Study. Community contribution involved parents and students in topical focus groups through the PFA and School Improvement Council. Communication of results, process, and progress was maintained through newsletter articles, email, department meetings, and other school meetings.

Relevant Factor: Establishment of St. Mary's New School Corporation

St. Mary's original School Corporation was founded in September 1954, by the Brothers of Christian Instruction and was fully recognized in accordance with Article 64, Part 7 of the Japanese Private Schools Regulations. That school corporation eventually came to include an orphanage and five Catholic/Japanese private schools. Since the last accreditation visit, St. Mary's has successfully established its own separate school corporation, *Gakko Hojin Kokusai Sei Maria Gakkuen*. A constitution was written and modeled after the former school corporation constitution. Governing Board members include members of the Brothers of Christian Instruction, St. Mary's alumni, former parents of the school and members at large.

Integral to the establishment and approval of a separate St. Mary's school corporation was the construction of new school buildings which also involved reconstructing the entire campus, an extensive eleven year process. Authorities from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (Tokyo-to) visited the school to inspect and approve it as a registered school in early 2012 and incorporation took place officially on April 2, 2012. The establishment of the corporation necessarily involved a great deal of time and effort preparing documentation with many meetings involving the Business Manager, Headmaster, HS Principal and Corporation Board members. Incorporation tasks included writing detailed reports regarding a variety of aspects such as financial (assets and liabilities) and operational (types of classes, enrolment, etc.).

Relevant Factor: Campus Reconstruction

Since March 2008, a major campus re-development project took place. Our entire campus was under reconstruction and providing the time and resources needed for the building project became the school's main priority. Reconstruction design goals focused on providing for student safety, security, and high quality learning environments. All faculty members were involved in the design process. Through tremendous effort on the part of the entire school community, our academic, athletic, fine arts and activities programs, and school events for students continued uninterrupted throughout the reconstruction phases.

Our new buildings were designed to be earthquake resistant and are 25% stronger than required by the latest stringent Japanese seismic design codes (factors that served us well on March 11, 2011). The buildings are barrier free with large windows and skylights. Classrooms are spacious with natural light, air conditioning and 24-hour ventilation systems to maintain good indoor air quality, and wireless network access. The classroom and administration building (North Campus) includes all regular classrooms, two libraries, seven science labs, two playgrounds for younger students, and all administrative functions. The South Campus includes a new gymnasium, a seven-lane pool, cafeteria, fine arts classrooms, a large athletic field with natural blade type artificial turf, and four tennis courts. The tennis courts and field are open for the use of the school community on weekends when not being used for scheduled sports and activities. In addition, the new multipurpose facility accommodates various functions, such as exhibits, presentations, drama and music events, class assemblies, sports, and more. The campus is ecologically engineered, using recycled rainwater, solar panels, and "green" walls

and roofs. Over 830 square meters of roof areas or building walls are covered with plants to reduce heat gain and CO2 levels. The air conditioning/heating system in the North Building makes ice or hot water at night and uses it for cooling/heating portions of the building during the day to reduce peak electrical loads. 110 kilowatts of photo voltaic solar panels are installed on the third floor roof of the North Building — the second largest solar array in Tokyo. Rainwater is collected in a 200 cubic meter reservoir, filtered, and used for flushing toilets and irrigating planting areas. Over 90% of the large trees on campus were saved during the reconstruction, and many new trees have been planted as well.

The school aims to provide the best in safety, environment, technical capabilities, and facilities for our 21st Century learners; a school environment reflective of current and changing academic programs that will meet the needs of future generations of St. Mary's students.

Relevant Factor: Changing Economic Situation and Demographics

2010 – 2011 was a challenging and eventful year for St. Mary's International School, one which has come to be defined in terms of the events which occurred on March 11, 2011. The earthquake/tsunami/radiation disaster had a significant impact on the school and community, which was still evident as we moved into 2011-2012. In the wake of the disaster, work toward accomplishing some of our CIS/WASC recommendation goals and action plans was necessarily postponed and energy re-directed to other priority areas.

Since the Japanese and world economic downturn and March 2011 disaster, St. Mary's has experienced a decline in enrolment along with the other international schools in Tokyo and throughout Japan. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, elementary school classes were consolidated so that rather than having four homerooms per grade level, there were three; and in the case of kindergarten, only two homerooms. The decline in enrolment continued in 2012-2013 to our current level of 807 boys.

Relevant Factor: Leadership Change

St. Mary's continues to evolve. One aspect of this evolution can be seen in the Administrative Team at school. From a school where the Brothers of Christian Instruction were active at all grade levels as teachers, administrators and counselors, the St. Mary's of today is a school that is dependent on lay persons and a much smaller group of Brothers.

In 2011, the elementary school principal position transferred to a lay person and a new ES assistant principal was hired. Beginning in August 2013, the Headmaster position will transfer to a lay person as well and for the first time St. Mary's leadership team will not include representatives of the Brothers of Christian Instruction. Other administrative changes include the following:

August 2011

Elementary School Principal (former ES Assistant Principal)

Elementary School Assistant Principal
High School Assistant Principal (new position created)

August 2012
Middle School Principal

August 2013
Headmaster (Former HS Principal)
High School Principal (former SMIS HS Assistant Principal)
High School Assistant Principal
Business Manager

To help provide continuity during this transition time, the current Headmaster will continue to work as Chairman of St. Mary's School Corporation Board and the current Business Manager will continue to work as Executive Secretary of the School Corporation. Looking forward, the new Leadership Team will continue to work on improving organizational structures and processes focused on student learning and building leadership capacity within the faculty.

There is a commitment to carry on the spirit of the Brothers, one of compassion and the education of the mind and the heart; the commitment to excel in academics, activities, and in philanthropic pursuits. The international community at the school further challenges the St. Mary's of today and of the future to be even more sensitive and tolerant of cultural and religious differences. We will continue to work *Together Along the Way* to address the challenges and opportunities of the future.