



## ST JOSEPH'S INSTITUTION OLD BOYS' ASSOCIATION

Gentlemen

We had a robust sharing of views with members of the SJI OBA who turned up for the Forum on Friday 21 May at St. Joseph's Institution. There were diverse views and were passionately elaborated but we were all united by the love of our alma mater and a common aspiration for SJI to be a significant school of learning and education.

Since the AGM on 26 March, I have worked at drafting the Terms Of Reference (TOR) as well as the composition of the Working Group (WG). We called for the forum on 21 May to officially present the TOR and WG and to clarify issues if there were any.

I would also like to take this opportunity to clarify some misconceptions that have been circulated on Facebook.

There was no vote taken at the AGM on 26 March 2010. A member, Andy Wee proposed that the OBA form a committee to look into the diverse views expressed at the AGM in relation to lowering the Cut Off Points (COP) for admission to SJI. This committee was to present recommendations to the SJI Board of Governors (BOG) and asked for those who were in support of such a move to stand as a show of support. He suggested this because the views expressed at the AGM were both in favour of the status quo as well as a lower COP.

It has also been hinted that we have slow in starting the committee. As has been 8 weeks since the AGM before we presented the TOR and the WG. In that space of time, we have met with the SJI BOG to inform them that we plan to commission a WG with the proper TOR to provide feedback, drafted and fine-tuned the TOR, invited members to be part of the WG, spoken with members who volunteered to be part of the WG, chaired OBA meetings, organised the Founders Day Mass and Home Coming Dinners and held our day job as well. Whether we could have done it any faster is speculative but certainly work was done and progressed. As the President of the SJI OBA, I accept responsibility for not having communicated the progress of the issues raised and the formation of the WG and I sincerely apologise.

It has also been suggested that the OBA tabled a different set of issue for the WG to investigate and recommend. The WG was meant to provide recommendations to the BOG on the diverse views articulated at the AGM and the TOR was drafted as widely as possible to enable the WG to provide recommendations to address a whole host of issues. It was not narrowly focused just on the issue of the COP. We certainly did not divert the WG for our own purpose.

It was suggested that the OBA erred by involving the SJI BOG as the issue is an internal affair. This reflects a lack of understanding of the Mission of the SJI OBA. Clause 3Aa of the Objectives states "The Objectives of the Association shall be "To aid in furthering the mission and objectives of the School by close collaboration with the School's Board of Governors and Management Body".

It has also been insinuated that the OBA raised the membership fees to \$500 without full clarification with members and without establishing exactly how we will use the money. For those of you who were at the AGM, you will clearly remember the OBA explained how much we have in our account, what we need for our monthly expenses as well as our aspirations for the OBA. I also explained what the ACS OBA is charging members. We then put it to a vote. A majority of members eligible to vote elected to approve the changes to the Constitution governing membership and membership fees. .

Finally, there was criticism that the Forum was announced haphazardly and there was a rally to ask members to come for the Forum to tell the OBA ExCo that "You serve the Old Boys and it's not the other way around". I would like to clarify that the announcement was actually via a Facebook posting as well as on the OBA website. The OBA ExCo serves our alma mater and we are proud to be of such service. The Old Boys do not serve the ExCo and the ExCo does not serve the Old Boys. We are in partnership to serve the alma mater

The TOR has already been widely circulated but I am attaching it for reference again and state that the essence of the TOR is to contemplate *How SJI can be positioned as a Mission school of choice for students from both affiliated and non-affiliated primary schools, taking into consideration the changing educational landscape and the challenges and opportunities that these changes present*

In forming the WG, the ExCo decided not to involve any members from the current ExCo as well as the SJI BOG to ensure objectivity. We endeavoured to have different age groups represented on the WG and tried to draw membership from diverse backgrounds, industries and sectors. The WG will be tasked to engage with Old Boys, teachers, parents and students, La Salle brothers and clergy to in coming up with recommendations to the SJI BOG.

The Working Group is still incomplete as there has been a good suggestion to include members of the School Management Committee of the affiliated schools. I am attaching the list as it stands at the moment and will update you when I have the other members on board. Before the Forum on Friday 21 May, 3 of the Old Boys who had earlier accepted the invitation to be on the WG informed me that they had to withdraw, two due to health and another due to work commitments. Towards the end of the Forum, Jeffrey Heng also withdrew from the WG, citing disagreement with the TOR. Since then, there has been one more withdrawal due to work commitments.

I personally approached and persuaded Roy Quek to be the Chairman of the WG. Roy was previously a Director at the Ministry of Education and is currently a Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of Health. He is well respected and well connected to ensure support, resources and information for the WG. As a standing member of the SJI International BOG, he is also current and informed regarding the educational landscape in Singapore. We are very happy that he has accepted this responsibility on top of a very demanding work load.

Ora et Labora  
Philip Seah  
President SJI OBA

***Attached: Terms of Reference  
Composition of Working Group***

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Aim**

1. This paper proposes the terms of reference, composition, possible approach and work schedule for a Working Group (WG) on the Positioning of SJI as a mission school of choice.

### **Background**

2. At the SJI OBA AGM held on 26 March 2010, members discussed the future direction of SJI. Some members were of the view that SJI had become elitist and should instead adopt an affiliation-based admission policy so that up to 75% of the places at SJI could be allocated to boys from our affiliated primary schools.

3. The SJI Board of Governors (The Board) responded that SJI had not been elitist given its PSLE cut-off point and the wider range of academic abilities that is being served compared to other top schools. The Board argued that, in re-positioning SJI, the school needed to achieve a good balance between attracting a fair share of high ability boys and other boys from both affiliated and non-affiliated primary schools. With a wider range of academic abilities, SJI is able to provide a diverse and rich learning environment in which every boy is inspired to develop to his fullest potential, regardless of his academic abilities and specific talents. Also, the re-positioning of SJI is not only about where to set the PSLE cut-off points but about the various initiatives taken such as the Josephian Talent programme, Academic Review and HR review, etc.

4. After an extensive discussion of SJI's future, the OBA agreed that a way forward was to convene a WG comprising selected Old Boys to study the way forward for SJI. The President of SJI OBA communicated this to the Board and obtained their support and agreement that the findings and recommendations of the WG would provide key reference points for the Board's plans to position SJI as a mission school of choice going forward.

### **Terms of Reference**

5. The WG would study and assess how SJI can be positioned as a mission school of choice for students from both affiliated and non-affiliated primary schools, taking into consideration the changing educational landscape and the challenges and opportunities that these changes present.

6. Based on the above, the proposed terms of reference (TOR) of the WG are as follows:

- a. Review and assess the challenges and opportunities of the new educational landscape in Singapore and globally;
- b. Review and assess the relevance of SJI's vision and mission in this new educational environment;

- c. Review and assess what has SJI done so far to meet the challenges in the new educational landscape;
- d. Propose recommendations on how SJI can be a mission school of choice in the new educational landscape, catering to students of both affiliated and non-affiliated schools.

### **Composition of the Working Group**

7. The WG should comprise a wide representation of Old Boys so that a balanced report in meeting the term of reference would be achieved.

### **Approach Taken**

8. In addition to gaining access to essential data available at the school and elsewhere, the WG will also consult and solicit the views of Old Boys, teachers, parents and students, and other stakeholders such as the Lasalle Brothers and the Clergy in the Catholic Church, as appropriate.

### **Schedule**

9. The WG should target to table its report to the SJI OBA and SJI Board of Governors by October 2010.

**Composition of Working Group**  
(Corrected as of 24 May 2010)

<b>NAME</b>	<b>OCCUPATION</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>CLASS</b>
<b>1. Roy Quek Chairman</b>	Deputy Secretary	Ministry of Health	1986
<b>2. Kenny Rebeira</b>	Chairman	St Stephens School BOG	SPS 1976
<b>3. Michael Ang</b>	Managing Director	Stream Networks	1970
<b>4. Richard Teo</b>	President	Pacific Star Asset Mgt	1971
<b>5. Francis Oen (Dr)</b>	Medical Director	Singapore Eye and Vision	1977
<b>6. Tan Teck Hock</b>	Principal	Serangoon Junior College	1980
<b>7. Wong Ying Yuen</b>	Financial Realtor	DTZ Realty	1980
<b>8. Felix Oen</b>	Regional Director	NEC Asia Pacific	1983
<b>9. Michael Boey</b>	Head, Learning and Organisation Development	UOB	1983
<b>10. Nicholas Chee</b>	Project Manager	BP spore Pte Ltd	1983
<b>11. Adrian Phang</b>	Partner	Glocalent Consulting Pte Ltd	1986
<b>12. Daniel K. Nomanbhoy</b>	Operations Manager	ExxonMobil Chemical	1988
<b>13. Lee Kok Fatt</b>	Director	Ministry of Finance	1989
<b>14. Andy Wee</b>	System Integrator	NetConnect Solutions	1991
<b>15. Christopher Koh</b>	Director	Ministry of Health	1992
<b>16. Nigel Na</b>	Teacher	St. Andrews School	2001