

SPECIAL VISIT VISITING COMMITTEE REPORT

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR SCHOOLS WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

FOR

KING MONGKUT'S INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LADKRABANG INTERNATIONAL
DEMONSTRATION SCHOOL

1 Chalongkrung Road, Chalong Krung, Ladkrabang, Bangkok,
Thailand 10520

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Visiting Committee Members

Shannon Wellwood-Koga, Chair

Head of Schools The Olympia Schools, The OIS Schools

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I. Introduction

The school began its operation in August 2017. This was followed by the initial ONESQA visit in March 2019 outlining the positive impact the school made in the region. The King Mongkut Institute of Technology Demonstration school then completed the application for ACS WASC accreditation on August 30, 2020. The initial visit was completed in February 2021 with the recommendation to conduct a special visit as the dormitory, which housed approximately 30% of the students, required additional planning.

Purpose of the Visit

Subsequent to the initial visit the school dormitory was identified as an area that needed improvement and this special visit was required.

Add the WASC Commission letter paragraph here.

The school states:

King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang International Demonstration School (KMIDS) was conceived and developed under the auspices of King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL)—a university renowned for technological innovations and advancements. In conjunction with this spirit of innovation, KMIDS stands as Thailand's first STEAM-focused school. Our school features a student-centered program promoting interdisciplinary learning, higher-level thinking skills, and creative solutions to real-world problems. Furthermore, KMIDS' affiliation with KMITL affords our high school students the privilege of learning in undergraduate courses instructed by experienced KMITL lecturers. In these "Pathway" courses, students have not only the opportunity to gain hands-on, real-life university experience at a variety of KMITL faculties but also to earn college credit and preferential early admission into KMITL. Along with the KMITL Pathway program, KMIDS also offers AP courses to our high school students. These advanced programs, coupled with a standards-based, challenging American middle and high school curriculum, ensure that our graduates are well-equipped with 21st Century skills and well-prepared for pursuing degrees at leading universities in Thailand and abroad.

School Mission: KMIDS students will be Masters of Innovation, full of Inspiration and imagination. This lofty mission was developed after the Universities set its vision to help to develop highly trained, technologically literate Thai citizens who are university ready.

Changes/Developments

The KMIDS has grown to 385 students with an anticipated 80-90 additional students for the 2022-23 school year. There are currently 93 dormitory students and also anticipate additional enrollments. The school states that it has provided additional training for the dormitory staff,

increased offerings for wellness and special needs. Due to Covid, the school remains on “blended learning” with roughly 2/3’s of the students attending daily. The school has a solid Covid action plan.

Significant changes and/or developments

KMIDS has had several leadership changes. The head of school and the major board leaders are new. Along with this, the organization and leadership structure has shifted to accommodate more students. The school moved into its new facility in June 2021. This new facility better provides for the secure needs of the students as it is embedded on the University campus.

The action plan which was developed after the initial visit had 10 major goals:

1. Improvement in Academic English
2. Improvement in Critical thinking skills
3. Improved communications systems
4. More fully develop global awareness and digital responsibility
5. Promote a culture of ethical accountability
6. Revise the Thai curriculum
7. Improve resource and procurement systems
8. Create a school wide and individual focused Professional Development Program
9. Develop a robust student services structure
10. Improve the KMIDS dormitory and program.

This special visit revealed that the KMIDS has made significant improvements in English, communication systems, resource planning and in developing a robust student services program. This is considered good progress in the period of one year, considering the ongoing disruption due to the pandemic.

The visit revealed that the school continues to work on critical thinking, professional development and the dormitory program. The June 2024 timeframe should be sufficient for the school to complete the improvements necessary to continue the process of accreditation.

The new leadership team was responsible for moving the school forward and developing the progress report.

II. Progress on Critical Areas for Follow-up/Schoolwide Action Plan

Following the Initial Visit the Commission decided:

It is the decision of the Commission to grant King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang International Demonstration School (7-12) Candidacy Status through June 30, 2024, with a special visit in the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year to review progress in addressing the residential program (See *Focus on Learning International 2020*, Residential Life criteria.)

In preparation for the special visit, the schools is asked to prepare a written progress report. The report should include the progress being made in meeting the recommendations of the initial visit visiting committee, especially in the area of the residential program. Instructions for preparing and submitting this report will be provided to the school.

The residential program at KMIDS was identified as the sole critical area of focus.

The residential program at KMIDS supports 93 students in an off-campus hotel where students are provided with room and board, supervision and care, with 80-83 of those students returning to their homes over the weekends. Within the initial visit and the following report, the residential program (dorm) was identified as a critical area of follow-up. In particular, the focus of professional development in child protection, improvement of the dorm situation, the organizational structure of the dorm, the physical location and services of the dorm, clarity of roles of the adults in the dorm, supervision of students in the dorm, physical and socio-emotional support of students in the dorm, and program evaluation of student centered opportunities within the dorm.

The current temporary dorm is located in a hotel, simultaneously open to the public. Most students are housed in one wing of the building called Building C. Since the current number of dorm students exceeds the capacity of Building C, some students are housed in Building A. The dorm consists of a common area, located on the first floor, while upper floors are bedrooms. Security measures, such as security systems, such as CCTV, fire exit alarms, and access cards for each floor are in place. In addition, security guards are assigned at the main entrance for 24 hours.

The current supervision of dorm residents is completed by a small staff of 5. There has been a difficulty in recruiting further dorm staff as qualified individuals are requesting a higher salary than the school is willing to offer, and others who are willing to take a job have been reported as not being able to pass the background check or are not fully qualified. Current supervision ratio is at 1:28 for female students by the only female staff and 1:22 for male students. The female staff member is the dorm supervisor and is on call 24/7. A better onboarding process for staff at the beginning of the 2021-22 academic year has led to a better understanding of processes as well as a lower turnover rate.

Students, while attending classes in person, are provided breakfast and dinner, and transportation to and from school is provided by two regulated, monitored school buses. Evening meals are provided in two sittings to create social distancing opportunities, based on the bus schedule

returning to the dorm at the end of the day. While the students rated their dorm experience very favorably, they had many, many suggestions for meal improvement.

Upon return to campus at the beginning of second term, Check in procedures were clarified and students began by Signing up for check in so as to limit contact. Pre-arrival damage checks in the hotel were done initially by staff and then by families on arrival using a newly developed document.

In the second term, dorm students have had more flexibility in whether they can stay after school for additional support or not. Due to Covid, after school activities for all students have been canceled.

Some students reside in provinces outside of the local jurisdiction and the school has made a concerted effort to ensure that, even through the most recent Covid restrictions, the dormitory remains open to facilitate healthy and happy socio-emotional support for the students. During the first term of the 21-22 academic year, while the school was only learning online, the dormitory closed and was only re-opened in January of 2022. The school has worked hard to ensure that students who need quarantine or isolation services or are learning from the dorm are supported with medical support as well as additional meals.

During times of increased restrictions, the school has synchronously increased its mask, visitation, excursion, and social distancing regulations. In order to compensate and build relationships amongst the dorm students, the dorm staff have organized activities once a month (Get to know you, Valentine's Day, Roommate Day) to support relationship building.

The socio-emotional well-being of the dorm students is supported by the school counselors who support and train the dorm staff. In addition to actively seeking out student opinions this year, dorm staff have been training in first aid and mental health training, while the supervisor is undertaking advanced pastoral training, and a diploma in boarding practice. Dorm students who fall ill while on campus are fully supported by dorm staff and the dorm has been provided with first aid kits and medicine boxes for initial support. The need to go to a hospital is assessed through a crisis chain and one staff member is always available to provide transportation to the hospital. The lack of a connection in the new school information system linking the dorm and the school has been noted in the need for redocumentation of important medical and private information.

The Dorm Handbook and Dorm Crisis Response are two essential documents added to KMIDS in the past year. This document will be essential in guiding the child protection and supervision of students. The latest fire drill to be done for the dorm was in 2020. Current practices do not yet fully monitor the living conditions of all students; last year some seniors were living on their own and no assessment of students this year has been undertaken.

The child protection policy has been linked to the dorm handbook and all staff are engaged in a variety of training throughout the year ranging from annual safeguarding training to weekly staff consultations with the dorm supervisor. There is a lack of clarity and directness in the reporting of possible child protection concerns and the overall reporting of the dorm has only recently changed in January 2022 to the head of school.

Plans for the new, permanent, on campus dormitory are underway providing rooms for 2 students each with bunk beds, personal bathrooms, TV, and wardrobes. The intended construction timeline is running according to schedule and is scheduled to finish as planned in August 2023.

The school has noted the generosity of KMITL, the parent university, and the availability of almost everything that is asked for, however stated that they are limited in moving forward as quickly as they would like to due to bureaucracy and administrative procedures of the parent university.

In addition, the recent turnover in leadership at both the university and the school level has meant that continuity and structures have not been as consistent as they may have been. The current acting director of the school, assigned annually by the university, is new, and the deputy director and assistant director at the school are internal promotions this year. The administration noted the turnover and the lack of a long term, more permanent plan.

III. Commendations and Recommendations

A. Commendations:

Comment on significant progress the school has made in responding to the critical areas for follow-up and in carrying out the related action plan.

1. The teaching staff is commended for its work improving the students progress on English language proficiency,
2. The leadership team and faculty are commended for its improved communication systems, making use of technology as a vehicle to reach its community.
3. The university and board are commended for their unfailing financial support and vision to provide better resources for the school as it grows.
4. The leadership team is commended for its development of student services which involve activities, wellness and counseling.
5. The dorm staff are commended for their dedication to the students over the years
6. The students are commended for their persevering attitude through the pandemic.
7. The board is commended for their continued commitment to provide better facilities for the dormitory students.

B. Recommendations:

● **Comment on any critical areas for follow-up/action plan sections that have not yet been completely addressed, if applicable**

1. The board, leadership and faculty must continue to complete its goals from the Initial Visit recommendations by 2024.

2. The board provides the needed training and opportunities to the school leadership to learn and implement international standards across the school.
3. The Dormitory staff insure the continual safety of the students through regular emergency drills.
4. The Leadership Team ensures the adequate supervision meeting international standards of the dormitory students at all times.
5. The dormitory staff and faculty must provide dorm students with opportunities to participate in activities which provide for the opportunity for more student agency to develop responsibility.
6. The dormitory staff must provide a more prescriptive, thoroughly documenting the program for the students and families in its handbook.

- **Identify any new areas of concerns, if applicable.**

1. There have recently been many changes to the board and the senior leadership of the school. Consistency in leadership is a basic organization characteristic which promotes continual improvement. The Board should find mechanisms which promote stability which will increase the speed and effectiveness of the school for its students.