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A Jesuit Secondary School



Exploration Exercise on Adopting DSS
Round 2 Consultation Report – Survey Findings

Commissioned by the Jesuit Education Board

January 2018

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Chapter 1 Backgrounds

JEB members had gone through discernment in two meetings held in mid-September 2017, and decided WYHK should move forward to round two of the DSS consultation, which consisted of the following procedures:

- 1) Release of
 - a. The Interim Consultation Report and
 - b. The revised WYHK DSS proposal
- 2) Arrangements for Feedback / Consultation Sessions with stakeholders
- 3) Collection of Stakeholders' views subsequent to 1) and 2)

The aforesaid documents, i.e. The Interim Consultation Report and The Revised WYHK DSS Proposal, were uploaded onto the school website on 12th October, 2017 with official commencement of round 2 of DSS consultation. In addition to the public announcement on the school website, the school also posted an advertisement regarding the consultation on three major newspapers on 20th October, 2017, including Sing Tao Daily, Ming Pao and South China Morning Post.

After that, WYHK organized 4 open consultation sessions (for alumni and parents/guardians of WYHK and PUAWYPS) and 2 private consultation meetings (for WYHK staff and PUAWYPS teachers) between 3rd November, 2017 and 13th November, 2017.

Subsequent to the consultation sessions, WYHK drafted the questions of the stakeholder survey. Those questions were designed based on feedbacks received from round one consultation. The majority of the stakeholder groups surveyed during round one consultation sessions agreed that WYHK ought to address all the 3 key challenges stated in the consultation document. The survey this time is thus focused on whether the revised DSS proposal can indeed address those challenges. These form the first set of common questions.

As different stakeholder groups have their particular concerns, some stakeholder groups are asked question(s) that are of particular interest to them only.

Finally, we are interested in the level of overall support for the proposal so two questions on stakeholders' overall views were asked and they form the second set of common questions. There were strong requests from some stakeholders of different

stakeholder groups that the overall support for the DSS should be gauged by way of a vote so that stakeholders would provide unambiguous views on whether they support or oppose the DSS proposal. While JEB sees the survey as in essence a collection of views and not a vote, we nonetheless tried to design the last two survey questions on overall stakeholders' support in such a way so that respondents need to clearly indicate whether they support or not support the proposal. This explains why for these two questions, a 3-point scale instead of a 5-point scale was adopted.

All questions were vetted by Dr. Rachael SUEN, an academic with ample experience in social research from the field of education at The University of Hong Kong.

The entire stakeholder survey (save the one for PUDA and the online survey for WYHK alumni of Overseas Chapters) was administered by the independent auditing firm HUI CHI CHUEN & CO. CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS (許志全會計師事務所) with further monitoring by an independent professional accountant from AC WONDERLAND LIMITED (會計天地有限公司). To avoid concerns about conflict of interest, the staff of the school only provided logistics support and was not involved in the administration of the actual survey. We tried to ensure the rigor of the process which is important in helping to resolve an issue as potentially controversial as DSS.

The stakeholder survey was held from 9th December, 2017 to 11th December, 2017 (for alumni and parents of WYHK/ PUAWYPS), as well as on 12th December, 2017 (for WYHK staff and PUAWYPS teachers). Stakeholders had to come in person so that their identities and eligibilities can be unambiguously verified while anonymity (both real and perceived) can be maintained¹.

Besides the above surveys organized by the independent auditor, WYHK also designed and sent a survey to Pun U District Association (PUDA) in order to obtain the collective official view of its Board of Directors.

As WYHK alumni overseas would also like to express their views on this important issue, the school also administered an online survey for alumni in Overseas Chapters. However, given the difficulty with ascertaining whether survey participants are genuine WYHK alumni, we enlisted the help of Overseas Chapters to help verify identities of

¹ There had been suggestions that the survey of parents could be done without them coming to the school as students could help bring the questionnaire home and back. This would increase response rate. However, there is a tradeoff between response rate and validity. For example, the form would need to pass through different persons in the process. Also, loss of anonymity, even if more perceived than real, would open the survey result to serious challenge.

participants. As such, the surveys cannot be made anonymous. Thus survey results of this group are reported separately.

Please find in Appendix 1 a timeline of events and Appendix 2 the report by the independent auditor.

Chapter 2 Findings from the Final Stakeholders' Survey

2.1 WYHK Alumni

Nearly 500 turned up in person for the survey in Hong Kong. About another 100 participated in the online survey for alumni overseas, with about 80 whose identities could be verified by Overseas Chapters.

Please refer to Appendices 3 and 4 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

Based on the survey in Hong Kong, the **majority** indicated **support** that the DSS proposal can enable WYHK to admit more students from less well-off families:

- 44.8% (A+SA) vs. 41.3% (D+SD), [13.9% (N/NC)].

(Where A=Agree; SA=Strongly Agree; D=Disagree; SD=Strongly Disagree; N/NC=Neutral or No Comment)

The **overwhelming majority** of Overseas Chapter alumni (counting only those with identities verified) also **support** this statement:

-62.0% (A+SA) vs. 15.2% (D+SD); [22.8% (N/NC)]

The **overwhelming majority** of alumni **support** that the DSS proposal can tackle the other two key challenges:

Alumni surveyed in person in Hong Kong:

-70.6% (A+SA) vs. 21.0% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [8.4% (N/NC)];

-70.6% (A+SA) vs. 21.1% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [8.4% (N/NC)].

Overseas Chapter alumni surveyed online (counting only those with identities verified):

-83.6% (A+SA) vs. 10.1% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [6.3% (N/NC)];

-84.8% (A+SA) vs. 10.2% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [5.1% (N/NC)].

Overall opinion

Overall, WYHK alumni **overwhelmingly support** the DSS proposal as a more effective means to address challenges and opportunities faced by the school and that the school should adopt it:

Alumni surveyed in person in Hong Kong:

-62.7% (A) vs. 26.8% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [10.5% (N/NC)];

-61.1% (A) vs. 32.3% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [6.5% (N/NC)].

Overseas Chapter alumni surveyed online (counting only those with identities verified):

-75.9% (A) vs. 11.4% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [12.7% (N/NC)];

- 70.9% (A) vs. 15.2% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [13.9% (N/NC)].

2.2 WYHK Parents/Guardians

87 WYHK parents/guardians participated in the survey in person.

Please refer to Appendix 5 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

WYHK parents/guardians surveyed showed **overwhelming support** that the DSS proposal can tackle the three key challenges noted in the DSS exploration:

-51.7% (A+SA) vs. 20.7% (D+SD) regarding admitting more students from less well-off families, [27.6% (N/NC)];

-90.6% (A+SA) vs. 5.7% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [3.4% (N/NC)];

-88.4% (A+SA) vs. 3.5% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [8.1% (N/NC)].

Overall opinion

Both questions also enjoyed **overwhelming support** from parents/guardians:

-82.8% (A) vs. 5.7% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [11.5% (N/NC)];

-83.9% (A) vs. 9.2% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [6.9% (N/NC)].

2.3 WYHK Teachers

58 WYHK teachers participated in the survey in person. The Principal did not take part in the survey.

Please refer to Appendix 6 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

The **majority** of WYHK teachers surveyed indicated that they **did not agree** that the DSS proposal could enable the school to admit more students from less well-off families:

-31.1% (A+SA) vs. 48.2% (D+SD) , [20.7% (N/NC)]

The **overwhelming majority agreed** that the DSS proposal could enhance intake quality:

-62.1% (A+SA) vs. 20.1% (D+SD), [17.2% (N/NC)]

The **majority agreed** that the DSS proposal could increase resources for learning and teaching:

-48.2% (A+SA) vs. 31.1% (D+SD), [20.7% (N/NC)]

On composition of the Appeals Committee

An **overwhelming majority** favored the **5-member composition**² as indicated in the revised DSS proposal:

-24.1% supported the 3-member composition as indicated in the revised DSS proposal;

-72.2% supported the 5-member composition as indicated in the revised DSS proposal;

-3.7% supporting neither of the two proposed compositions.

² The proposed 5-member Committee consists of 1. The School Supervisor, 2. An academic from the Faculty of Education of a local University OR a retired senior official of EDB, 3. A member of the JEB OR a Jesuit Father, 4. An alumnus who is a lawyer or a judge; 5. A teacher representative as defined in the revised DSS proposal OR the Legco member elected from the Education Constituency OR a person nominated by the Professional Teachers' Union.

Overall opinion

On the question of whether the proposal was more effective in addressing challenges and opportunities, as compared to remaining in the aided mode, a **slight majority agreed**:

-37.9% (A) vs. 34.5% (D), [27.6% (N/NC)]

On whether the school should adopt the DSS proposal, the opinion was **split exactly** between agreement and disagreement:

-43.1% (A) vs. 43.1% (D), [13.8% (N/NC)]

2.4 WYHK Non-teaching staff

19 WYHK non-teaching staff participated in the survey in person.

Please refer to Appendix 7 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

WYHK non-teaching staff surveyed indicated **support** that the DSS proposal can tackle the three key challenges noted in the DSS exploration (the **support** is **overwhelming** for the **second and third challenges**):

- 36.9% (A+SA) vs. 26.4% (D+SD) regarding admitting more students from less well-off families, [36.8% (N/NC)];
- 73.7% (A+SA) vs. 10.5% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [15.8% (N/NC)];
- 63.2% (A+SA) vs. 15.8% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [21.1% (N/NC)].

Overall opinion

Both questions also enjoyed **overwhelming support** from non-teaching staff of WYHK:

- 73.7% (A) vs. 21.1% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [5.3% (N/NC)];
- 57.9% (A) vs. 21.1% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [21.1% (N/NC)].

2.5 PUWY Alumni

139³ (valid counts) PUWY alumni participated in the survey in person.

Please refer to Appendix 8 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

A **slight majority supported** that the proposal could enable the school to admit more students from less well-off families:

-44.6% (A+SA) vs. 41.8% (D+SD), [13.7% (N/NC)]

An **overwhelming majority supported** that the proposal could tackle the other two key challenges:

-74.8% (A+SA) vs. 18.0% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [7.2% (N/NC)];

-71.2% (A+SA) vs. 23.0% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [5.8% (N/NC)].

Impact on development of PUWY

On whether the WYHK DSS proposal will be more beneficial to PUWY than if WYHK stays in the aided system while having to adopt other means to address its challenges, a **majority** indicated their **agreement**:

-52.5% (A+SA) vs. 30.2% (D+SD) , [17.3% (N/NC)]

Overall opinion

Both questions also enjoyed **overwhelming support** from PUWY alumni:

-66.2% (A) vs. 28.8% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [5.0% (N/NC)];

-66.9% (A) vs. 28.8% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [4.3% (N/NC)].

³ The on-site valid count was only 136 as eligibility of a few participants could not be verified on-site. The eligibility of three of these participants was subsequently verified, thus increasing the valid count to 139.

2.6 PUWY Parents/Guardians

138 (valid counts) PUWY parents/guardians participated in the survey in person.

Please refer to Appendix 9 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

An **overwhelming majority disagreed** that the proposal could enable the school to admit more students from less well-off families:

-16.7% (A+SA) vs. 74.7% (D+SD), [8.7% (N/NC)]

The **majority supported** that the proposal could tackle the other two key challenges:

-47.1% (A+SA) vs. 38.4% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [14.5% (N/NC)];

-52.2% (A+SA) vs. 33.3% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [14.5% (N/NC)].

Impact on the chance of their sons being admitted to WYHK

An **overwhelming majority agreed** that the transitional arrangements in the proposal will ensure that their sons' chances of being admitted to WYHK will **NOT be negatively affected**:

-60.9% (A+SA) vs. 26.0% (D+SD), [13.0% (N/NC)]

Impact on development of PUWY

On whether the WYHK DSS proposal will be more beneficial to PUWY than if WYHK stays in the aided system while having to adopt other means to address its challenges, the **majority** indicated their **disagreement**:

-28.2% (A+SA) vs. 47.8% (D+SD), [23.9% (N/NC)]

Overall opinion

The **majority** surveyed **disagreed** with both statements:

-37.0% (A) vs. 44.9% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [18.1% (N/NC)];

-35.5% (A) vs. 51.4% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [13.0% (N/NC)].

2.7 PUWY Teachers

41 PUWY teachers participated in the survey in person.

Please refer to Appendix 10 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

On all three issues, the **overwhelming majority disagreed** that the proposal would be effective to tackle them:

-4.9% (A+SA) vs. 92.7% (D+SD) regarding admitting more students from less well-off families, [2.4% (N/NC)];

-2.4% (A+SA) vs. 80.5% (D+SD) regarding enhancing intake quality, [17.1% (N/NC)];

-2.4% (A+SA) vs. 85.3% (D+SD) regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching, [12.2% (N/NC)].

Impact on development of PUWY

On whether the WYHK DSS proposal will be more beneficial to PUWY than if WYHK stays in the aided system while having to adopt other means to address its challenges, an **overwhelming majority** indicated their **disagreement**:

-2.4% (A+SA) vs. 92.7% (D+SD), [4.9% (N/NC)]

Overall opinion

The **overwhelming majority** surveyed showed **disagreement** with both statements:

-0% (A) vs. 92.7% (D) regarding effectiveness of the DSS proposal in addressing challenges and opportunities, [7.3% (N/NC)];

-2.4% (A) vs. 95.1% (D) regarding adopting the DSS proposal by WYHK, [2.4% (N/NC)].

2.8 PUDA

The Board of Directors of the Pun U District Association in Hong Kong (PUDA) also deliberated on their response to a survey sent to them around the time when the survey of other stakeholder groups and provided their official collective views.

Please refer to Appendix 11 for details of the survey results.

On the three key challenges

PUDA either agreed or strongly agreed that the proposal could tackle these challenges:

- Agreement** regarding admitting more students from less well-off families;
- Strong Agreement** regarding enhancing intake quality;
- Agreement** regarding increasing resources for learning and teaching.

Impact on development of PUWY

On whether the WYHK DSS proposal will be more beneficial to PUWY than if WYHK stays in the aided system while having to consider other means to address its challenges, PUDA also indicated their **agreement**.

Impact on PUWY's P.1 enrolment

PUDA indicated their **agreement** that the DSS proposal may cause PUWY to have insufficient enrolment.

Overall opinion

PUDA indicated their **agreement** with both statements:

- that the DSS proposal is more effective in addressing challenges and opportunities than if WYHK stays in the aided system;
- that PUDA supports WYHK to adopt the DSS proposal.

2.9 Open-ended Questions

All answers to the open-ended question were classified and grouped under the following categories.

| |
|--|
| 1. Rationale for turning DSS |
| a. Vision |
| b. Learner Diversity and EMI Status |
| c. Resources |
| d. Other concerns |
| 2. Key features of the proposed DSS model |
| a. School fee and fee remission |
| b. Admission policy |
| c. Learning & teaching and student development |
| d. Financial model |
| e. Other concerns and suggestions |
| 3. PUAWYPS – quota and relationship |
| 4. Others |

Most comments received had been raised during Round One of the consultation and responded to in the Interim Consultation Report released in October, 2017. While many of these comments can be addressed through clarifications with stakeholders, some do prompt actions that the school might take if it does make an application for DSS. They include:

- (a) Explaining more clearly on how it would attract and recruit more students from less well-off families;
- (b) Elaborating further on how learning and teaching will be enhanced under DSS;
- (c) Endeavoring to improve communication and cooperation with PUAWYPS through a review of the current mechanism for various operational level communications;
- (d) Considering a few concrete suggestions regarding HR policies at WYHK.

2.10 Comparison of summary opinions among different stakeholder groups on the 5 common questions

Summary table on responses to the five common questions

| Stakeholder Group | Valid counts | Admitting poorer students ⁴ | Intake quality ⁴ | Resources for L&T ⁴ | Proposal as effective ⁴ | Adoption of DSS proposal by WYHK ⁴ |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| WYHK Alumni (in person) | 489 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| WYHK Alumni (online) | 79 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| WYHK Parents/ Guardians | 87 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| WYHK Teachers ⁵ | 58 | N | Y | Y | Y | <i>Exact split⁵</i> |
| WYHK Non-teachers | 19 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| PUWY Alumni | 139 ⁶ | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| PUWY Parents/ Guardians | 138 | N | Y | Y | N | N |
| PUWY Teachers | 41 | N | N | N | N | N |
| PUDA | N/A ⁷ | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |

Y = the majority either agree or strongly agree

N= the majority either disagree or strongly disagree

⁴ These headings are abbreviations. Please refer to the original question for the precise questions.

⁵ The Principal did not take part in the survey.

⁶ Valid counts on-sight was only 136 as eligibility of some participants could only be verified after the official count.

⁷ This was a collective view of the Board after deliberation among Board members.

Chapter 3 Discussion

3.1 Stakeholders at WYHK

From the survey, it is found that stakeholders at WYHK (WYHK alumni, parents/guardians, teachers and non-teaching staff) have come more or less to a consensus on supporting the key provisions of the DSS proposal, except for the fact that teachers are still skeptical about one point – whether the proposal can admit more students from less well-off families. Also, apart from those who are neutral/ have no comment, other teachers are split exactly down the middle on whether to support or oppose the school to adopt the DSS proposal. A slight majority of teachers do agree that the DSS proposal is more effective than if the school stays in the aided mode in addressing challenges and opportunities.

3.2 Stakeholders at PUWY

The picture among PUWY alumni, parents/guardians and teachers is more diversified.

The proposal enjoys support (some overwhelmingly so) from PUWY alumni for key aspects of the proposal. However, the picture is different for other stakeholders at PUWY.

PUWY parents/guardians have mixed feelings about it. While agreeing that the proposal can enhance intake quality as well as increase resources for learning and teaching, they disagree that the proposal can enable the school to admit more students from less well-off families. Overall, they object to WYHK to adopt the proposal. However, it is important to note that on the question which has actual direct impact on them – whether the proposal will affect their sons' chances of being admitted to WYHK – an overwhelming majority considered that they will not be adversely affected. It is also interesting to note that in the open-ended question, no parent/guardian indicated concern about the need to pay school fees.

PUWY teachers responded overwhelmingly in the negative to all survey questions. These include even the question on whether the DSS proposal can increase resources for the school, and such an answer seems to contradict their implicit agreement that the

DSS proposal can indeed increase resources⁸. The uniformity of views expressed by PUWY teachers is unusual in normal surveys and it is interesting to consider the relationship between such a survey result and the fact that a joint open letter has been signed by the principal and all teachers. The open letter has set out the key reasons for their objections including: a) Lack of details on how learning and teaching will be enhanced under DSS, b) Lack of strategies to recruit students from less well-off families, c) Risk of losing the EMI status overblown. Actually, these objections have been addressed to a large extent in the Interim Consultation Report released in October, 2017. However, further elaborations to address these concerns will be made if the JEB do decide that the school should make the DSS application.

3.3 PUDA

The collective view of the Board of Directors of the PUDA shows a more positive picture for nearly all the questions asked, including on three key questions – the impact of the proposal on the long term development of PUWY and WYHK and whether they agree that WYHK should adopt it. The only reservation is on the question of whether the new quota of “55+25” will cause PUWY to have insufficient enrolment. However, given (a) that PUWY will be the only primary school in North Point with a significant quota (that covers 46% to 67% of its P.6 graduates) for F.1 places at a grant school in Hong Kong and (b) the quality of education provided by PUWY (as confirmed by the confidence shown in the open letter of December 2017 by all teachers and the principal), this worry can be addressed.

It is worthwhile to consider how the collective view expressed by the Board of PUDA should be positioned alongside views of other stakeholders at PUWY. The School Sponsoring Body (SSB) of any school is the party that will have primary and overall responsibility for the school, including for all of its different stakeholders, on a permanent basis. The same cannot be said of other stakeholders who may be affected by the school in certain aspects and/or during certain periods in time.

3.4 If we do go DSS...

If WYHK does adopt the DSS proposal, then based on our analysis of qualitative feedbacks during the consultation period and comments to the Open-ended Question, it is advisable that the school:

⁸ Quoted from p.5 of their joint letter shared with all parents and alumni: 「...總括來說，我們只贊成港華在無法透過其他方法增加財政收入的情況下，透過轉制直接收取學費...」.

- (a) Explain more clearly how it would attract and recruit more students from less well-off families.
- (b) Elaborate further on how learning and teaching will be enhanced under DSS;
- (c) Endeavor to improve communication and cooperation with PUAWYPS through a review of the current mechanism for various operational level communications;
- (d) Consider concrete suggestions expressed under the open-ended question regarding some HR policies at WYHK.

Chapter 4 Conclusion

With the formal stakeholders' survey done after two rounds of consultation, the DSS exploration which spans over two and a half years is now in its last phase. While there had been heated arguments, seemingly unbridgeable divergence of views, rows occasionally being made public, and even some actions or words which may seem to be excessive at times, we believe that this is just part of a process of open-minded and in-depth exploration.

With extraordinary transparency, attention not just to broad principles but also to meticulous details of actual context, numerous opportunities for communication and debate, and ample time for consideration, culminating in a rigorous stakeholders' survey, it is hoped that stakeholders regardless of views will see the whole process as a journey from mere impression to genuine understanding, conflict to compromise, narrow interest to collective good, and divergence to unity. Having gone through the issues thoroughly and taking into consideration views of different stakeholders, we now come to a point when we need to find an optimal solution that balances different concerns and aspirations. Once this is done, all in the Wah Yan community can then cast our differences along with the uncertainties aside and move forward together to continue furthering the Jesuit vision for education at WYHK, serving young men in Hong Kong in the best way possible.