

CDNIS Students and Alumni Send Open Letters to EDB, IBO, Ontario Ministry of Education, the Canadian Consulate and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce

Calls for Apology and External Investigations into School Governance and Administration

Hong Kong - 26 June: Today, an independent group of students and alumni of the Canadian International School of Hong Kong (CDNIS) published 10 open letters expressing grave concerns regarding the School's current administrative and governance issues.

Addressed to the Education Bureau (EDB), International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), Ontario Ministry of Education, Consulate General of Canada in Hong Kong and Macau, and Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, the letters call for a public apology from the School to the CDNIS community for the poor handling of the dismissals of nine teachers and one staff member on 11 June 2015.

The cover letter, written by the newly graduated Class of 2015, comments on the damaging manner in which the terminations were conducted on 11 June:

"The sudden news of staff terminations, the overt issuance of these notices, and the subsequent visible presence of security guards caused notable distress among the student body. Students and teachers were in tears; it was a scene that was completely unprecedented in its emotional impact."

The 10 letters published were each written by groups of concerned students and alumni from 10 classes. In light of CDNIS's inability to uphold the pedagogical values mandated by the EDB, and the educational systems which authorize CDNIS to grant IB Diploma and Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) - the IBO and the Ontario Ministry of Education - these letters argue that thorough external investigations into the School's governance and administrative issues must be conducted in order to rebuild the school community.

As an example, the letters argue that the values of the IBO have not been upheld in recent administrative behaviour, as demonstrated below:

"Given that leadership includes the promulgation and exemplification of the IB Learner Profile, we cannot help but question the extent to which our current governing body is able to uphold these principles, particularly given the severe lack of transparency that has accompanied many of its central decisions over the past academic year."

The letters also draw attention to the potential decline of educational quality starting from the next academic year as a result of the lack of administrative transparency, fragmentation of the school community, and the rapid deterioration of stakeholder morale, and further question the validity of the current leadership.

The letters follow numerous troubling events in the Wong Chuk Hang school during the 2014-2015 academic year, including the controversial appointment of the new Head of School, Dr. Gregg Maloberti, the dismissal and resignation of two Lower School principals in March respectively, and most recently the terminations of nine teachers and one staff member.

In conclusion, the letters call for the external organizations' help in restoring CDNIS to a path of stability and unity through realignment with the values of respect and discourse.