



# HEADLINES

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## Measuring Up

Schools like Somersfield don't operate in a vacuum. We continuously monitor our progress against a number of benchmarks in academics (CATs, PSATs, etc.); and school performance against standards of accreditation (CAIS and IB). One interesting window on how we go about our business is the annual CAIS school benchmarking report. Each fall, we submit data about the previous year in all aspects of operations (tuition levels, teacher salaries, administration costs, class sizes, etc.) In return, we receive a full report that outlines where we stand in relation to comparative schools of similar size and composition.

The full report will be posted on the Blackboard next week, but here are a few highlights:

Our operating costs per student are slightly above the median. This is mostly driven by teaching costs which at 51% of our operating costs are around the 85th percentile in comparable schools. In contrast, our administration costs (8%) are at about the 15th



A smile is worth more than any statistic!

percentile. Our student-teacher ratio (9.6 to 1) is at the median as is our student-administration ratio (68 to 1).

We spend more on professional development for our staff (not surprising in Bermuda) than 85% of the schools studied; and our IT costs are at the 85th percentile as well.

With regard to fundraising, we spend less on advancement than 85% of the other schools but managed last year to raise more than 75% of them! This has been due in no small part to the generosity of our corporate sponsors and a number of key parents and staff.

This year, as most people are aware, we face greater challenges as many corporate donors are focusing shrinking resources on

the needs of the greater community rather than on independent schools.

For the last number of years, we have had about 8-10% of families contribute to Annual Giving. This compares to an average participation rate of over 52% in most independent schools.

This is an area where we clearly need your help as we face greater and greater costs for teacher salaries, resources, and technology; and greater demands for bursaries and scholarships to keep the school accessible to as large of pool of deserving students as possible.

I am very proud of how the faculty and staff have managed Somersfield's resources. Even with the higher cost of doing business in Bermuda, they have consistently held expenses down while continuing to provide a first class education in a world class facility.

Please take some time next week to peruse the whole report—while a bit dry, it is an interesting window on where your fees and donations go.

*Jim*

### Upcoming Events

#### Extracurricular Programme begins

January 9th

#### MYP Exam Week

January 16-20

#### MYP Music Concert

January 20th

#### MYP Curriculum Night

January 24th

#### UN Biodiversity Day

February 28th