

This letter is to inform you of the outcome of Daniel Bastian's and my (Philip Spottswood) trip to Astana on April 10th and 11th. We look forward to discussing with you these events in detail at our meeting on April 21st, 2008 at Almaty International School.

****THURSDAY* 10 April 2008***

1. We begin our day with a lunch meeting with a member of the President's staff who had worked previously in the Ministry of Education. After listening to us describe how uncertain our "licensing" status was as international schools, he called his former colleagues at the Ministry of Education and helped us set up a 6 PM meeting with the R of K Vice Minister of Education, Mrs. Kulyash Shamshidinova, who is responsible for K-12 Education. She and her colleague, Mr. Nurali Arshabekov, Director of the Dept. of Development Strategies, and two other assistants listened to our presentation. We told them that we were there representing all of us, and that we wanted their counsel on how we could work with the Ministry of Education and the Ambassadors of the United States (and those he could get him to join us in this effort) to develop a transparent procedure to license international schools.

She listened to our presentation and made the following remarks:

1. The Republic of Kazakhstan does not issue "International" licenses;
2. She did not handle K-12 education issues;
3. Licensing of any schools was done at the regional "Akimat" level, not at the national level; and
4. Mr. Arshabekov mentioned that the matter would be "moot" in several months as they were introducing new legislation which, when adopted, would solve the problems we had been discussing and also the issues relating to the arrival of Halleybury to Kazakhstan;
5. She invited schools to submit their curriculums for an analysis and review to verify that the requirements set forth by the constitution of the R of K were met.
6. She will consult her colleagues at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding possible intergovernmental agreements.
7. She wanted to make certain that we would not harbor any religious groups through this initiative.
8. She did not understand why we were there, as the last school who wanted an international license, a TCO school in Atryau, got their paperwork in order and were given a license to operate by the Ministry.

It should be noted however, that this school does not have any Kazakhstani national students.

After more discussion, she invited us to get our paperwork in order and then present it to the appropriate official in her department. We left the meeting very confused, but thankful for her invitation to continue working with the appropriate officials from her department.

We then went to visit another woman in the Ministry of Education who was responsible for the licensing of schools. We asked her to give us the information regarding which documents were required to be produced that, when produced and checked, would allow our different schools to get licensed as international schools. She promised to help us get this information.

****FRIDAY* 11 April 2008:***

1. On Friday we met at 10:00 to discuss our 11:00 presentation to Mr. John Ordway, US Ambassador to Kazakhstan. We then went to the US Embassy and met with Mr. Ordway and key members of his staff including Mr. Milas, the Deputy Chair of Mission, Mr. Ms. Sarah Penhune, General Services Officer, Mr. Paul Gilmer, Management Counselor. After presenting the results of our prior days meetings, Mr. Ordway again expressed his strong support for our continuing effort to get licensed as international schools in Kazakhstan. He asked us to finish the work of becoming an

association, and in that regard, would help us by calling a meeting of all of the international schools in Kazakhstan at which we would discuss how best to proceed as an organization. He indicated that he wanted to find out what the new legislation being proposed by the Ministry of Education looks like. He expects us to put together a concrete plan as to what we want to achieve and he then assured us he would work with us as an association to get Ambassadorial support for a process that would allow all of us to get licensed as international schools. He encouraged several of his staff to work with us on various issues as we continued pursuing this goal. He reminded us that it was Mr. Benjamin Franklin who had warned readers, "/*to hang together, or surely be hung eparately*/". We left encouraged by Mr. Ordway's commitment to do whatever he could to help us realize our goal.

2. We also met Mr. Kirlan, a lawyer recommended to us by Mr. Islam Jusef, a parent of one of our children (at KIS) who also introduced us to the gentleman from the President's Office who opened up the door for us to meet with the Vice Minister. He was introduced to us as a man of impeccable credentials and honest beyond reproach. He had previously worked in the Attorney General's Office and was now working in the Justice Dept. We discussed the possibility of him becoming the Attorney, and possibly the Executive Director, of the *_*Association of International Schools in Kazakhstan*_* (AISK). Although he was interested, he replied he would have to think about it. We said that we would go back to the rest of you and present his credentials and discuss with you the possibility of him working with us to solve any problems related to our getting licenses as international schools.

****SATURDAY* 12 April 2008:***

Mr. Bastien had gone home to Almaty Friday evening. I stayed in town one more day for a meeting with Mr. Jusef and his colleague, Mr. Kirlan. We left at 6:30 AM for a trip to the mountains and a visit with one of their friends who showed us around the "little Switzerland" of Kazakhstan. During our trip we had an opportunity to enjoy a 3 hour traditional Kazakh meal of horse meat and other delicacies known as "bisparmach", or "five fingers". Sitting on the floor on pillows, we ate horse meat, large flat noodles in the sauce that the meat was cooked in, and drank in the mixed tradition of the Kazakh "russified" feast. This trip and meal solidified my/our relationship with Mr. Jusef and his colleague and was the punctuation to a good series of meetings to move our agenda forward.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL DIRECTORS BASED ON THESE MEETINGS:

1. Formalize the agreement, ratified so far by the five (5) international schools in Almaty, to form an association with legal status to work on the issue of licensing and to provide a framework to resolve other issues as we continue to provide international education in Kazakhstan: (According to our school's attorney, this would require the following: the registration of an "association" in the Republic of Kazakhstan requires that a lawyer be retained to prepare the following documents:

1. Charter;
2. Resolution of the Directors (Founders);
3. Minutes of the meeting. The Charter should be registered at the Department of Justice.

The cost is approximately 60,000 tenge + taxes

2. Invite all international schools (those who teach in a non-national language) using a non-national curriculum to join us as members of this new organization;

3. Elect officers of this new association; and
4. decide whether we want to retain an attorney to work with us in this process.

We, Mr. Dan Bastien and Phil Spottswood, look forward to discussing the details of our meetings and discuss the process that we should pursue as a group as we go forward.

Sincerely,

Philip J. Spottswood, Ph.D.
Director, K.I.S.

Daniel C. Bastien
Director, A.I.S.