

# **STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PLAN 2010 - 2015**

## **“TAKING UNIS HANOI FROM GOOD TO GREAT”**

**Approved by the Board of Directors  
11<sup>th</sup> May, 2010**

## Introduction

The notion of moving from good to *great* is taken from the organizational development literature and refers to the institutional attitude of *continuous improvement*. In this context, the United Nations International School of Hanoi (UNIS Hanoi) is widely viewed as a good school and the Board of Directors wants to make UNIS Hanoi a great school. This document provides an overview for the UNIS Hanoi community of the new Strategic Management Plan 2010 – 2015 for UNIS Hanoi to become a great school. Initiated and developed by the Board of Directors with the Head of School and Senior Management Team in consultation with faculty, parents and students, this strategy aims to deliver and achieve distinctive impact on our mission. During this school year, the board, through its Strategy Task Force, has conducted extensive analysis and consultation and now recommits to the UNIS Hanoi mission and United Nations (UN) principles as a driving force for this schools future.

### UNIS HANOI Mission

**To encourage students to be independent, lifelong learners who strive for excellence and become responsible stewards of our global society and natural environment achieved within a supportive community, that values diversity and through a program reflecting the ideals and principles of the United Nations.**

#### UN Principles:

- **Promote peaceful solutions to problems**
- **Develop friendly relations among children and adults of different nationalities**
- **Promote cooperation in problem solving in economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian matters**
- **Encourage respect for fundamental freedoms and equality for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion**

## About UNIS Hanoi

Since UNIS Hanoi was founded in 1988 by the United Nations Development Programme, the school has grown from 20 to over 900 students and achieved many benchmarks of a well established international school. Fifty-eight nationalities make up a diverse student body from early childhood to grade 12. The school has been accredited by CIS/NEASC since 1999 and just received re-accreditation in February 2010. It is also a member of the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS) and affiliated with the Mekong River International Schools Association (MRISA).

In September 2004 the school moved to a purpose-built, state-of-the-art campus in the Tay Ho District. The 9.2 hectare site is located within a new international community development, six kilometres north of the centre of Hanoi. Its spacious grounds and quiet environment offer an inviting learning environment and top quality facilities. The board approved the construction of the arts centre and an indoor multi-purpose sports centre which should be ready for the start of the 2011-12 school year, and approved expansion of teaching space for approximately 150 additional students by adding a fourth form from grade 3 upwards on a gradual basis beginning in school year 2010-2011.

UNIS Hanoi is one of only two UN schools in the world (the other school is in New York City), establishing a distinctive role for UNIS Hanoi among international schools to attract the best teachers and administrators and create an innovative learning experience. With this historic perspective, UNIS Hanoi is uniquely positioned to implement a strategy that takes the school to a higher level of performance.

Annex A provides more information and background about UNIS Hanoi.

### **Introduction to the Strategic Planning Process May 2010**

The UNIS Hanoi Strategic Management Plan 2010-2015 is the culmination of several years of work, and a process which began in October 2007, initiated by the Board of Directors to produce a strategic plan by the summer of 2008. It began with one Head of School and Board Chair and was carried over to the current Head of School and Board Chair along with three members of the initial team, into the present task force. Prior to October 2007 there had been no strategic plan in place although there had been an 'Action Plan' designed by the board and the administration (named Strategic Plan 2004).

### **Initial Planning/First Strategic Plan (2008-12)**

In October 2007, a facilitator was appointed and a planning team headed by two co-chairs and 15 additional members representing a cross-section of the school; (board members, senior administrators, faculty, and parents; students were also consulted) met for two 2-day weekend workshops. Following discussion and revision, a final report, (which included implementation examples), was presented to the Board of Directors at its meeting in May and approved by the board in June 2008.

Significantly, the board recognized the importance of retaining the mission statement and the role of the UN as the founding organization, along with the benefits and responsibilities of this relationship with the UN. By design, this strategic plan was meant to complement and support further planning, including those of self-evaluation, accreditation, and continuous improvement. The overall strategy addressed 13 focused goal areas, each with a set of policy goals and supporting rationale, and reflected a great amount of work and value, but was far too broad for the board and senior management team to effectively manage. The challenge for the current board and administration was to update this strategy to be more focused (e.g. 3 strategic goals), measurable, actionable, and useful for strategically managing the school into the future.

### **Updated Strategic Management Plan (2010-15)**

During the school board retreat in August 2009, the board worked on updating the strategy for UNIS Hanoi, with the aim of proactively guiding the school's future development from its current position to a new future defined with a clearer set of goals and objectives and measurable indicators. The plan was to incorporate relevant issues from the on-going accreditation process (which included the self-study) which identified areas for improvement in the school, and corporate strategy methods that result in a practical, actionable strategy for the board and Senior Management Team to manage UNIS Hanoi over the next 3 to 5 years. The design of this comprehensive strategy would include goals, objectives, strategies/tactics, and measurable performance indicators to guide the oversight role of the board and the operational management of the school by the Head of School and Senior Management Team. The development of the strategy was to be undertaken in close cooperation with the Senior Management Team as ultimately responsible for implementing much of the strategy through annual action plans approved by the board.

A Strategy Task Force was appointed to work from September 2009 with the aim of obtaining board approval of a Strategic Management Plan prior to the May 2010 Annual General Meeting. This task force was made up of administrators, faculty, board members, parents and a community member (total 10 persons). The terms of reference focused on an outcome that was to be results-focused, information-based, realistic, ongoing and flexible, the driver of action and operations, and measurable.

Much credit is to be given to Jim Collin's, author of Good to Great, specifically in relation to his book Social Organisations: "Greatness is not primarily a function of circumstance; but largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline." According to Jim Collins:

“Strategic Management is a continuous process by which a great organization is one that makes a distinctive impact and delivers superior performance over a long period of time in relation to the organisation’s mission. Adherence to core values combined with a willingness to challenge and change everything except those core values—keeping clear the distinction between “what we stand for” (which should never change) and “how we do things” (which should never stop changing)... The results should be superior performance, relative to the mission, making a distinctive impact on the community we serve, and the achievement of lasting endurance beyond any leader, idea or setback.”

The draft strategy has been discussed with stakeholder groups, including students, faculty and parents, to build broader consensus. The board and task force was given valuable input from the Community Open Forum held on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the feedback from which is incorporated into the present strategy.

The board will review the strategy periodically and continuously update it based on changes in the environment and the school, to ensure the strategy is relevant and an effective management tool over time. The board will continue to play a strategic oversight role and empower the Head and Senior Management Team to manage the school and execute this strategy. This partnership between board and Head is critical to effective governance to deliver on the school’s mission for a school that is changing through turnover of parents, students and faculty, yet dynamic in innovation and constant in our core values to achieve our mission.

### **From Good to Great**

Our strategy for UNIS Hanoi should focus on three strategic outputs, according to Collins, for UNIS Hanoi to achieve “great” status. The school:

1. **Delivers Superior Performance:** The school delivers on the mission to prepare our students for a complex world. This is no easy task. The education of our students today is the best promise on a better future world inspired by innovation and leadership values inculcated in our students as they learn within this complex world, reflected in a diverse UNIS Hanoi community and the opportunities afforded within our community, Vietnam, Southeast Asia and the world.
2. **Makes a Distinctive Impact:** UNIS Hanoi makes such a unique contribution to the people and communities it touches, and does its work with such unadulterated excellence that if it were to disappear, it would leave a hole that could not be easily filled by any other institution on the planet. UNIS Hanoi’s distinctive impact should be captured within the unique manifestation of our mission in action in our school environment, grounded within our curriculum that delivers academic excellence and holistic student learning (Goal 1) and innovative co-curricular programs that engage students in individual and collective learning experiences that inspire global citizens (Goal 2).
3. **Achieves lasting Endurance:** The school can deliver exceptional results over a long period of time, beyond any single leader, great idea, market cycle, or well-funded program. When setbacks hit, it bounces back even stronger than before. Like many international schools, UNIS Hanoi must implement its mission and sustain a drive to continuous improvement within a community that is constantly changing. Building core values and a foundation, (Goal 3), within our ever-changing school community, reflected in our mission and strategic management culture is essential to achieve greatness over time. UNIS Hanoi must invest in community-building efforts to sustain positive momentum for future students and families in a school that is constantly innovating and improving. Therefore the board must stay focused on overseeing and implementing the strategy in partnership with the Head, administration, faculty and community for the benefit of long-term success based on continuous improvement

The board is committed to work with the Head, Senior Management Team and whole community to develop action plans with measurable performance to implement this strategy. This latest version of the strategy provides the framework for continuous improvement in our dynamic school community.

The following sections provide a brief introduction to the strategic goals and objectives for UNIS Hanoi. Annex B provides a performance management framework that the board, Head and Senior Management Team will use to continuously assess progress of the strategy. Annex C provides definition of key terminology used in this document.

### **Strategic Goals and Objectives**

***Goal 1: Our students develop highly valued, internationally recognized qualifications and the personal qualities articulated in the UN principles***

UNIS Hanoi is first and foremost an institution for learning that enables students to be successful, high functioning people. Promoting and supporting academic excellence is one of our primary functions, but we acknowledge that there are multiple dimensions of learning that we know lead to success in later life, and we work hard to promote all of those capabilities.

The school's admission policy is non-selective in that all applicants are eligible for admission except for those in need of intense learning support. And given that the average length of stay for students is 3-4 years, and only a very small number of students go all the way through the school from beginning to end, the school is strongly committed to challenging students at their highest level of functioning throughout their time on campus. The school refers to this as maximizing each student's potential.

We are aware of the need to help students become proactive citizens of the world and thus strive to provide experiences and encouragement to be involved, take initiative, make sense of the challenges they confront each day, and think critically and independently. This practice prepares them to become effective adults.

We appreciate the social nature of learning and the need to thrive in an interdependent world. Thus confronting authentic issues in their studies and developing the skills of problem solving, negotiation, constructive debate and working effectively with others, students develop the talents and tools to take on the world's challenges.

#### **Objective 1.1** [5-Dimensional Learning]

Students achieve personal excellence by maximizing their a) academic, b) emotional, c) social, d) physical, and e) aesthetic capabilities.

#### **Objective 1.2** [Higher Cognitive Learning]

Students will: a) cultivate creative and critical thinking and problem-solving skills; b) construct enduring understandings of their local and global environments; and c) make reasoned, ethical decisions and act upon them.

#### **Objective 1.3** [Collective Learning]

Students will: a) promote peaceful solutions to conflicts and problems; b) encourage respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights; and c) act collectively as environmental stewards.

***Goal 2: Students are inspired and participate in purposeful and responsible behaviors in and beyond the classroom.***

The development of a high quality co-curricular program is essential to the development of all students at UNIS Hanoi. We believe that it naturally supports the curricular program, and serves to

provide learning opportunities for students not always found in the regular classroom. Students are encouraged to extend their learning, explore new activities, take risks to expand their development, and have some fun in the process. These experiences are extensions of their learning that provide real-life challenges that students must face now and in the future, and also help students find that healthy balance of work and play that is so essential to a life of satisfaction and fulfilment.

We acknowledge the social nature of learning and the importance of working with others in a collaborative and respectful manner. We also expect all members of the school community to see themselves as leaders and take responsibility for their own welfare as well as the welfare of those around them through collective action and service.

We have a strong commitment to help all students look outside themselves, acknowledge the needs around them, respond in reactive and proactive ways, and appreciate what they gain from reaching out to help others.

**Objective 2.1** [Individual Behaviours]

Students: a) achieve healthy, active, and balanced lifestyles; b) discover and develop interests and talents and passions; and c) become independent, life-long learners.

**Objective 2.2** [Social Behaviours]

Students demonstrate: a) responsible leadership; b) respect for cultural and other differences; and c) the ability to collaborate and work as a team.

**Objective 2.3** [Service Behaviours]

Students: a) understand the significance of service in their lives; b) understand and act on their responsibilities to self and others; and c) initiate and are involved in supporting and improving their communities.

***Goal 3: UNIS Hanoi is a high quality, welcoming and secure environment for teaching and learning***

UNIS Hanoi believes that the attraction and retention of an outstanding faculty is the highest priority for the school. A year round recruiting program is in place to build a strong base of candidates on a continuous basis. Significant resources are devoted to faculty professional development. Support is provided for faculty to attend conferences and workshops and take additional classes; consultants are brought in to assist with areas of focus; a peer coaching program is ongoing; mentoring is provided to new faculty; and a thorough system of goal setting, observation and appraisal is in place.

‘Security’ includes not only the physical campus, but all aspects of the working environment, recognizing the unique role of faculty, students and parents. This allows us to encompass the strategic governance of the organization, as well as the long term financial planning and business operations along with the development of world class facilities; all of which should, we believe, engender an assured sense of security amongst the whole community.

We are committed to being a high quality, innovative learning environment and research confirms that without a complete sense of security, learners will not thrive. Since we know the overwhelming majority of our community are living away from their home base and emotional roots, and we know that there is regular turnover of students, parents and faculty, UNIS Hanoi aims to provide a vibrant community where people feel secure, cope with change, and where they can ‘belong’ for the duration of their stay in Hanoi. We believe that maintaining our community takes commitment from all parties and that relationships will strengthen and deepen in a climate of trust, transparency and mutual respect that will carry lasting benefits for every participant.

In choosing to join the school community, parents have made the decision to be a part of the UNIS Hanoi culture complete with rights and responsibilities. A strong home-school connection serves to enhance student achievement and success, and at UNIS Hanoi, all parents are expected to be engaged in their child's education.

**Objective 3.1** [Faculty and Administration]

The school attracts and retains motivated faculty and administration to deliver high quality education.

**Objective 3.2** [Governance, Finances and Facilities]

The school is strategically governed, financially secure, invests in continuous improvement of human resources, programs and facilities and offers high value to individuals and organizations that support the school.

**Objective 3.3** [School Climate]

The community actively collaborates to engender an inclusive, ethical environment based on respect, transparency and security.

**Strategic Governance and Performance Management**

The board's primary role is to strategically manage the school with this strategy and to work closely with the Head, Senior Management Team, administration, faculty, students and the school community to achieve new levels of performance. Annex B provides a Performance Management Framework developed by the Strategy Task Force and the Senior Management Team to measure performance during the coming years. As noted earlier, strategic management is a continuous process of improvement that requires meaningful and measurable indicators to assess performance and ensure that UNIS Hanoi fulfils our aspirations for a great school.

## ANNEX A

### PREAMBLE

**(Taken from Accreditation Visiting Team report November 2009 and updated May 2010)**

The United Nations International School of Hanoi (UNIS Hanoi) was founded in 1988 as a project of the United Nations Development Program in Vietnam and with the full support of embassies, non-governmental organisations and the international community in Hanoi. It is a not-for-profit, co-educational English-language day school, authorised by the Ministry of Education, and enjoys special if tenuously defined relationships with Vietnamese government departments and the Hanoi People's Committee. At the time of its establishment, it was the only English-language school in Vietnam and remains only one of two United Nations schools in the world. The purpose of the school is to promote and provide an international education conforming to the spirit and principles of the United Nations (UN), for the children of UN personnel and other members of the expatriate and local communities who are committed to this vision of education.

UNIS Hanoi began in 1988 with only 20 students, but in 1992 moved to the Van Phuc campus, near central Hanoi, increasing its numbers to over one hundred. It continued to grow in size over the next few years and thereafter maintained a steady enrolment of around 350 students. A major benchmark in the development of the school occurred in September 2004 when it moved to a purpose-built, state-of-the-art campus in the Tay Ho District. The 9.2 hectare site is located within a new international community development, six kilometres north of the centre of Hanoi, and has been leased from the government for an initial fifty years. Its spacious grounds and quiet environment offer an inviting learning environment and top quality facilities.

Each division of the school has its own buildings, which are maintained to a high standard of decoration and cleanliness, as are the surrounding landscaped areas and playgrounds. Staff and students also enjoy a central library/media centre, a canteen, covered and uncovered hard court areas, and two sports fields. The school has phased strategic plans for further development of the campus and, since the time of the Five Year Visit, has completed the swimming pool and dance studio/fitness room complex. The board has since approved the anticipated construction of the arts centre and an indoor multi-purpose sports centre. Ground-breaking ceremonies took place on the first day of the Team's visit. Completion of these facilities for the start of the 2011-12 school year will provide teaching space for approximately 150 additional students.

The school's facilities are well used in the evenings and at weekends, both for the extensive program of student extra-curricular and community sports activities and for the community education program. This intensive use is now exerting considerable pressure on the maintenance of the facilities as well as leading the school to question priority usage.

The school has witnessed a rapid increase in student numbers since 2004 and continues to grow. For 2009 enrolment stands at 900 students with a waiting list of around 220 students. The latter is partly attributable to strict EAL criteria for admission and partly to cultural diversity policies, whereby no one nationality may exceed 20% of total enrolment. The strength of the school's reputation in the local community ensures a strong demand from local and expatriate families wishing to enrol their children. Fifty-eight nationalities are represented on campus: approximately 15% are Vietnamese, 14% Korean, 13% from the USA, 8% Australian and 5% British. The client base has also broadened and now includes parents working for Vietnamese private businesses, Korean enterprises and other foreign companies.

UNIS Hanoi is divided into an Early Childhood Centre, an Elementary School and a Middle/High School. It is fully-authorised International Baccalaureate (IB) school and delivers the Discovery, Primary Years (PYP), Middle Years (MYP) and Diploma programmes. Graduating classes for the Diploma have consistently achieved excellent results, which have proved a passport to university entrance worldwide. A few senior students opt for individual certificates rather than the full Diploma. Students with limited English proficiency are supported up to grade 8, both within the regular classroom and through specialised English as an Additional Language (EAL) courses. In order to meet its goal of maintaining an English-rich environment, the school limits the number of EAL students in each class.

UNIS Hanoi is administered by an overall Head of School and is supported by a Principal in each of the Elementary and Middle/High Schools. The transition arrangements for the new senior leadership team, which took office in 2008, were efficiently managed. Altogether the school employs 96 teachers, 31 teacher aides, 35 office staff and 26 maintenance staff. A number of new posts have recently been created, such as an Athletics Director and additional teacher aides, so as to enhance effective learning. The one-to-one tablet programme, now encompassing grades 8-12, is a further tool which reflects the school's focus on student-centred learning.

UNIS Hanoi is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors. Two of these are elected by parents, three are appointed by the Resident Representative of the United Nations in Hanoi and four are appointed by the board. Currently the four senior administrators and a staff representative are ex officio members. From August 2010 the Head of School will be the only ex-officio member of the board. The appointment system is currently under review, to take account of the necessity for succession planning. The board is responsible for all strategic policy areas including the adoption of an annual budget, determination of salaries and benefits for employees and the approval of general academic policies. It further appoints the Head of School.

UNIS Hanoi is mostly dependent upon tuition fees for its operation and the board has adopted very conservative policies in relation to fiscal management. The school has been able to achieve fiscal surpluses over the past five years, sufficient to permit both cash reserves to be established and bank loans for the construction of the new campus to be repaid.

The school encourages parents to play an active role in the school. In the spring of 2009, the Parent Teachers Organisation (PTA) changed its name to the School Community Organisation (SCO) and adopted a formal working constitution. There are regular SCO meetings for the parent community and welcome coffee mornings for new families. The SCO follows the UNIS Hanoi mission by their charitable contributions to outside groups and supporting events on campus. The school communicates with parents, students, staff, and outside stakeholders through a variety of avenues, including the UNIS portal.

UNIS Hanoi has been accredited by CIS/NEASC since 1999. It is also a member of the East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS) and affiliated with the Mekong River International Schools Association (MRISA). Cultural and sports exchanges take place with MRISA throughout the year, both on campus and at other schools in the region.

The school hosted its Five Year CIS/NEASC Visit in October 2005, a little later than is usually the case in order to allow the school to settle into its new buildings. The Preparatory Visit was conducted in May 2008 and the Team Visit itself took place during the week of 7-13 November 2009, this time under the auspices of CIS/WASC.

Following the Team Visit in November 2009, the school received notice of reaccreditation by all agencies commencing December 2009. Re-accreditation is effective for ten years, with the next Five Year visit due in 2014.

## **ANNEX B**

### **PERFORMANCE MONITORING FRAMEWORK**

***Note: This page was revised by the Board of Directors 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2013***

In 2010 the Board approved the SMP with a draft framework. Following work by the Strategy Task Force, this was extensively revised and approved by the Board at their 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2012.

As part of the SMP Mid-Term Review in school year 2012-2013, the Task Force reviewed the performance indicators in order to provide mid-term results to the Board. The Task Force also made recommendations to revise and/or replace indicators where necessary. The Board approved the updated Framework 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2013. (file reference SMP Monitoring Framework updated for Mid-Term review and approved 9<sup>th</sup> April 2013, as appended to this document)

## ANNEX C

### KEY DEFINITIONS

**Strategic management** is an ongoing process that evaluates and controls the business and the industries in which the company is involved; assesses its competitors and sets goals and strategies to meet all existing and potential competitors; and then reassesses each strategy annually or quarterly [i.e. regularly] to determine how it has been implemented and whether it has succeeded or needs replacement by a new strategy to meet changed circumstances, new technology, new competitors, a new economic environment, or a new social, financial, or political environment.

#### **Mission and Vision:**

A **mission statement** is a formal short written statement of the purpose of a [company](#) or [organization](#). The mission statement should guide the actions of the organization, spell out its overall goal, provide a sense of direction, and guide decision-making. It provides "the framework or context within which the company's or organization's strategies are formulated." The **vision statement** states how the organization wants to be measured, recognized or viewed and its future aspirations in its industry or sector.

Mission statements often contain the following:

- Purpose and aim of the organization
- The organization's primary stakeholders: clients, stockholders, congregation, etc.
- Responsibilities of the organization toward these stakeholders
- Services offered

Vision Statements and Mission Statements are the inspiring words chosen by successful leaders to clearly and concisely convey the direction of the organization. By crafting a clear mission statement and vision statement, you can powerfully communicate your intentions and motivate your team or organization to realize an attractive and inspiring common vision of the future.

**Goal:** Broad spectrum, complex, organizational, indication of program intentions and aspirations.

**Objective:** Measurable, defined, operational, steps, and specific, tied to key performance indicators. Objectives contribute to the fulfilment of specified goals.

A **performance indicator** or **key performance indicator (KPI)** is a measure of [performance](#). Such measures are commonly used to help an organization define and evaluate how successful it is, typically in terms of making progress towards its long-term organizational goals. KPIs can be specified by answering the question, "What is really important to different [stakeholders](#)?" KPIs may be monitored using techniques to assess the present state of the business or organization and to assist in prescribing a course of action. The act of monitoring KPIs in real-time is known as [business activity monitoring](#) (BAM). KPIs are frequently used to "value" difficult to measure activities such as the benefits of leadership development, engagement, service, and satisfaction. The KPIs differ depending on the nature of the organization and the organization's strategy. They help to evaluate the progress of an organization towards its vision and long-term goals, especially toward difficult to quantify knowledge-based goals.

A KPI is a key part of a measurable objective, which is made up of a direction, KPI, benchmark, target, and time frame. For example: *"Increase Average Revenue per Customer from \$10 to \$15 by EOY 2008"*. In this case, 'Average Revenue per Customer' is the KPI.