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**ECIS GLOBAL ADVISORY**

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CAPABILITIES / **GOVERNANCE & RISK**



## CAPABILITY

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### Governance & Risk

The duty of care and stewardship that comes with serving on the governing body of the school cannot be understated; it is of immense importance, when we consider the lives we are preparing. Yet members of the governing body need to be careful that they do not spend all their time in the fiduciary mode of governance, focusing exclusively on finances, integrity, compliance, risk, and legal liabilities. Boards need to get it right, of course, yet to hold the school 'in trust' for others necessitates that board members exercise the strategic and generative modes as well, ensuring a healthy and strong school for years to come. Our board development offerings below are designed to support and advance boards in their crucial work.

**Effective Governance:** A full-scale review of (or, for new board members, an introduction to) the principles of effective governance as found in our online Governance Foundations course, using a multifaceted case study approach around a fictitious school and its governance-leadership journey. This approach is for a board that prefers in-person board development, and it is ideal for a start-up school that wants to get governance right, from the beginning. \*Includes one copy per board member of our [ECIS Effective Governance Standard](#), and our publication, *Governance in International Schools*. The latter may be exchanged for NAIS Trustee Handbook, if desired.

**Generative Governance:** Designed for boards that are already financially literate, appropriately involved, monitoring events and results, and staying abreast of the strategic plan, this offering introduces boards to a mode of inquiry that aligns the board toward the 'big unknown' of the school: engaging the questions around future-readiness, so that the school will thrive well into the future. Our generative governance framework prepares boards to structure and engage in this mode of governance at every board meeting.

**Custom Retreat:** We work with you to design and deliver a board retreat that integrates a review of effective governance foundations within the context of other items of interest, such as local market competitive analysis, educational trends, futures thinking, or case studies that serve to unearth and highlight areas of risk for the board to consider. We can also customise a retreat around a specific topic you'd like us to research in depth, help you with annual goal-setting aligned to your strategy, or whatever you'd like! Our goal is always to help you excel.

**Risk Analysis:** We offer table-top sessions designed to engage board members in carefully-designed, hypothetical scenarios that affect the school, calling upon the board and school management team to function according to policy, procedure, and principles of effective governance. We prefer to guide a board through two scenarios in a day, in order to gauge the board's preparedness for and responses to more than one scenario, providing a more insightful analysis of preparedness and risk elements. Post-session, your advisor will prepare a written analysis for you, including specific recommendations for improvement, indexed to our ECIS Effective Governance Standard. This offering represents a cost-effective way to evaluate your readiness for unanticipated events.

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CAPABILITIES / STRATEGY

## CAPABILITY

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### Strategy

Great strategy is critical to the success of schools, irrespective of location. We take the view that strategy is fundamentally about choice. As Roger Martin (Rotman School of Management) writes, "Strategy is not a long planning document; it is a set of interrelated and powerful choices that position the organisation to [succeed]." Choice can be difficult for schools, because it means that schools need to do some things at the expense of others. Schools, however, tend to exhibit a reluctance to make truly hard choices because they do not know how things may turn out. This, then, is our work: to help schools identify possible solutions to their challenges, construct and perform low-risk tests of hypotheses to help overcome those challenges, and make informed decisions that will lead to success.

**Strategy Review:** Having reviewed over 200 strategic plans in the past ten years, we find that such plans are rarely strategic; they tend to be highly operational to-do lists. We are happy to review your existing plan, and provide feedback on the general plan as well as its specifics. We will highlight those elements that are simply 'normal work flow,' as well as those that might be strategic in nature, but may have gotten lost in the orchestration of the plan. This flat-fee service is a highly cost-effective and quick way to determine whether your plan is still fit for purpose, or whether it is an exalted to-do list that is not answering the real strategic questions you face.

**Strategic Choices Framework:** For schools that need to make serious strategic choices, our strategic choices framework is a fresh approach to decision-making. We pursue strategy as a coordinated and integrated set of five choices: your winning aspiration (your purpose), where you 'play,' how you will win where you play, your core capabilities, and the management systems you need. We work with you to construct multiple hypothetical scenarios that would allow you to overcome your challenge(s), tease out what would have to be true for a given hypothesis to be successful, design and execute tests to explore whether perceived barriers to implementation are real, and, finally, empower you to make the choice(s) that will lead your school to thrive in today's increasingly competitive environment. This framework can be undertaken as a whole-school strategy, or within a specific division, unit, or programme.

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CAPABILITIES / OPERATIONS

## CAPABILITY

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### Operations

In school operations, there is always at least one area that could be improved, and it is frequently related to meaningful change in the school. Sometimes that change occurs through a major initiative, while at other times, it occurs in a much less overt way: it happens slowly and gradually over time. In the latter case, a status quo approach to operations is often evidenced because of satisfaction with something being 'good enough for right now.' Operational excellence, however, requires a mindset of relentless pursuit of 'the best' rather than 'good enough,' even if 'the best' cannot be attained, combined with constant experimentation and learning, with appropriate controls. It is an item of organisational culture. Your organisational culture tends to manifest itself in your operations.

We distinguish between a Review and an Audit for our services below.

**A Review** consist primarily of inquiry and analytical review: it shows what you do, and how your figures and/or data portray the picture. A review does not verify information with supporting documents. The advisor only inquires of management when unexpected results are encountered. A review, therefore, provides a limited level of assurance that there are no major modifications that should be made in an operational area.

**An Audit** is the highest level of inquiry and analytical report that we provide. An audit consists of obtaining a thorough understanding of internal constructs and controls, assessing any risk, and obtaining evidence to support figures and/or data through observation, inspection, testing, confirmation, or examination of source documents, processes, procedures, and controls. An audit, therefore, provides a reasonable level of assurance that an operational area is free of mismanagement, lack of control(s), or other material misstatement or lack of structure, guidance, control, etc

**Operational:** a comprehensive review/audit of all operations, from A to Z.

**Compensation:** review/audit of salary and benefits for staff and/or senior administration.

**Programme:** review/audit of an individual programme or department (e.g. HR, EAL, SEL, Service Learning, Learning Support, Admission, Advancement, Languages, etc.).

**Professional Learning:** review/audit of professional learning structures, schedules, opportunities for teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as administration.

**Curriculum:** comprehensive review/audit of school curriculum and its articulation at all levels.

**Governance:** review/audit of school governance structures, policy manuals, essential agreements, compliance with accreditation bodies, etc.

**Accreditation:** review/audit prior to undergoing initial accreditation or re-accreditation. Ideal for a start-up school prior to applying for candidacy status with an accreditation agency. We offer the same for schools that undergo Inspection.

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ECIS GLOBAL ADVISORY

CAPABILITIES / SAFETY & SECURITY





## CAPABILITY

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### Safety & Security

We believe that an intelligent approach to safety and security will empower school governance and school management teams to be more informed, better prepared, and able to respond properly in the event of an emergency. The challenges that schools face today call for a 360-degree approach to safety and security, from campus security and associated protocols to appropriate and not overly-intrusive surveillance equipment to rock-solid policies and protocols for child protection, and more. Our goal is to help schools work toward a healthier, safer tomorrow for all members of the community.

**Safety & Security Audit:** A three-day examination of areas such as current policies, procedures, and protocols with regards to safety and security of students and staff whilst on school premises; guard force operations; access of parents, visitors, and others; threat assessment of neighbouring areas; security of school-owned transportation assets; adequacy of safety and security equipment and systems; feasibility of additional technical security features; internal security staffing structure and crisis team composition; access control procedures for vehicles and pedestrians; employee and contractor vetting policies and programmes. Audit concludes with an informal feedback session with key personnel, highlighting preliminary findings and recommendations. Final written report will be delivered within ten days of on-site visit.

**Child Protection Audit:** We undertake a thorough audit of your policies, procedures, and practices around key areas such as safe environment, staff and volunteer conduct, screening and hiring, and reporting, culminating in the formation of a general child protection strategy for your school. The audit concludes with an informal feedback session with key personnel, highlighting preliminary findings and recommendations. Final written report will be delivered within ten days of on-site visit, and ECIS Global Services can assist with the creation, accessibility, and training around robust child protection policies, procedures, and practices, if the school desires (this work would fall under the capability area of Operations, highlighted earlier).

**Institutional Emergency Planning Management (EPM) Certification:** Institutional certification is a year-long process that begins with a comprehensive on-site inspection and assessment by our advisors. Following this assessment, our advisors will monitor the school's progress in addressing any identified deficiencies as well as current risk-mitigation activity. When we deem the school ready, we will conduct an on-site compliance inspection, to include a table-top exercise with the school's crisis management team and selected stakeholders. If requirements are met, the school will be awarded with EPM Certification, which will be valid for one year, with the possibility for recertification for up to three years, at which time another quality assurance visit is required.

**Virtual Chief Security Officer Service (VCSO):** Few international schools around the world employ the services of a full-time Chief Security Officer, and therefore lack some of that needed expertise when it comes to managing operational risks on campus. With the ECIS Global Advisory Virtual Chief Security Officer service, schools around the world can now seek the expertise and guidance for their safety, security and emergency preparedness programs. Selected topics of support include: vulnerability assessments and mitigation; security contract reviews; safety and security policies and procedures; emerging threats, and much more.

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CAPABILITIES / **COACHING**

## CAPABILITY

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### Coaching for Organisational Development

School transformation brings about an evolutionary space called an ecotone, the space between where the organisation is...and where it aspires to be. Organisational health during change transformation can sometimes succumb to the implementation dips of emerging practice, and, even with professional learning, structured support is essential in sustaining the journey of growth and change.

Our coaching services aim to support individuals and the organisation as they navigate the implementation of continuous change, build systems and processes, and approach their desired state.

Coaching services are tailored for organisational needs, and include individual executive coaching, group coaching, and the co-creation of a coaching component for professional learning systems. Our lead coach is a trained Cognitive Coach ® and an Adaptive Schools ® practitioner.

**Executive coaching** is a one-to-one service for school leaders. The timetable and digital conference calls are arranged by the coach and the leader, with agreed-upon metrics for success. Complete customisation for and to the leader.

**Coaching in professional learning systems** is a custom design service offering constructive support from inception to implementation, refinement, and calibration. This service supports the school's pedagogical leadership in enhancing resilience of professional learners through a coaching cycle embedded within a professional learning structure.

**Group coaching** is an on-site service designed to enhance the resourcefulness of the members and the group as a unit, as the group plans, implements, and assesses plan implementation. All elements, including the timetable, are completely customised.

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CAPABILITIES / **BRAND & MARKETING**

## CAPABILITY

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### Brand & Marketing

ECIS Global Advisory offers the following services to ensure schools at any stage in their branding and marketing activities have access to modules to suit their specific needs.

**Brand & Marketing Review/Audit:** The review examines your current situation, based on information on strategy, objectives and available resources, as well as an analysis of your print and online strategy and activities. You will be provided you with a report containing an initial assessment of your current situation. The audit, by contrast, uses the review as a starting point for a two-day in-depth exploration of your differentiation, positioning, messaging, market analysis, branding, content, social media, and stakeholder mapping. Strategic discussion, creative thinking, goal setting and practical considerations will result in a solid brand and marketing strategy, a roadmap with main activities and timeline, as well as KPIs and set times for evaluation.

**Content Management Strategy:** Schools are awash in content that could be shared with current and prospective stakeholders, yet they feel overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the content, leading to content paralysis. The key is a robust content management strategy that feeds your brand stories, keeping them fresh and relevant for your stakeholders. We audit your school's content as well as your policies and procedures for using that content, and we interview a cross-section of stakeholders to understand what resonates with them. In other words, we will help you to identify which content to focus on, so you can feed brand stories with content that matters.

**Personal Coaching & Training:** Relevant for schools that decide to develop internal staff to become their branding and marketing lead. We will develop a personal growth plan for your staff member and guide them over a period three months to become a confident and expert leader in the brand and marketing role. This three-month coaching period includes two to five full training days on-site (more days for onboarding a new staff member), daily availability online, and monthly status calls.

**Virtual Marketing Officer Service:** This service allows marketing staff at your school to call on the Virtual Marketing Officer at any time, to serve as a sounding board, mentor, expert, or advisor. This is a cost-effective service for schools that have gone through our review or audit, and wish to have continued expert support available to them.

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CAPABILITIES / **START-UP SCHOOL**

## CAPABILITY

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### Start-Up School

There is a real need and opportunity to open new schools, whether to increase parental choice, provide children with a better education, or prepare a more suitably qualified and skilled workforce for an increasingly mobile society. Yet, starting a school is no minor task. From establishing the educational and business case for the school, to identifying and engaging the appropriate stakeholder groups in order to secure their support, to laying the earliest foundations for operations and the initial intake of students, new schools have a long to-do list. We provide invaluable assistance to individuals and groups looking to start a new school, drawing on our capabilities, expertise, and global network: we listen carefully to you in order to ascertain your exact needs, then we propose a framework of services that will assist you with the heavy lifting required to reach opening day.

#### **Human Resources**

- Leader Recruitment\*
- Teacher Recruitment
- Background and Credential Checks
- Medical Insurance (School and Individual)

#### **Compliance and Accreditation (Inspection)**

- Child Protection Training
- Governance Training
- Safety & Security Planning
- Legal Requirements\*
- Accreditation (Inspection) Preparation

#### **Operations**

- Board Policy Manual
- Operations Manual
- Financial Modelling
- Risk Matrix
- Data Benchmarking
- Curriculum and Examinations
- Systems\*
- Procurement\*

#### **Strategy**

- Brand & Marketing
- Strategic Plan

For services that we do not offer directly, we maintain close relationships with trusted providers (denoted by \*).

## THANK YOU

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This brand book has been created by ECIS. Any queries with regard to Global Advisory can be addressed to the contact details here.

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