



April 18th, 2017

Aoba-Japan International School

Joint A-JIS, SCU and BBTU Project Launched to Introduce “Blended Learning”

Aoba-Japan International School (A-JIS) is pleased to announce a major project involving a collaboration between the A-JIS, Business Breakthrough University (BBTU) and the Southern Cross University (SCU) from Australia. A world expert in teacher education, Professor David Lynch, has assembled a team of highly qualified specialists from SCU to support A-JIS build a Blended Learning (BL) approach to teaching and learning. The term Blended Learning is used to refer to a particular way of teaching that combines the use of digital technology with face to face instructional strategies. An effective BL model is designed to provide a more engaging approach to student learning. This requires teachers to reconsider the traditional teaching and learning processes, so that the learning process is closely aligned with a more student-focused and student-directed learning.

The Head of AJIS, Mr. Ken Sell, said ‘schools and education systems worldwide are challenged by the rapidly changing social and economic dynamics that influence our daily lives. ICT (information and communication technology) is playing a significant part driving these changes and as a result we need to make adjustments, both incremental and disruptive, in how we think and act as educators’. The respected education expert, Professor Lynch makes the point that ‘education systems are struggling to fit ICTs into traditional classroom settings. Most attempts end up relegated as add-ons to already overcrowded and what could be called convoluted school arrangements and curriculums.’ According to Professor Lynch the ‘Blended Learning Project’ aims to answer: How do we teach 21st century skills while ensuring the development of basic skills are maintained?

To answer the question, members of the SCU team and teachers from A-JIS designed a strategy that aims to maximize effective Face to Face teaching and learning through the use of ICT as well as teacher understanding of their impact on learning. This 3 year project is implementing two strategies. One is to build a Blended Learning support package for the delivery of courses through BBTU’s blended learning platform, AirCampus®. The other is to implement a professional learning and development program for teachers to implement a BL approach in all classrooms.

Having completed the design and planning phase of the project the project team have commenced the professional development program. This program consists of three parts. Groups of teachers

are engaged in conducting their own action research to explore the use of ICT in their practice; each teacher will be studying BL course that is equivalent to a post graduate qualification and collaborative planning teams will adopt 'Coaching, Mentoring and Feedback' protocols that are designed to focus teacher attention on their impact of student learning.

By this coming August the BL team will have developed several courses to be delivered by classroom teachers through the BBT's AirCampus® platform. Drawing on the findings of a thorough literature review of the research in BL these courses are designed to create a unique and engaging experience for the student. This will be accomplished through a focus on three aspects of individualised learning: path, place, and pace. Path is the combination of learning experiences that a student encounters when studying any particular subject or topic. Place is where the learning takes place, whether it be in a classroom, at home, in public, or online. Pace is the time it takes a student to complete a given learning experience or set of experiences. All three can be set by the student, the teacher, or an external agent; traditionally, the student has the least agency with regards to these three key aspects and it is this we intend to address.

According to Ken Sell 'a major strength of this project is having SCU research our effectiveness over time. This project provides an ideal opportunity for a longitudinal study into the effectiveness of our approach. It (the project) provides constant data for us to analyze and evaluate as part of our ongoing commitment to providing quality education for all our students'. To start with the project will be generating baseline student achievement data in the areas of Literacy, Numeracy, school Core Values and the IB Units of Inquiry (International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme). This data combined with teacher data related to their professional growth will provide the school with holistic picture of performance. Ken Sell points out, 'it is this holistic and objective picture of performance that will be the basis for professional reflection and future planning. The project represents a major and important initiative to establish AJIS as forward thinking and active place for student-centric learning, a place that is attuned to student needs in the context of the changing social and economic dynamics'.

BBT University, which runs the first and largest 100% online MBA and undergraduate courses in Japan in the past 10 years, will provide this project with its hands-on know-how on e-learning through its proprietary platform, AirCampus®.

For further information please contact Paul Fradale, Director of Innovation & Blended Learning paul.fradale@aobajapan.jp

About Aoba-Japan International School(A-JIS):



A-JIS is an international school operated by Aoba International Educational Systems (Aoba) (Head Office: Tokyo, Nerima-ku), which became a subsidiary of Business Breakthrough Inc. (BBT) (Location: Tokyo, Chiyoda-ku, President: Kenichi Ohmae) in October 2013. Founded in 1976 in Aobadai, Meguro-ku, Aoba-Japan International School is a pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12, co-ed, secular school open to all nationalities and religions. Except for Japanese language classes, all classes are conducted in English. A- JIS has a strong and effective English language support program that prepares students for the International Baccalaureate program. From pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12, the school provides a curriculum that follows international standards, and graduates can obtain the credentials they require to apply to universities worldwide. A-JIS is accredited through the Council of International Schools (CIS) and the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). A-JIS is also authorized as an IB World School for all ages (DP and MYP and PYP). <http://www.aobajapan.jp/>

About the International Baccalaureate:

Founded in 1968 the International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit foundation, which offers four high quality and challenging educational programmes for a worldwide community of schools. For close to 50 years, IB programmes have gained a reputation for their rigour and high academic standards, for preparing students for life in a globalized 21st century, and for helping to develop citizens who will create a better, more peaceful world. Currently, IB students attend over 4,500 schools in over 140 countries. To learn more, please visit www.ibo.org.

For information about the number of IB World Schools and programmes offered, please visit: <http://www.ibo.org/en/about-the-ib/the-ib-by-country/>

About Business Breakthrough (BBT):



BBT was established in 1998 as an educational company by Kenichi Ohmae, a world renowned management consultant. Since it opened, BBT has continued to offer high quality educational programmes via remote delivery through various media. BBT provides a lot of educational programming: a university, a graduate school of business, an entrepreneur training program, educational TV programs, and more.

BBT has participated in the management of Aoba since 2013, and it aims to construct an educational platform which can support lifetime empowerment BBT aims to provide proactive education that makes full use of its own in-house IT technology platform. Approximately 200,000 ID have been issued and sent out to the business world from BBT's courses.

<http://www.bbt757.com/>

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