Board of Governors 2021-22

Together there is deep experience in governance/board work, finance, education, business management, project management, financial investment, education, human resources, health, counseling, coaching, entrepreneurship and fundraising.

Pekka Holopainen
Board Chair

Pekka Holopainen, from Finland, is a retired lawyer with 5 grown children who attended local and international schools in Finland, Portugal, Sweden and Germany. As an attorney, Pekka specialized in corporate governance, contracts, dispute resolution and risk management.

Pekka served 7 years on the Board, 3 years as the Chair, at the German School of Helsinki, from where his children graduated. From his service on the Board at DSH and the role of the Board at ICS, his view is that "the Board's focus needs to be on strategy level matters and not so much on day-to-day operative tasks. When the Board takes decisions the criteria for the decisions need to (be) on what is in the best interest of the school. Also, the Board must ensure that the finances of the school are on a sustainable level and path." He is a graduate of the University of Helsinki, and obtained his MBA from the London Business School. Now resident in Addis with his spouse, the Ambassador of Finland, Pekka will serve a 2-year term.

Karin Steiner
Vice Chair

Karin was elected to the Board by members of the ICS Association. At ICS she is engaged in the Mother Tongue program, supports our Scouts groups and often organizes and assists at international community events. She has a business background in Communication / Marketing and Event Organization. She has two children at ICS in grades 8 and 3.

Michael Zink
Treasurer /
Finance Committee Chair

Michael is the Board Treasurer. Following a very successful banking career within Citigroup and a 27-year odyssey around the globe (including 8 years in Africa and time as a Peace Corps Volunteer) with his wife and four kids, Michael now dedicates much time to voluntary service for educational institutions. He contributes significant board governance expertise to ICS, having served on the Board of Directors of several Citigroup subsidiaries, and is also a member of the Board of Trustees at Case Western Reserve University. Michael is also a guest lecturer on the Advanced Management Program at the Kellogg School of Management of Northwestern University.

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Vinson Anderson
Secretary

Vinson is the US Embassy Representative member to the Board. Vinson brings significant public management experience to ICS. In addition to experience gained from 25 years in the Foreign Service and the US Navy, Vinson has a M.A. in Public Administration, is currently the Counselor for the Regional Affairs Section at the US Embassy, and previously served on the American International School of Niamey. Vinson has four children at ICS in EY5, and grades 4, 6 and 8.

Dennia Gayle
Governance Committee Chair

Dennia Gayle, from Costa Rica, is a resident of Addis and parent at ICS and works at the United Nations Population Fund. She is an executive with over 15 years of international public health, development and humanitarian experience across Latin America, The Caribbean and Africa. Dennia has expertise in data-driven strategic planning and performance-based management; finance proficiency and operational excellence with a focus on efficiency, productivity and innovation. She is a transformational leader and team contributor; public speaker and writer.

Dennia brings to the ICS Board a wealth of knowledge, skills and competencies from her work as a UN Diplomat, and from one of her first jobs as Counselor at a school in Costa Rica that had some of the same principles and commitment to education that she sees in ICS. Dennia, who was a Fulbright scholar, is a graduate of the University of Costa Rica, and Tulane University. Dennia will serve a 4 year term.

Rudy Muller
Member

Rudy Muller is an American retired father of 2 grown children who attended international schools in Singapore and France. His professional experience as an attorney and business executive in the US, then France and Singapore includes working for multinational corporations, and as a founder owner of an investment firm.

Rudy's international school governance and Board management experience includes 5 years of service on the Board of the Singapore American School from 2008 - 2013 (serving for 3 years as the Board Chair), working with a 12 person board supporting 4,000 students, 600 employees and an annual budget of US$100 million. Rudy brings strong leadership that is based on integrity, transparency, delegation, accountability and teamwork. He seeks to promote confidence and encourage higher performance in executive management teams while building consensus.

Rudy is a graduate of Lemoyne College, Georgetown University Law Center, and the General Management Program at CEDEP/ INSEADResident in Florida, USA, Rudy will serve a 4-year term.

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Hanania Negede
Member

Hanania was elected to the Board by members of the ICS Association. Hanania has sixteen plus years of management experience with various companies and organizations such as a startup owned by IBM and Kaiser Permanente, LVMH and an International NGO. Hanania also recently completed a Global Executive MBA program at Duke University. She has one child at ICS in grade 2.

Cheryl Richardson
Member

Cheryl brings extensive education policy and strategy experience to ICS. Cheryl is the Associate Director of Inclusive Teaching Initiatives at the University of Chicago and holds a PhD in Education. Prior to the University of Chicago, Cheryl worked at the Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education, University of Delaware, Stanford University, Marymount International School, Mastercard Foundation, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the World Food Programme. Cheryl has also served on the Board at the International School of Uganda, and Stoneleigh-Burnham School. Cheryl is a former parent at ICS and now lives in Chicago.

Yohannes Tsehai
Member

Yohannes Tsehai is an ICS alumnus and former substitute teacher at ICS. He is currently a Senior Advisor to H.E. President of Ethiopia, Sahle-Work Zewde. He manages the President's chairmanship of the International Commission on the Futures of Education convened by UNESCO, to rethink education in a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty, and inequalities. Yohannes believes in ICS's progressive, personalized learning mission and welcomes the opportunity to give back to his alma mater which helped shape his intellectual and personal development.

Previously Yohannes was a Managing Partner of Veritas, a leading policy advisory, investment, and management consulting firm in Ethiopia. He was also Director for the Center for Development Consulting (CDC). During his time in the US, he served as the Chief of Staff and Legislative Director for US Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, and worked as an attorney in New York at Cleary Gottlieb. Yohannes is a graduate of Texas Southern University and Harvard Law School. A resident in Addis, Yohannes will serve a 4-year term.