

Letter From The Elementary School Principal

Dear Elementary School Families,

Congratulations to our students in grades 3 through 5 who ran for student council office. Students spent a week campaigning, dressed professionally and presented well thought out and excellently executed election speeches. We now have a full electoral cabinet that is energetic, bursting with great ideas and full of anticipation to collaborate with all other student council members to plan and execute activities this school year.



We are committed to maintaining regular communication about student academic progress. When collaboration amongst teachers, parents, students and other stakeholders takes place, academic growth is the inevitable outcome. Last month you received your child's progress report, prior to that you received your child's MAP assessment results. Next month students who receive and or those who are in need of additional academic or social emotional support will receive an additional progress report (this includes students who attend ESOL class).

Parent teacher conferences will take place on **Friday November 12, 2020**. Conferences are an excellent opportunity for parents and teachers to collaborate and speak about students' success and areas of needed growth. All elementary teachers and students are currently utilizing **Seesaw** to develop their digital portfolios. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have not received Seesaw login information or if you need assistance utilizing the platform. All elements of communication and reporting are important, and we encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's learning and growth.

Thank you for your continued collaboration and support,



Ms. Mixon

Elementary School Principal



Letter From The Upper School Principal



Dear Upper School Parents,

We have had a very **productive** month. There have been a number of activities focused on student safety, learning and teacher development.

From a **safety** standpoint, we conducted a Lockdown and Safe Haven Drill. Both of these are designed to familiarize staff and students with emergency procedures in the event of a threat on campus. We know that preparation and planning can be instrumental in reducing the impact of this type of event. During the drill we noticed some areas that needed improvement and we modified our Safety Protocols.

On September 16, Ms. Sanfo conducted an assembly on Service Learning. This has been an integral part of the ISO learning experience for years. Students from Grades 6-12 brainstorm ideas on how they might **develop and execute** a project that helps the school community, or community at large. It provides a wonderful experience in thinking about ways to contribute to the world around you. Not coincidentally, it perfectly dovetails with



our MSA accreditation goal of incorporating the 5C's (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking and Community).

This week Grade 10 and 11 students are taking the PSAT and NSMQT to prepare for the SAT and qualify for scholarships. The PSAT serves as a strong **diagnostic** tool to guide students in preparation for the SAT. Although we are seeing some movement away from the SAT by certain universities, it still remains an important tool in college admissions, and a strong indicator of future success in higher level academics.

On September 24, ISO held its first **Professional Development** Day this year for teachers. In the morning session, teachers worked in teams to address action plans for MSA accreditation goals. This is an instrument of **continuous school improvement**, and serves as a schoolwide guide for implementation of best practices. This was followed by afternoon sessions in respective divisions. In Upper School, teachers met in subject specific teams to focus on ensuring that there is continuity from one grade to the next in terms of content and instruction. Simply put, we want to make sure students know what they need to know before moving on to the next level.

Letter From The Upper School Principal

In visiting classrooms over the last month, I am pleased to report that students are **engaged in their learning**. Last week, in one day, I saw students giving speeches in English, solving problems in cooperative groups in Math, and performing a Japanese style play that they wrote in Theater! We know they are benefitting from this rich and varied approach to education.

As always, I welcome your input and discussion,

Sincerely,



IBDP Contribution

The past month has been busy for the DP. As our Year 1 students (Grade 11) are now getting used to the rigor and rhythm of the programme, Year 2 students (Grade 12) have been reflecting on their progress thus far through a series of meetings. With their parents, they participated in individual meetings discussing their college application process with Ms. Nancy Weis-Sanfo and looked at their first predicted grades with Ms. Marie-Hélène Pichette. From teacher and parent feedback, a few things emerged out of these meetings.

- First, an after school English Writing Workshop has been created. Under the direction of Mr. Scott Chaffin, select Year 2 students will strengthen their writing skills in order to be successful in all aspects of the DP. These mandatory sessions will be held at least until December 14th or until the students have reached the writing objectives.
- It is more than ever important to ensure that our students have some long-term planning technique. No matter how hard teachers try to avoid too many assessments being given on the same day or how often we give reminders to students, this will not give positive results unless the students decide to take their learning in their own hands.
- With the rigor and increased content of the DP curriculum, more students are working with external tutors. Although some of these hired tutors claim to be “IB recognized” or “IB authorized”, no such thing exists in the IB. Tutors can be certified to teach the DP in their own school, but the IB does not have a recognized tutoring system. It is therefore crucial that all students who are working with external tutors also work with their ISO teachers. Tutors should always be in contact with the student’s teacher in order to understand in which areas they should focus their work.

As usual, collaboration is the key to the students’ success. It is only by working together (teachers, parents, students) that we will ensure positive results.

Marie-Hélène Pichette

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Associate Upper School Principal

