

TOUCHSTONE

A PTA Publication Issue 1 / 2020-2021



"Sometimes the strength within you is not a big fiery flame for all to see. It is just a tiny spark that whispers ever so softly "You got this. Keep going."

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A Story in a Nutshell

Gunjan Mullick, Chief Editor

Leadership / ES / MS / PTA / Sports / Travelogue / Native Language / Gastronomy Editor



My daily walks have become an absolute necessity in my quest to remain as level-headed as possible amidst the current global crisis. Most often these walks take me winding through familiar paths and sights. Like many others living in the neighbourhood, I too have encountered all kinds of wildlife on these exuberant trails. From monitor lizards, snakes to countless birds and insects, but my favourite spotting by far, was just the other day!

The sun had suddenly turned hot and bright and unknowingly I increased my pace as I walked, to keep it out of my eyes and that's when I spotted him! A tiny, quarter-sized turtle sitting right on my path. My heart sank! His shell was dry and he was all coiled up inside. I'd never encountered one of these turtles before, let alone one this small or one right in the middle of a route that's very popular with cyclists. They could crush a shell that small in a millisecond. He was definitely in danger!

When I knelt down to get a closer look, he stuck his tiny head out the slightest bit from its shell and stared right back. Here was a tiny creature, terrified and alone, hunkered up in his shell to stay safe from the myriad threats to his life, yet brave enough to peek at this monstrous creature who had stopped to examine him intently. For all you know it was waiting for me to get out of its way yet I chose to believe that his steely gaze was a cry for help instead. He was facing the lake but was on the far side of the path from it — a dangerous journey for a critter so small and one that he couldn't make alone without being crushed. So, I did what anyone would do: I pinched him between two fingers and lifted him to the other side of

the path. He remained immobile in my hands, likely in shock but the moment I put him down, he scrambled through the dirty underbrush, back towards the water, he probably called home.

As I watched him walk away, and I continued on mine, I realized what this turtle had just taught me. That ever so often we get stuck in life! We hit dangerous hurdles and insurmountable roadblocks, and so often we continue to soldier on simply to prove to ourselves that we can handle our problems alone. But sometimes we need help! Help from friends, family, peers, colleagues and even kind strangers, to simply walk beside us and see us through. We aren't any weaker when we seek help. In fact, doing so is often the bravest thing one can do, as it exposes our vulnerabilities to others and vulnerability is neither winning or losing. It's having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome. In keeping with our current times, it's our greatest measure of courage. So as you navigate your way through yet another year, reeling under the continued strains of uncertainty... trust the wait. Embrace uncertainty, enjoy the beauty of becoming. When nothing is certain, anything is possible!

However, if troubles and strife continue to burden you? Don't be afraid to ask someone to lift you across the walking path to the safety of the river. You might be surprised by how great it feels.

Take it from a tiny turtle who made his way home that day.



Foot Note: This is not him as I do not carry my phone on my walks. But, just this once I wish I had!

Adapting with Care

Cassandra Waters, High School Editor



Welcome to the first issue of ISBs Touchstone magazine for the 2020-2021 school year. I am delighted there is an issue despite the challenges of Covid-19. The compromise comes in the digital format, but the bonus is an extra issue. You will receive 4 issues of Touchstone this year, with the fourth culminating issue coming in print. Your first issue covers ISB events until the end of September. Therefore the pages are fewer, so feel free to plow right through it all and enjoy all the upbeat stories of our great school's perseverance in the trying times of the pandemic.

I began the year with the ISB Booster Club to welcome all the new and returning families to the inaugural Pancake Breakfast aligned with the Panther Activities Fair. Just like many calendar events the risks had to be weighed, and changes in format implemented. I was pleasantly surprised that with a few tweaks to ticket sales and food service we overcame the obstacles and had a lovely morning. That is the theme you will find throughout this edition. Lovely things are happening because ISB leaders and students show care and responsibility while being adaptable and creative.

Our High School did not miss a beat implementing curriculum and activities. Despite the challenges of spring and canceled IB exams, student scoring was strong, laying a foundation for an even better year. School and College Counselors were ready to meld the virtual needs of students awaiting entry or quarantine completion, and even had universities visit with college bound seniors. Student service or clubs have had a modicum of change to maintain the integrity of student safety, but they have found ways to keep moving forward. Our PantherNation student writers remind us of the ISB learner attributes in action. With the digital format we are sharing two of their articles. Witness the self-managing abilities of our high school clubs, and become more globally-minded while considering the plight of Yemen in contrast to our current circumstances.

As your High School Principal, Justin Alexander, implores- I wish you hope and positivity as you move forward in the 2020-2021 school year. I hope you do not forget the history that has brought us here, but turn forward and do not look back, as we are not going that way.

Please click or swipe to the next page and enjoy your first issue.

Blessed

Emi Tokai, Graphic Designer and Social Media / Arts & Activities, Booster, Community Coordinator



I am still pinching myself, wondering if I will wake up to find that we are in lockdown and our life has come to a standstill. But no, we are awake and living our lives as close to normal. I see my husband and son heading off to work and school, return home to share their stories with me, as they did before COVID-19.

As an expat child myself, I know how the structure of a school life is important for nomadic children. It's not only an integral part of their nomadic path but their identities too. The friends they make at school are a blessing and their anchor. Those they make as they grow older often remain friends for life. I tell my child each day to enjoy everyday to the fullest, spend time with his friends when he can and never take things for granted.

COVID-19 has reminded us in a harsh way that nothing in life is forever or will stay the same either. It taught us to savor and be grateful for our blessings. My son has many friends around the world that are not as lucky as him. If operational, most schools are teaching virtually while others have shut down. Just thinking of the plight of those children breaks my heart. I am so thankful that we live in Thailand and my son is blessed to have a school to go to. The new norm is not easy, but when I listen and look around me I have to say we are so blessed!



Welcome to the 2020/21 School Year - On Campus!

Dr. Andrew Davies, Head of School



The last edition of *Touchstone* understandably had a strong COVID-19 / virtual school focus. For this edition, however, we can thankfully celebrate a successful return to campus and a resumption of almost all of the activities that provide such richness to the ISB student experience.

Almost all of our new students are with us on campus and all of our new teachers have now arrived. Enrolment is even a little higher than last school year.

We are still pinching ourselves that the school is operating in person and are deeply thankful for the incredible work of the Royal Thai Government in keeping Thailand COVID free and such a safe place to be. We are very much the envy of the world right now.

We are also very thankful for the good thinking and hard work of our school leadership team, the faculty, and our Classified Staff in preparing for the safe reopening of school. The details were numerous, but almost everything planned was accomplished.

I would like to give a special mention of our Headmistress, Usa Somboon, who represented the interest of international schools through her role as President of the International School Association of Thailand (ISAT). The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Public Health proved to be great partners and they worked with us to ensure schools could open, new teachers and students could enter the Kingdom, and most activities could resume.

Our Director of Risk Management, Mark Hevland, also worked tirelessly and expertly alongside our Deputy Head of School for Operations / CFO, Marc De Vries, to ensure our school was prepared to operate as safely as possible.

Our strong hopes are that ISB can remain open, that Thailand remains as safe as it is now, that the world works together to overcome COVID-19, and that normal life for everyone returns as soon as possible.

Virtual School 2020-2021

Jennifer DeLashmutt, Director of Curriculum and Professional Learning



The 2020-2021 school year began like no other. We are so very fortunate to have been given permission to welcome students, faculty and staff on our campus for face to face learning. School opened for our first day on August 10, 2020 and most of our students and faculty were on campus by the end of the week. Those who are not in Thailand or who are in quarantine, we are and have been connecting with virtually, since the onset of the school year.

At the time of this writing, almost all of our faculty members are back on campus and only a handful of students in each division are engaging in school virtually. ISB faculty and staff prioritised safety and routines over the summer, and developed plans for learning for those not yet on campus. As a team, we have been reviewing and revising our Virtual School learning plans based on our reflections from last spring. As we look ahead, we want to identify what we have learned from our Virtual School experiences and how we can continuously improve. Additionally, we have been revising our protocols and procedures, should we have to shut campus down abruptly due to any government response to COVID.

For our students learning remotely, the year began with live Zooms for students to be a part of the class from afar. Zoom sessions were recorded for students to access lessons at an appropriate time, depending upon their location. The personalisation for students based on their needs and situations, as well as our reflections on our learning from last year have allowed virtual learning sessions to evolve. For example, we discovered that air pods work much better than a lapel microphone for teachers and students. The

airpods have better sound quality and allow the teacher to hear the comments and questions from the online students in one ear, while interacting and sharing with the students who are in the classroom. Additionally, teachers are creating screencasts or recordings of just the lesson, rather than the entire class session, and offering office hours to support students in their goal setting, time management and self-regulation.

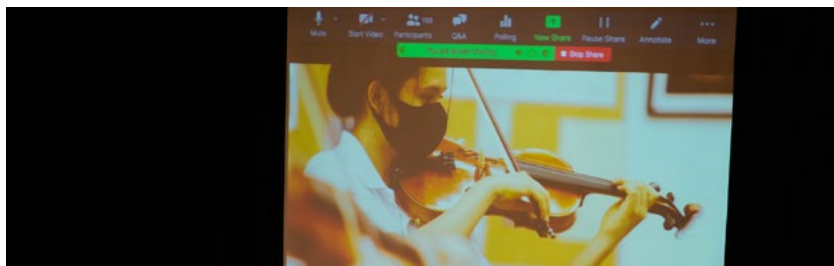
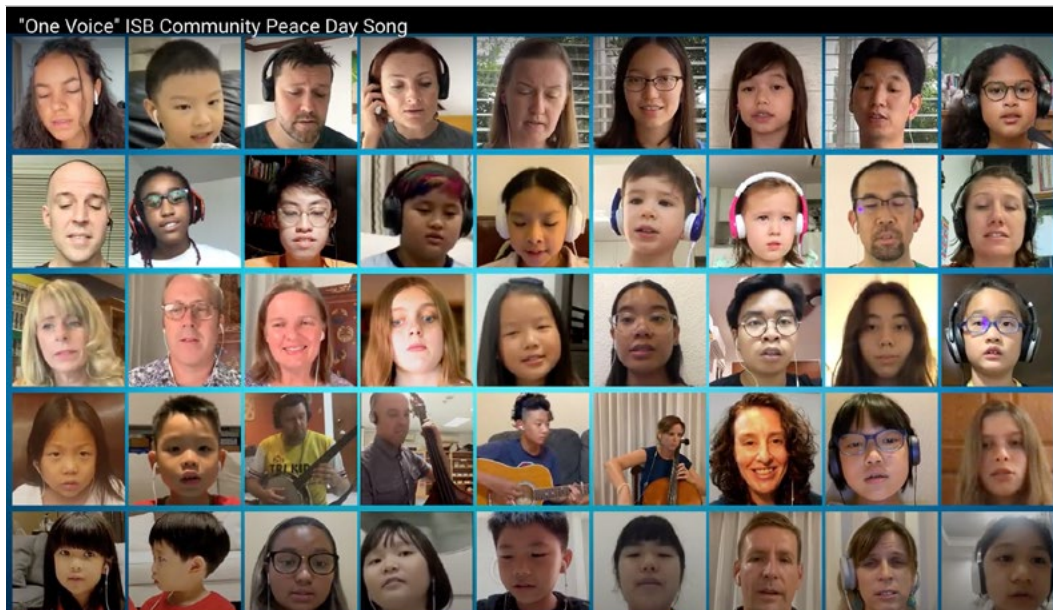
Teachers who still have students learning virtually are feeling the extra workload. As one would expect, some students are doing really well with virtual school, while others are missing the face to face learning opportunities that being on campus provides. One faculty member shared that the longer term virtual school students are being supported to help make connections with other students and customise their learning through breakout rooms for example, and some language classes will continue to use some form of Zoom, that best fits language learning.

When faculty and students arrive for the first time on campus, there is such a sense of gratitude and elation, "I am so happy to be here and back at school!" Many students and families know other students who are unable to be at their schools full time or at all due to COVID restrictions. We are fortunate to have the resources, tools and faculty to offer virtual school for all students like last spring, or for some of our students like this fall. Learning from our Virtual School experience last year, we know that learning is social and being together in the classroom is not to be taken for granted.



Peace Day

Shelley Bragg, Director of Marketing, Communications and Alumni



In September, we celebrated our first virtual Peace Day assembly with the whole campus coming together to watch a live broadcast of a production created and delivered by some of our high school students. The assembly, *Shaping Peace Together*, drew on themes of compassion and kindness from the 2020 UN International Day of Peace (celebrated on September 21).

The virtual assembly was planned and hosted by our High School Global Issues Network Club and allowed us to share the experience synchronously as a school community while providing a unique opportunity for each class to discuss these important themes in scheduled classroom discussions after the assembly.

From kindergarten to high school, our students came together to show how we shape peace together by demonstrating adaptability, care, integrity, and courage.

The assembly included a dance video, *Give Peace a Dance*, by the Middle School Dance Team; a video showcase of the Elementary School Visual Art Project and Installation, *Birds for Peace*, and performances by the High School String Musicians, Grade 2 and 3 poets, and more. A highlight was the “One Voice” compilation from ISB Community Musicians. Each performance and video added to the theme of the event and shared important commentary on peace and compassion.

There was also an abundance of positive feedback and gratitude for the assembly.

“What a beautiful and meaningful assembly!! Thanks so much for making this happen in our school.”

“Thanks for putting together such a meaningful assembly. Very impressive and clearly required a lot of orchestration of people.”

“ありがとう! Merci! 감사합니다! Danke schön! 謝謝 and 謝謝 ๗๐๖๑๑๓๕๖๗๘๙! So appreciated the virtual but very real focus on paix/vrede/שלום and diversidad that today’s assembly created.”

“Thank you for your hard work in creating such a beautiful program for our entire school. I had tears in my eyes - it was meaningful and relevant. Hearing the voices of our community, PK-12 and beyond, are of utmost importance always, and especially now.”

“Sooooo great! ♥️”

“Really well put together and a positive message for us all.”

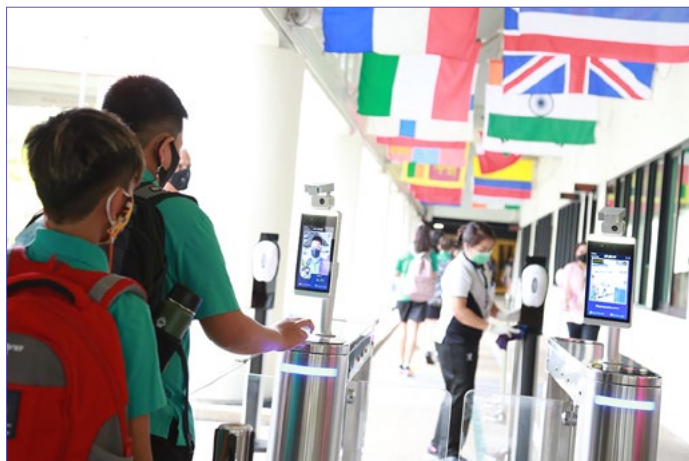
We strongly believe in the importance of the Annual Peace Day Assembly and although the event is only once a year, we hold onto the values the event cultivates for much longer.

Thank you for all those that worked to make this assembly possible and a success. Well done, in particular, to the Global Issues Network!

Happy Peace Day!

A Safe Reopening: ISB's Reopening Plan

Shelley Bragg, Director of Marketing, Communications and Alumni



We were so pleased and fortunate to be able to open our campus safely for the start of our school year on August 10th. The opening was made possible by a combination of the stable situation in Thailand - thanks to measures taken by the Thai government in response to the pandemic - and also a robust and well-resourced reopening plan developed by our Director of Risk Management and Crisis Management Team. It has allowed us to bring all of our students back together, and for them to continue their learning, and the majority of their regular activities, in person.

As ISB looked to reopen, we were guided by two key principles:

1. The health and safety of students, staff, and our community are paramount, and
2. The educational and social emotional needs of students are best provided in a face to face environment on campus.

Our plan was reviewed by two safety consultancies at Control Risks (Singapore) and Clearpath Emergency Planning Management (USA) – as well as the US Embassy's Bangkok RSO office and took into account the input and concerns of our parent community.

Our approach to ensuring safety encompassed six main areas based on research and expert advice: Physical Distancing, Campus Health Screening, Promotion of Hygiene (hand washing, wearing masks, respiratory hygiene), Cleaning & Disinfecting, Education & Training, and Communication.

Considerable financial investment was required to equip the campus in order to properly put this plan in place, with our biggest purchase being automatic turnstiles for each main entrance. We further “automated” the campus, to reduce high touch areas, by installing automated hand sanitizer dispensers and water refill stations. We installed additional wash basins and screen dividers in the cafeteria and classrooms where necessary. We also purchased additional disinfection materials and had them distributed throughout the campus for easy disinfecting and regular cleaning.

We took time to create a plan that incorporated the regulations from the Ministry of Education and OPEC, guidance from the CDC for school reopenings, and measures being taken by other international schools.

There was concern that the various safety measures that needed to be put in place, particularly the compulsory mask wearing and physical distancing, would create a stark change to school life. However, we have been pleased to see that students have adapted well and these measures have not restricted learning, connection or collaboration.

It's been wonderful to see the campus bustling again and we want to extend our thanks to the entire community for your cooperation with these safety measures and remaining positive and supportive throughout.

Our thoughts continue to go out to those families in other places in the world, who are not yet able to return to regular schooling and we hope the situation improves for them soon.



A Covid-19 Drive-In Graduation

Harold Albert, Alumni Coordinator



Like high school and university graduates around the world, the ISB Class of 2020 was faced with the disappointing reality that due to the pandemic their graduation ceremony was not going to happen, at least in the traditional sense. After nearly a semester of virtual school and missing out on all of the time-honored traditions of senior year, it seemed that the best-case scenario was something other than a real graduation. Alas, such is life for graduating seniors in these days of the Coronavirus! At least until the ISB High School Leadership got together in the early spring for a brain-storming session to discuss the situation.

Principal Justin Alexander, Dean of Academics Justyna McMillan, and Dean of Students Andy Vaughan understood quite well the predicament that the Class of 2020 faced and were determined to find a unique solution to the rather thorny problem. Given that there were some 140 graduating seniors, the prospects of getting the entire group together was not realistic. With that the trio developed a plan that would get all of the graduating seniors onto the ISB campus, allow them to walk across the stage and receive their diploma just like a ‘normal’ graduation ceremony, all this whilst still maintaining the proper social-distancing protocol outlined by the school’s pandemic policy. Here’s the plan that the group devised:

1) Given that people could drive into ISB, it was decided to have the families sign up to enter the campus at 10-minute intervals over the course of four or five days. The graduation gowns were distributed to the graduates in the weeks leading up to the graduation.

2) Once the car was parked, the student and his/her family had time for photos outside of the Chevron Theater and then in the foyer of the theater. While the normal venue for the ISB graduation ceremony is Rajendra Hall, the Chevron Theater was adorned with flowers and decorations befitting a grand graduation ceremony.

3) Once inside the Chevron, the senior was to make his/her entrance into the theater by descending the stairs to the strains of “Pomp and Circumstance.” The ISB tech crew under the excellent direction of

Khun Sathit Kaivaivatana, with assistance from a professional crew, was ready to record the entire procession.

4) The graduating senior was then to walk across the graduation stage and have his/her diploma presented by the accompanying family members. Not only was the ceremony to be recorded, but photographers were to be on hand to take professional photos of the ceremony. The graduate and family were then to exit the stage where they were given time to take more formal portraits and then photos in front of the Panther before leaving campus.

5) The entire procession was scheduled to take 50 minutes per family with up to five families moving through the process at once. Thus, over the course of four or five days all 140 graduates could enter the campus, walk graduation, and depart without breaking any of the Covid-19 regulations.

6) Other graduation traditions like speeches, musical performances, formal pronouncements, and the reading of names were all recorded over the course of the week, with individuals being invited to the ISB campus as needed.

7) Once all of the parts of the Drive-In Graduation had been recorded, the real work then began as the tech crew painstakingly spliced together the individual parts into a cohesive program. The resulting ISB Drive-In Graduation video was then streamed live online at approximately the same time as the regular graduation ceremony was to have taken place. The video can be seen here, <https://www.facebook.com/ISBInternationalSchoolBangkok/videos/774576943372028>.

Congratulations to the High School Leadership team for coming up with such an elegant solution to such a difficult problem, and kudos to the outstanding ISB tech crew who made the final ISB Drive-In Graduation Ceremony look even better than a regular one. And, quite naturally, special felicitations to the awesome ISB Class of 2020, the resulting ceremony was a tribute to your hard work, grit and determination over the final months of your senior year!



Congratulations *Class of 2020*



Your ISB Booster Club

Kelly Mott, Booster Club President



The beginning of the 2020-2021 school year has certainly been unlike any other; however, it has not slowed down our PANTHER PRIDE! The ISB Booster Club is made up of a dedicated group of volunteer parents, faculty, and alumni who enthusiastically promote school spirit while supporting students involved in athletics, the arts, and academic programs like MUN and Forensics & Debate. From the Elementary School play to High School graduation, we foster the PANTHER SPIRIT through a welcoming environment and fun comradery. How do we do this?

- We are the friendly faces in the Booster Hut.
- We are creating and selling ISB swag.
- We are the cheering fans in the Spirit Tent.
- We are directing traffic to visiting musicians and artists at festivals and cultural conventions.
- We host the first all school function of the year – the Pancake Breakfast.
- We are baking delicious PANTHER POPS!

By raising funds and encouraging community involvement, these are just a few of the ways we support ISB students at all grade levels.



On August 15th, we started off strong by hosting the annual Booster Club Pancake Breakfast in collaboration with the Panther Activities Fair. We thoroughly enjoyed welcoming new and old families back to campus after a long absence due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Led by Cassie Waters, Pancake Coordinator, we introduced an online cashless ticketing system and a new Thai Breakfast option as well as serving up the yummy traditional fair of pancakes, eggs, and sausages. This event could not have been successful without our student volunteers. Special thanks to Varsity Council and Arts Council members for taking orders and helping with set up. Also, a big ‘thank you’ to the phenomenal team of Girl Scouts that served as hostesses and servers while the ever-so-gallant Boy Scouts were on hand to help clear and set tables to keep everything moving smoothly.





In conjunction with ISB’s Spirit Week, what once was our ES T-Shirt Sale became the new Black & Gold T-Shirt Sale on September 23rd-24th. Online presales, a new location at the ‘pond patio’ for in-person sales, 2 new t-shirt designs and new swag were all introduced under the leadership of Takky McGary, ES Coordinator. It was a lively event made even more special with the appearance of ISB’s mascot, SPIRIT, to greet students in the morning. Our deepest gratitude goes to the many volunteers that gave their time to make this event a success that grossed over 90,000 baht!

There is more on the horizon for Booster Club... so stay tuned! Please continue to watch the ISB eNews and our Facebook page for the volunteer sign-up notices for the Booster Hut, Spirit Tent, Panther Pops and other areas. Everyone is welcome. GO PANTHERS!



Although Spirit Night and attendance to all concerts were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Booster Club is always an active supporter and super fan of ISB programs and students. The Spirit Tent was open for two amazing athletic events on September 25th-26th and October 9th-10th. We sold drinks and light snacks to athletes visiting our campus and were glad to cheer on our own varsity soccer and volleyball teams from the breezeway. We also eagerly lent a helping hand to allow our ISB students to continue to pursue their artistic and academic passions at the Bangkok Massed Band Festival (September 18-19), Bangkok International Strings Festival (September 25-26), Bangkok International Choir Festival (October 2-3), and the Bangkok Model United Nations -MUN (October 11). We can’t thank our volunteers enough for their continued support of Booster Club activities.

BOOSTER CLUB – SPOTLIGHT

The BOOSTER HUT is the heart of the Booster Club operation and is located next to the MS/HS cafeteria. Profits from our sales, go directly to support student activities throughout the school. Led by our energetic Booster Coordinator, Heather Clary and the Purchasing ‘Dream’ Team of Non Itiravivong, Mai Kornakamon, Janene Coetzer, Rosalin Nitidandhaprabhas, the HUT is always introducing new designs and apparel, ranging from T-shirts, hoodies, socks, water bottles and of course the COVID-19 essential – mask. This is the place to pick up your spirit wear and gear to show your PANTHER PRIDE!

The Booster Hut is also a great and easy way to get involved and make new friends. If you like to get involved, feel free to stop by the shop to learn more or email booster-hut@isb.ac.th.



Message from PTA President

Dunke Tostevin, PTA President 2020 - 2021



Welcome to the new and exciting 2020 - 2021 school year, it will truly be unlike any other.

If this is your first year at ISB, I would like to extend an especially warm welcome.

As we start this special year together during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PTA will focus on having a positive impact on the lives of children and families in the community through smaller events, while giving help to the ISB staff when needed.

In a typical school year, the ISB PTA hosts some wonderful events such as Coffee Meets, Staff Appreciation Days, Popcorn Fridays, ES Intercultural Day and the International Family Fair. We also provide enriching programs through our Adult Education Courses and we support our students and staff through grants.

As our 2020 - 2021 school year is looking different, our PTA events and activities will be looking different too! They will also be a lot of fun.

What doesn't change, is that all of these programs (and more not mentioned) are made possible by the generosity of VOLUNTEERS!

We hope you have noticed our new Lost and Found ideas. It might seem like something small but at times like this even something as simple as reuniting a little one with their favourite teddy brings a lot of joy.

Please reach out to me or any of the PTA Board officers or community representatives should you have any questions or suggestions.

Sincerely,
Dunke Tostevin
ISB PTA President 2020 - 2021



Community Representatives September Gathering

KJ Bakkejord, PTA Vice President 2020 - 2021



In September the PTA had its first monthly community representatives meeting.

It was nice to see that so many were able to come. Many have already had their community get together or are planning to. The director of partnership also came to talk about his role at school.

If your community doesn't have a representative yet and you would like to take on that role, please send me an email and we can have a chat.

pta-vp@isb.ac.th



Come and Join Welcome Wai Events!

Mayuko Mibu and Yukiko Oguchi, Welcome Wai Coordinators



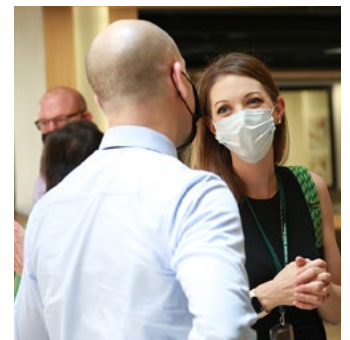
The PTA Welcome Wai is committed to welcoming new families to ISB by planning events that bring our community together. This year though it was quite a challenge for us to do so because of COVID-19. However, beating the odds we still managed to host a “Welcome Back Coffee” for our new and returning ISB families on September 2nd.

We take this opportunity to thank you for coming to our first Welcome Coffee event!



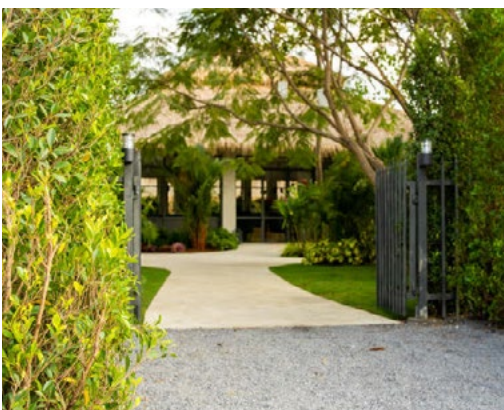
We had been missing school, friends, and the regular routine of our daily lives for several months, so it was a pleasure indeed for us to meet you all and to introduce the ISB community to our new parents. We wish to express our sincere gratitude to Dr Andrew Davis, the ISB Leadership team members, every community Rep, and all participants for such a successful event. We wish to cherish our wonderful friendships and relationship with you all, in the years ahead.

As we informed you earlier, we will have more events planned throughout the year. Please feel free to come and enjoy coffee with us each time we do. Our next event is slated for December 3rd at Sweet Poppy, a beautiful and comfortable restaurant that is close to our school.



We look forward to meeting you again!





See you December 3rd at Sweet Poppy.

Indian Community Social

Rika Gupta and Pooja Kapoor, Indian Community Representatives



As we sent our kids packing to school this August, most of us with a great sigh of relief we imagine, one of the topmost priorities on our agenda was to bring the community back together as soon as possible. After months of lockdown, quarantine, cancelled and repurposed travel plans, we were eager to seize the moment and quickly organized ourselves for our first meeting of the school year on September 3.

Naturally, food was an important part of our gathering. Several of our Nichada families and a few from downtown joined us for an extensive lunch menu inspired by the culinary traditions of Rajasthan. While we are still awaiting some of our new families to come to Thailand, we have been able to connect with them virtually and are hoping to welcome them in person in the coming weeks.

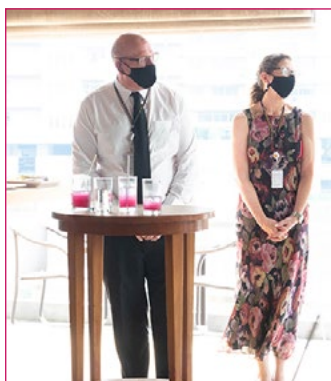


We are excited to jump into volunteer opportunities at school this year and contribute to positive and diverse learning experiences for our students. The ES Intercultural Day, MS Olympics and organizing special treats for our graduating class are just some of the ways we are hoping to continue our involvement at ISB. We look forward to making the most of this year!



JPC Coffee Morning @ Vapor Restaurant on 23rd September 2020

Miho Yamaguchi, Japanese Parents Community Representative



It is our long standing annual tradition to organize a gathering at the beginning of the school year to welcome new families to our community at ISB, besides welcoming returning families too. However, due to Covid-19 restrictions and regulations that currently define our new normal, we were forced to think outside of the box, this year.

Thanks to both the JPC (Japanese Parents Community) leadership team and Nichada Thani management, we were able to host our informal coffee morning at the famous VAPOR restaurant. It was an honour to have ISB's Leadership Team, ISB PTA President, Booster Club President and Ms. Morizono our Japanese liaison join us on Wednesday, September 23rd as we hosted the same. We had a wonderful time catching up and welcoming our new members.

We haven't given up yet on trying to host our formal annual gathering at school. We are planning to do so within this year, but in the meantime we are in full preparation for our very first Japanese Marketplace fundraiser in October with another showcase in November. Stay tuned and we sincerely hope to see you all at our events. All proceeds from the sales will help us in continuing our support towards IFF and Intercultural Day at ISB. We would also like to expand our activities to create interaction with Japanese heritage and culture, for which your support and help is sought.

Thank you so much.
Miho Yamaguchi



Being at ISB -A Two Years Reflection

Xiao He, ISB Parent



We started our third year at ISB in August of 2020. I am the kind of a person who loves to write resolutions and wrap ups each time I start or finish something big. My son Oliver finished middle school and started high school this year. This is a big event for our family and the feeling is great... It's time for a reflection!

We came to Thailand in late July 2018. However, coming to Thailand and starting at ISB was not part of our original plan. I was told by my husband that he will be transferred from DC to Thailand in June, when I was still preparing to move to our new home in Virginia. I had traveled for work to Bangkok many times in the past, before moving to North America. Bangkok was both a familiar city and much closer to our extended families in China. Although Oliver was not willing, I was more than happy to come "back." Also I had been told by many friends that ISB, the school Oliver was planning on going to, happened to be one of the best schools in Thailand, and probably one of the best in Southeast Asia. The first sight of the school excited me and it truly looked like one of the elite schools, which I have been longing to put Oliver in.

The first year at ISB was quite challenging for Oliver. The new surroundings, new kids, very hot and humid weather, far more tech-advanced teaching style, being unceremoniously dumped into middle school while he was still in elementary mode (Most Elementary schools in BC Canada finish in grade 7) seemed overwhelming to him. He was passionate about basketball in grade 6 and not making it to the ISB basketball team, took him further away from loving ISB. No more ice hockey or snowboarding, no more weekend hikes or biking due to the heat, disappointed him further. These 'negative elements' seemingly penetrated into his academic learning too. Looking back, I still feel sorry for him, given the hardships he was experiencing in his very first half year at ISB. I am sure there are many kids used to an expat life and constant change, however, there are many like Oliver who need time to adapt and integrate.

I wish to express my gratitude to Ms. Cody who was Oliver's counselor in grade 7 and 8. She is empathetic and an expert in working with kids of his age. She worked together with Oliver's teachers to ensure enough attention and necessary support was given to Oliver without making him anxious or overwhelmed. The school admin team and teaching staff were really great, supportive, caring, and professional. Gradually, Oliver started making friends, enjoying some of his classes and teachers and tried new sports such as badminton and table tennis - all again a huge help. He was into table tennis and wanted to use every minute of his time playing it. Subsequently, his skills improved significantly. When he was in grade 8, he even tried to set up a table tennis club. He made a speech in the middle school moving-on ceremony and I was touched to see that



he was comfortable enough to admit that the club was not a success, however, he had learnt precious leadership lessons along the way. And the icing on the cake? He admitted that ISB is a great school!

I was actually a bit anxious for Oliver's high school life at the beginning of the school year. After the long virtual school mode I was worried, if he would fit into real campus life. Can he make friends? Can he handle the high school academic workload? Will he be able to use time wisely? Will he be independent enough to manage the various club activities?

The first six weeks soothed my anxiety. His good friend stays at ISB and they continue to play table tennis at lunch, every day. They also chose to join a few clubs together. Oliver also joined clubs to do community service. He studies hard after school and is motivated and serious about his schoolwork, and truth be told, his efforts have paid off. He tried again at basketball and was a lot calmer than before when he did not make it to the team. As a mom, nothing can be greater than seeing my child's inner growth this way. When I heard him whistling songs in his room while doing homework, my heart sang too. I am delighted to see him grow into a responsible 14-year-old kid with immense inner peace and calm. It's a real gem of life and I wish he can continue to have it till his adulthood. I am deeply aware that this won't be the entire picture of his high school

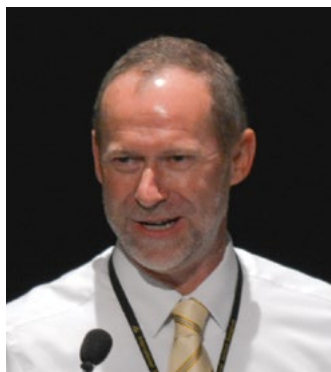
days. There will be ups and downs I am sure. However, I am very curious to know the external causes that could have contributed to this very welcomed growth. I want to identify it and maintain it, like all parents wish to do. I do believe that if these external contributions continue, we will all be blessed with peace in the years ahead.

This year I started to volunteer as a high school PTA coordinator. The role gave me many opportunities to interact with the school's admin team and other parents. Communication increases understanding. This is true. I always admire commitment and professionalism in a work setting. I found this in our high school. Although I am not an education specialist, and do not have professional sense to assess and describe how good the school is, by using industry benchmarks, as a parent, I use my gut to judge. From the communications and observations, I started to believe that the school must be one of the external causes I am looking for that have contributed well to my boy's well-being. I feel lucky not just for Oliver, but us as a family.

In addition, the PTA role reaffirms my belief that a relationship with mutual trust, respect and appreciation is a pleasant one and brings physical and mental health, prosperity and sustainability. I am grateful I am in such a relationship with our school.

Panther Activities

Anthony Giles, Panther Director



Paw Prints

A Quarterly Newsletter for Panther Activities at ISE



If “I can” was the motto for Panther Activities last year, then this year’s theme should be “Look what we can do together!” Despite the challenges related to COVID-19, Panther Activities opened in August with hundreds of kids. And if that wasn’t enough to celebrate, we also introduced a new registration platform, new names, and expanded offerings for students and adults!

New Name, New Platform, and New People

After years of referring to our headquarters and the programs organized there as the CAO Office, and CAO Activities (short for Community Activities Office), we have changed our name to **Panther Activities**, and the office to the **Panther Den**. We have also introduced a new registration platform, **CHQ**, that supports these Panther Activities including:



- BBSA
- Panther Arts
- Panther Basketball
- Panther Boy Scouts
- Panther Dance
- Panther Explore
- Panther Girl Scouts
- Panther Gymnastics
- Panther Music
- Panther Golf
- Panther Native Language Academy
- Panther Rugby
- Panther Soccer
- Panther Swim
- Panther Tennis
- Panther Volleyball
- Panther Baseball and Softball
- The return of Panther Cub Scouts
- Panther Fitness



In addition, we have a few new **Panther Coordinators** this year like Zack Wade for baseball and softball, Nandi Blanchard for basketball, Krittiya (Boom) Jalik-Fitzgerald for golf, Jordi Bartes for soccer, and Nannapat (Mint) Nantasuk for tennis.

Your input is requested!

While we aim to “Provide active, creative, diverse and collaborative opportunities for all students,” we can only make the programs better with input from the parents and students involved. To that end we look forward to hearing from you via the new Panther Activities survey at <https://forms.gle/BkqNfpQ37iKkz8u38>. What is going well, and in what areas can we do better?

Thank you for your ongoing support and feedback.

Panther Gymnastics

Torill Haga Olufsen, Panther Gymnastics Coordinator



The ISB Panthers Gymnastics program is in full swing, welcoming 237 gymnasts in nearly 20 weekly gymnastics and tumbling classes! Of course not everything has been ideal; several schools and clubs have altered their competitions, and mask use is a bit of a hindrance as we work to adhere to the safety guidelines of the athletics and activities programs. But overall, our program is strong and our skilled coaches are working hard so that our gymnasts are learning and enjoying gymnastics and progressing through the many lessons the sport offers.

Training, Coaching and Assessing:

ISB Panther Gymnastics Club utilizes the structure and routines of “Gymnastics Australia,” whose mission is to promote, develop and grow gymnastics for the enjoyment of all. We are fortunate to have had all of ISB’s coaches undergo extensive training including attending the Gymnastics Association of Thailand training for coaches at the Nationals Sports University in Sisaket Province. In addition, ISB provides specialized training for the staff in the areas of teaching, coaching, and communication skills, and physical and athletic training for stretching and related physical fitness. Head Coach Boy works closely with the coaching team to ensure each gymnast is also constantly supported, developed and assessed.

Panther Gymnastics Camps:

ISB Gymnastics Camps offer a chance for gymnasts to keep up practice during school breaks! Our first camp was offered during our October break and provided gymnasts from Pre-K1 up with an opportunity to get in the gym and enjoy a bit of a more casual practice. Sessions are flexible so that participants can attend as many or as few as they like. This year, ISB Panthers Gymnastics camps are planned for the following dates. (Look for registration information to be sent to you a month prior to each session.)

January Break Camp: 4-8 January, 2021

February Break Camp: 22-25 February, 2021

Summer Camp Week 1: 14-18 June, 2021

Summer Camp Week 2: 21-25 June, 2021

Special Parent Viewing:

Parents are always welcome to view their gymnasts from the bench overlooking the gym, but several times each year, the gym is open to parents to observe from a closer distance. During these times, benches within the air-conditioned gym are available to accommodate parents. We hope you mark your calendars and can come watch your gymnast for a day or two during the following Parent Viewing Weeks:

16-21 November

22-27 March 2021

24-27 May 2021

Planned Competitive Events:

As mentioned, our “new normal” has meant that some regular competitive meets have been scaled back or altered. However, there are two that are currently planned for November and December. The Bangkok Patana FOBISIA meet is scheduled to take place 28-29 November, 2020 at Bangkok Patana School in Bang Na, Bangkok. WAG (Women’s Australian Gymnastics) events will include gymnasts from levels 2-7, and MAG (Men’s Australian Gymnastics) events will include levels 1-5. As the event approaches, gymnasts will be selected to attend based on their current levels as well as the availability of spaces.

The ISB In-House Meet is scheduled to take place at ISB on 12 December, 2020. This is a “friendly” meet for gymnasts who attend two or more hours of weekly practice. Friendly meets provide an opportunity for gymnasts to prepare for and perform in a less stressful manner while still experiencing important elements of competitive meets like the “walk-on,” the rotations, judging and points, and team spirit!

New Normal

ISB has been enormously fortunate to be able to plan for the continuation of Panther Gymnastics this year. We realize that like our gymnasts, we all must remain *flexible* so that we can easily bend with any unforeseen events that may crop up, and we must remain *strong* in the face of possible adversities that we might encounter along the way. It’s our intention to come as close to normal as possible, realizing there may be challenges. We look forward to the school year and are grateful to have the capacity to provide this gymnastics program with ISB’s excellent facilities, coaching staff and support!

ISB Welcomes New Elementary School Principal Dr. Michael Allen



In December 2019, Dr. Michael Allen was appointed to the ES principal position beginning in the 2020-21 school year. Despite the additional challenges that came with moving to Thailand during COVID-19, Dr. Allen and his family arrived in Bangkok on July 21st, just in time for the start of the new school year!

August 2020 marked Dr. Allen's 20th year in international education and he is thrilled to be celebrating by joining us at ISB, one of the world's premier international schools. Prior to joining ISB, Dr. Allen was the Elementary Principal at Shanghai American School (SAS) for the past seven years. Dr. Allen also served as Elementary Principal at International School Nido de Aguilas in Santiago, Chile from 2005-2013, and as an Elementary School Principal at San Roberto International School in Monterrey, Mexico from 2002-2005. Prior to leadership experiences, Dr. Allen was an elementary school teacher.

Dr. Allen was born in Ontario, Canada and has earned a BA Degree and a Bachelor of Education Degree at the University of Regina, a Master's Degree in Education at Framingham State College, and a Doctor of Education Degree at Nova Southeastern University.

ISB also warmly welcomes Mrs. Caty Romero Allen to the community. Mrs. Romero is a math specialist currently teaching Grade 6 mathematics. Prior to joining ISB, Mrs. Romero was a Math Coach at Shanghai American School and has also worked in gifted education, as an ES Classroom teacher, and as a math consultant. Joining Dr. Allen and Mrs. Romero are their children Billy and Ana-Sofia who are seventh grade students here at ISB.

Welcome to the ISB community, Michael, Caty, Ana-Sofia and Billy!



Launching Our Home and School Partnership via Virtual Open House

Dr. Michael Allen, Principal



The 2020-21 school year launched its Elementary School Virtual Open House on August 27th. Parents and students, from Bangkok and around the world joined our collaborative grade level team of teachers as we launched important home and school partnerships. Open House provided parents with the opportunity to learn more about ISB's approach to learning programs as well as the class procedures and expectations. Students of all ages are most successful when there is a strong home and school partnership where families are able to link learning from school to their homes.

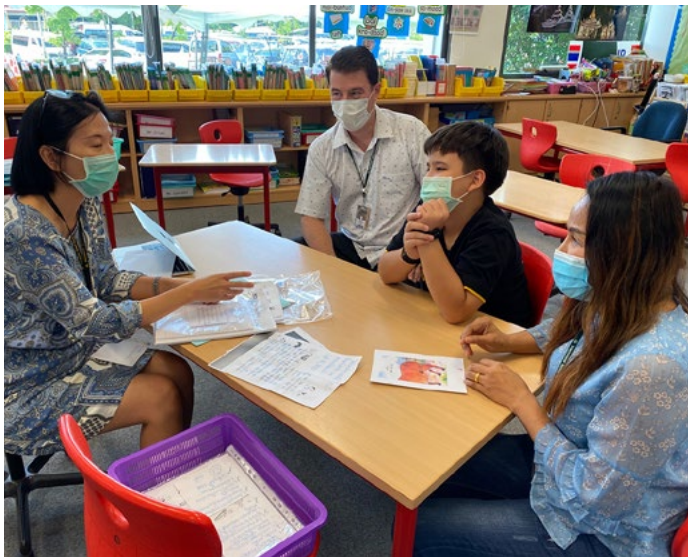
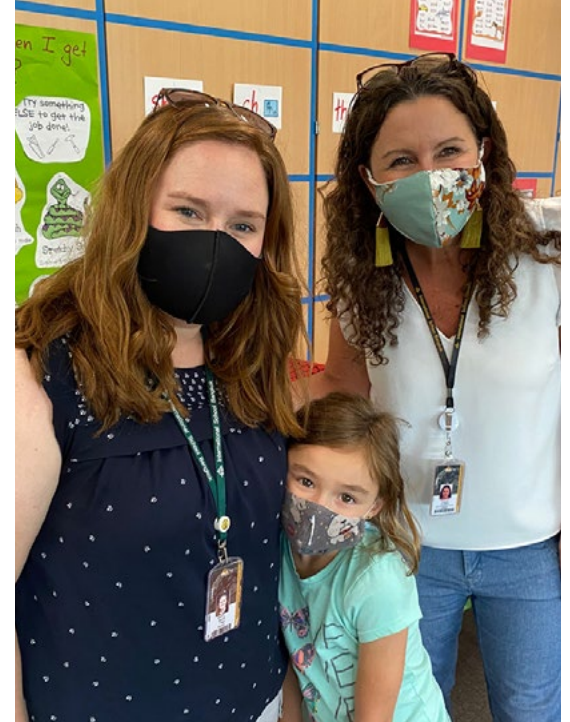
The responsibility for building partnerships between school and home rests primarily with school faculty, especially the school leaders. The ISB faculty and leaders provide parents with tools and strategies that allow them to link learning happening at school with their homes. Virtual Open House, weekly Friday ISB ES eNews, classroom updates to parents, student Seesaw posts, regularly scheduled "ES Parent Engage" workshops, Grade Level Curriculum Unit Overviews, and student-parent-teacher conferences are a sample of the tools used in the elementary school to support and empower parents.

On behalf of all of us at the elementary school, thank you for participating in our ES Virtual Open House. We look forward to working in partnership with you this school year.



Building Home and School Partnerships Through Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences

Dr. Michael Allen, Principal



On October 1 and 2 elementary school students, parents and teachers came together to celebrate student learning during the October Student-Parent Teacher Conferences.

If you had never participated in a conference with your child present, you might have asked, “What is this all about?” or “Why are children being included in conferences?” You might even have wondered when you would get a chance to “really talk” with the teacher about your child. We too asked these questions and spent a great deal of time researching and discussing the benefits to ensure that our teaching/learning/assessing/reporting process is at the forefront of current educational theories and practices. Conferences which include the child have been used for many decades and their efficacy for promoting optimal student outcomes has been well documented over time.

At ISB, we believe that children are in charge of their learning and we give them many opportunities to know their capability besides realising that they can influence what happens to them. Students, parents and teachers come together to discuss all areas of the child’s behavior and learning with openness and transparency, so that children continue to feel empowered and responsible for their behavior and learning.



During the annual Student Led Conferences in March, students will lead all aspects of the conference. This Student Led Conference format has a different look and feel than the October student-parent-teacher conferences. During each 45-minute time slot there will be 3-4 families in the classroom, creating a more relaxed environment and giving parents more time to engage in the presentation of their child’s work.



Benefits of Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences for Students

Some of the documented student benefits of Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences include the following:

- Accountability for their learning
- Ownership of the learning process
- Increased commitment to school work
- Increased interaction between child and parents
- Increased independence
- Ability to self-assess
- Increased confidence and self-esteem
- Development of leadership skills
- Fostering of organizational, communication and critical thinking skills

Benefits of Student-Parent-Teacher conferences for Parents

Some of the documented parent benefits of Student-Parent-Teacher Conferences include the following:

- Active participation in your child's learning
- Better understanding of your child's learning successes and challenges
- Forum for parents to have a voice that is heard by teachers and children
- Improved communication between home and school
- The creation of a forum for you to talk with your children productively and positively



Launching Our Parent Partnership with Virtual Open House

Sarah Fleming, Vice Principal



The elementary school launched our strong parent-teacher partnerships for the 2020-21 school year with a very successful Virtual ES Open House in August! Parents attended collaborative grade level presentations to learn about curriculum and grade level experiences, as well as attending sessions with their child's classroom teachers, Specialists and support teachers. All live on Zoom!

Open House has multiple purposes, and we know it is one of the most important events of the school year in establishing strong home-school partnerships. The purposes of Open House include:

- To establish a relationship and partnership between parents and teachers.
- To build parents' understanding about ISB's approaches to learning.
- To inform parents about class procedures, programs and expectations.
- To demonstrate that grade levels work collaboratively to create consistent learning experiences.

We know that Zoom doesn't feel quite the same as being live on campus in your child's learning spaces. However, we hope parents left feeling more informed about ISB's approaches to learning, and with more insight into their child's classroom communities. Many parents expressed that they appreciated hearing from teaching teams about grade level curriculum and common learning experiences.

All parents have dreams for their children and want the best for them and all parents have the capacity to support their child's learning. We believe that parents and teachers are equal partners, and we look forward to more opportunities to connect and partner together throughout the school year.



Launching a New School Year!

Jeff Scott, Vice Principal



On August 11th 2020 the Elementary School hallways, learning spaces, and playgrounds came alive once again as we welcomed students back onto campus. Joy filled the air as students reconnected with their friends, met their teachers, and started a new year of learning!

To reflect the government guidelines around health and safety, and ensure that all of our community members feel safe and supported at school during these times, some key measures have been put in place:

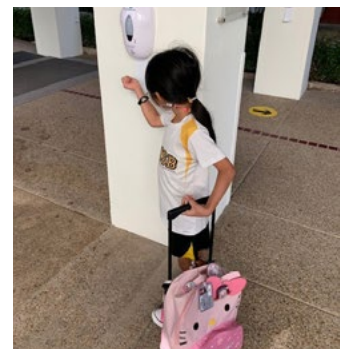
- As elementary school students arrive each day, their temperature is taken at the turnstiles.
- Aside from eating, drinking, and physical exertion during PE and recess, students wear their face mask throughout the day.
- Hand washing has become a frequent practice and sanitizing gel units have been mounted on walls throughout hallways and quads.
- Our learning spaces have been set up to maintain a 1-meter distance between students.
- The sharing of learning materials has been significantly reduced and students are provided with their own sets of supplies.
- Table and chair surfaces are sanitized when used by different students.
- Food is not consumed inside learning spaces.
- Acrylic screens have been set up in the cafeteria and the lunch schedule has been adjusted to respond to changes in capacity.



We have been so proud of the way that our Elementary School students have adjusted to these changes. They are certainly growing in **adaptability**, one of our ISB Learner Attributes!

For students who are yet to join us on campus, due to an overseas location or their quarantine requirements here in Bangkok, we have remained connected through our virtual learning offerings. Grade level teams, in collaboration with specialist teachers, design weekly learning grids for students. This connects students with their teachers and classmates, and engages them in learning that aligns with our on-campus programs. In addition to the asynchronous learning that is offered, students are invited to participate in weekly synchronous sessions on Zoom to receive live instructional support from teachers and have social connections with other students participating in virtual learning. In many cases, students are also invited to join their classmates on campus, through Zoom, to participate in community-building experiences such as morning meetings and small group conversations.

Each week, more of our students who have been learning virtually join us back on campus. We certainly look forward to the day when we can have all of our Panthers together again!



"One Voice": A Song for Peace

Angela Wong, Music teacher



In an effort to share a message of peace and unity, ISB community members ranging from PreK1 to adult faculty and parents voluntarily learned the song "One Voice" (by Ruth Moody of "The Wailin' Jennys") and submitted videos for this project. The result is a beautiful representation of our school community, highlighting the importance of using our voices together as "One Voice" to fight injustice and create peace. Enjoy the final video performance here, <https://youtu.be/qmn-5h3xyg0>

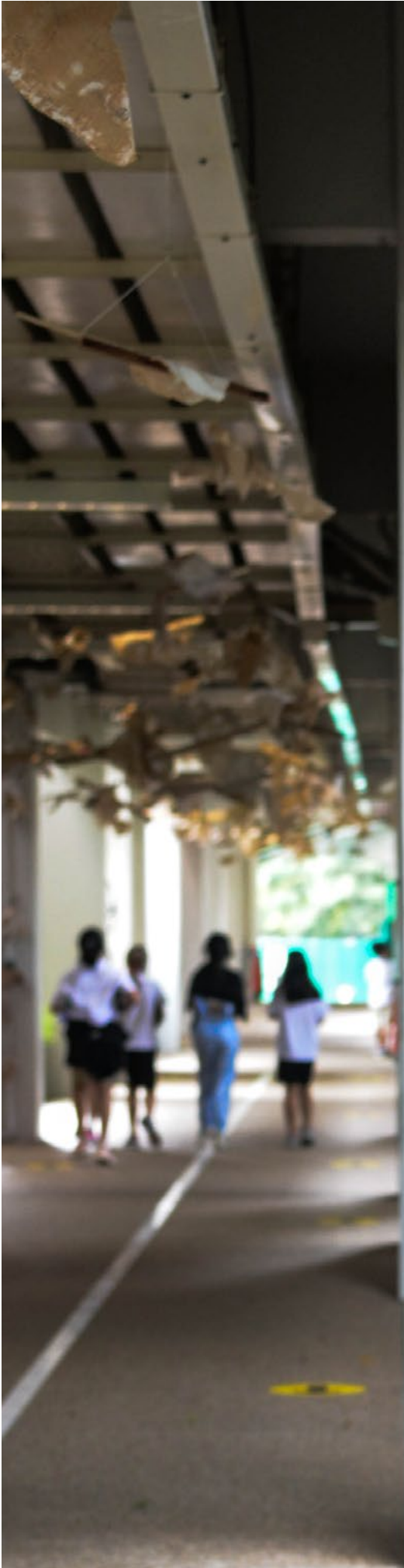
Peace Day

Jo Nichols, Art teacher



Peace day is always a wonderful celebration at ISB, and this year the ES art team created an art installation of hundreds of birds flying through the corridors of the school to bring awareness to Peace Day. All students in elementary worked on the creation of the Birds. The younger students printed fabric and the older ones had fun twisting and cutting wire to support their wings, and combined found objects into the form of birds. When many hands work together great things can happen, and through art work that is created by our ES community we can see the strength and power in working together. PEACE!





Greetings from the ES HUB!

Nat Whitman, Elementary School Librarian and Literacy Specialist



Summer Renovation!

This summer, the ES HUB's air-handling system and ceilings underwent a complete overhaul, resulting in new lights, new air conditioners, a new dehumidification system and air filtration system. We also removed the old swinging door system, removed a wall and installed a digital display board. Stop by and enjoy!



The HUB ceiling was removed and replaced over the summer.



Image source from goodread

Pokko and the Drum

by Matthew Forsythe

Pokko's parents have made a few mistakes raising their frog child –like buying her a giant pet llama and giving her a slingshot large enough to launch a frog into space. Their biggest mistake, however, was buying Pokko a drum. Reminding us that an important part of parenting is learning to love what we can't control, this beautiful story is illustrated in earth tones and angular geometry.



Image source from goodread

Saturday

by Oge Mora

A mother and daughter wait all week for Saturday, the day they know will be "Special" and "Splendid." On Saturdays, they get to enjoy special events like going to library story time, picnic times and salon time. But as unexpected events like library closure, lost tickets and the weather ruin plans, they find that love and time together are the most important thing. Vibrant illustrations with tilting geometries help make this book a "must read."

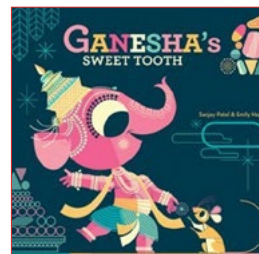


Image source from goodread

Ganesha's Sweet Tooth

by Sanjay Patel & Emily Haynes

This bright, funny and friendly retelling focuses on the god Ganesha. Ganesha, like every kid, loves sweets, except - he gets to ride on a mouse, has the head of an elephant and can get to any sweet, laddoo, that he wishes. When he tries to bite an enormous jawbreaker, he breaks his tusk and this becomes the pen used to write the epic poem Mahabharata. This story is a fun read for the entire family.

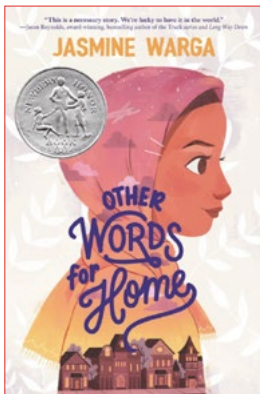


Image source from goodread

Other Words for Home

by Jasmine Warga

In this heartbreaking, heartwarming and deeply important novel, Jude, who is growing up in Syria, must confront the realities of a society that changes so quickly she can barely recognize it before it sweeps her away to a new land. After moving to the United States, Jude must adapt her identity to the lens of her new life in America. She must also wrestle with her new label “Middle Eastern” in an environment full of hostility. Written in verse, this novel helps the reader adopt a compassionate and informed view of those who are forced to live in a new land.

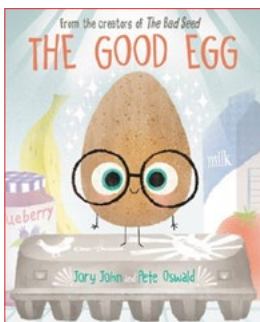


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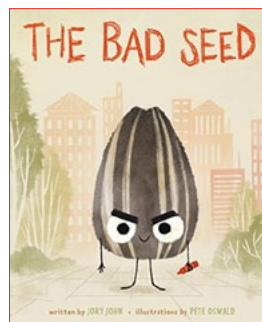


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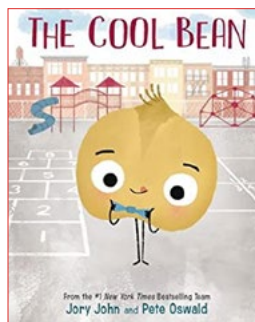


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The Good Egg and The Bad Seed and The Cool Bean

by Oge Mora

This trio of stories brought to you by the author/illustrator team of Jory John and Pete Oswald are all available in our Hub for the first time. Humorous illustrations and lively writing focus on character traits that help us to examine ourselves and learn that we are all, actually, “cool beans” inside!



Image source from goodread

SWEEP The Story of a Girl and Her Monster by Jonathan Auxier

In Victorian London, the job of cleaning chimneys was a dangerous and deadly occupation performed by “climbing boys.” Climbing boys were orphans enslaved to a “master sweep.” The boys would wedge themselves and climb up a chimney flue to dislodge soot. In this story, Nan, a climbing girl, is one of the best climbers in London.

She is rescued from a deadly chimney fire and ends up in an attic with a monster, a golem, made of ash and coal. Their friendship grows as they look for ways to rescue each other and alter what seems an inescapable fate.

Welcoming the New School Year with Gratitude

Dennis Harter, Principal



Welcome to the 2020-21 school year. We recognize how fortunate we are to have students and teachers back on campus in our hallways, classrooms, and gymnasiums. So many schools in the region and around the world aren't able to open - with families spread over the planet and young people still in isolation away from their peers. As we join Thailand's terrific efforts to minimize the pandemic with masks, distancing, and other measures we also realize just how lucky we are to feel like a school - learning and socializing together, in person - again.

I am so proud of our community for how we responded to the campus closure back in March, adapting to Virtual School. The resilience of our students, the patience of our parents, and the dedication and commitment of our teachers demonstrated the quality of our ISB community and the strength of our school.

We are grateful for the community efforts of the Thai government and people and the commitment that ISB has made to opening school safely, while maintaining as much of what it means to be a school, as possible. Everyday, I appreciate seeing students learning in classrooms, socializing in the cafeteria and hallways and engaged in school activities. Thank you to all of our middle school students, families, teachers, and staff for respecting our safety guidelines and doing their best to keep us together on campus.



Adapting and Doing Our Part to Start the Year in Middle School

Dennis Harter, Principal



The 2020-21 school year has begun like no other before it. We consider ourselves fortunate to be able to bring students and teachers (and now even parents) onto campus again when so many of our colleagues around the world remain in remote learning with their communities spread out and isolated. In order to be open, of course, a lot had to happen and we are grateful for the efforts of our administration and staff for their work in adapting to the government requirements and preparing our campus for a safe opening. Turnstiles, temperature and mask scanners, sanitary gel dispensers, cafeteria table acrylic dividers, and other distancing measures were all professionally installed and prepared. Ahead of opening our campus was transformed into being COVID prepared.

The challenges to starting the year extended beyond compliance and safety requirements. New teachers (and a few returning ones) remained out of the country as we started the year. Families - returning and new - also found themselves outside of Thailand as the start of 2020-21 arrived. Our teachers adapted and began running live online sessions while they were also providing face to face instruction to a classroom full of students. Students studied while in hotel rooms, opposite time zones, and in some cases, sharing a single online device with siblings. As families arrived into quarantine, our staff delivered laptops and school resources to ASQ hotels around the city to help students connect with their learning.

At school, teachers took on more duty and responsibility out in halls and outdoor spaces, reminding students about wearing masks and physical distancing (both not easy for MS students). In the classrooms, collectively, teachers disinfected tables and chairs after each class and developed protocols for shared materials. Behind the scenes our classified staff increased their presence in cleaning furniture, setting up spaces, and deep cleaning each night. Together, the ISB community rose to the challenge of making ISB a safe space.



Of course, we faced another challenge as we opened the school year: students hadn't been together at school in 5 months. We faced uncertainty of the impact on virtual learning for that length of time. We wondered about how students would re-enter the socialization of large groups of peers again at school. While students developed self-management and adaptability during Virtual School, we recognized that they missed out on key social emotional development during that time. Our MS Advisory program focused on helping students feel comfortable at school again as we saw them occasionally struggle with social conflict, large groups, and peer interactions. We focused on digital citizenship and balance early on to counter the shift after months of increased screen time. Counselors, teachers, and leaders have worked together to anticipate challenges, support each other, and ensure that students navigate this new transition.

These unprecedented times also presented questions around learning progress. How had months of learning from home, through a computer screen, in isolation impacted student learning? Teachers emphasized pre-assessment to start the year, getting a read on where students were in their learning to meet them at that point and move them forward. This is standard practice for ISB, but was all the more important after the Virtual School experience to finish off 2019-20.

The challenges have not ended. Each day we discover new questions like how might we do field trips or how long do we have to quarantine clay before it can be reused? As the weeks go by and some complacency naturally begins, we find ourselves (parents, students and teachers) needing more frequent reminders about distancing, hand washing, and masks. The safer the campus feels the more we see lapses in our safety obligations and that requires continued vigilance. We all share the responsibility to be part of Thailand and ISB's efforts to keep us safe and our campus open, rather than oppose or hinder those efforts. These are challenging times, but the ISB community has stepped up and will continue to meet these challenges together.



Getting Kids Outside Again: The Wild Panthers @ the EWC program is back!

Dennis Harter, Principal



One of the hardest aspects of the many months of home isolation this year has been seeing our young people trapped inside, inactive, often glued to screens. Parents and students craved interaction with others and they craved being outdoors again. As restrictions eased in Thailand, we saw increasing numbers of families outside in the neighborhood, jogging, biking, or walking. We all felt the imbalance of too much time alone and too much time inside.

That's why one of the most exciting pieces of reopening school was starting up our middle school Wild Panther program again. At the start of the school year ISB worked closely with the Ministries of Education and Health to ensure we met safety guidelines for our trip, program and Environmental Wilderness Campus (EWC). At the EWC, we put in cafeteria dividers, adjusted our room layouts, used more of the campus lodging, and developed mask and distancing protocols throughout the site. Director Elliott Bowyer and his teaching team adjusted the learning program to meet safety requirements while still providing a rich, active, outdoor experience.

Starting in the third week of school, our grade 7 students began their Wild Panthers program. Each week, 20-24 students spent 3 days and 2 nights at the EWC engaged in the grade 7 outdoor ed pro-





gram. They are navigating with maps and compass, learning abseiling and belay technique, and rock climbing on natural rock faces. The students also take on collaborative team challenges, share in the workload at meal and clean up times, and have fun with a team Quiz night. Most importantly, students are engaged in the outdoors, developing their resilience, courage, care for each other, teamwork, confidence, and leadership.

It has been particularly exciting to see these grade 7 students participating in the Wild Panthers program because most of them missed out during Grade 6 as we closed campus after just one week of the program in 2019-20 due to the pandemic. I attended the first session myself and saw first hand the incredible safety measures that our team had put in place along with the wonderful learning program that our students engage in while there.

We have always appreciated the addition of our outdoor education curriculum and program in the Middle School. This year, more than ever, we see its value for our students, as they move and interact in the outdoors, overcome physical and mental challenges, and develop essential life skills and attributes outside the classroom.



MS / HS Dance

Jaleea Price, MS / HS Performing Arts Teacher



Despite the 2020 slowdowns, this autumn the ISB dancers were busy in action throughout September and October. Here are some highlights in the studios, on stage, and virtually all over the world!

MSDT Gave Peace a Dance

This year's Middle School Dance Team (MSDT) shared graceful joy and unity in celebrating "Shaping Peace Together". The dancers presented their recorded work as part of the online K-12 annual Peace Day Assembly in September.





ISB hosts IASAS Dance Exchange

Also in September, the HS showed that dancers are virtually unstoppable! Joined by our sister schools in SE Asia - ISM, ISKL, JIS, and SAS - the ISB dancers powered through a weekend of dance workshops and virtual collaborations for the annual IASAS Dance Exchange. Working live with Guest Artists from Bangkok Studio Zoom Dance, our ISB students took Street Jazz, Hip Hop, and Dance Hall classes. In addition, they worked in mixed teams to collaborate and create a K-Pop Music Video showing a true international connection with dance. Here are some of the comments:...

- ISKL dancer: I loved the whole Dance Exchange. Of course it isn't as nice as going in person, but I still found it exciting and would definitely do it again!
- ISM dancer: I think it was really fun and interactive since even though we weren't able to meet the other students in person, the collab video helped us get to know each other a lot. And the workshops on stage were really good!!
- ISB dancer, Jacqui Cho (Grade 12): I really liked how there were a variety of genres that we were able to try out. I think what was done was a good way of trying out the first virtual dance event.

That Dancing Spirit! The Dance Club kept up our spirits in the HS with performances to boost up athletics in October. They jazzed up the outdoor stage with a dance during lunchtime "Open Mic", as well as bringing some Panther Spirit during a 'half-time' dance at the final IASAS Volleyball Tournaments. GO PANTHERS!

The Four Elements – The annual fall dance production once again highlighted student dance-artists in MS, HS and IB Dance classes. Each of the dances presented images or concepts inspired from nature as Earth, Wind, Water or Fire. There was also a featured work from a Guest Choreographer, Mr. Patrice LeRoy. Looking back on an action-packed fall semester, students were happy to be in the studios and enjoying dance together! – We'll soon SPRING back into action with the IASAS CC Dance/Drama showcase in March!



CHOREOGRAPHY PATRICE LEROY
FIRE
 WWW.DANCEINBANGKOK.COM

The Main Library

Christopher Bell, HS Technology Coordinator & Librarian and Melinda Kehe, MS Librarian



Change is in the air. In so very many ways, this year is different. For the Main Library, the biggest difference was how our patrons accessed the library. The library has 3 classrooms, 6 break out rooms, and massive open spaces. Trying to get all of our patrons to follow the ISB COVID plan has been challenging. We've tried a few different things and we think we are getting better each time. Our students have been trying to adhere to the rules but it has been difficult for everyone. As we get feedback from students and staff we are adjusting to meet the needs. Slowly we are working towards something that will work for all of us, and yet keep us all safe.

Another big change this year is that Mr. Bell has returned as the Tech Coordinator and Librarian. He, like many of the new teachers, started the school year in quarantine thus reducing the amount of supervision that could be done in the library.

We also have the added difficulty of sanitizing areas, and books after every use. This means that there are now baskets on the floor near shelves to drop books that are handled as patrons browse that require sanitizing after use. Additionally, books returned are quarantined for 72 hours before they are available for check out.

With all these changes, it is comforting to know that some things will not change. The librarians, Ms. Kehe for the Middle School, and Mr. Bell have already been out in dozens of classrooms doing book talks, engaging with students, and working on research projects with teachers. As we conduct the book reviews, one of the pieces of research we are citing is that reading for pleasure is a great way to reduce stress.

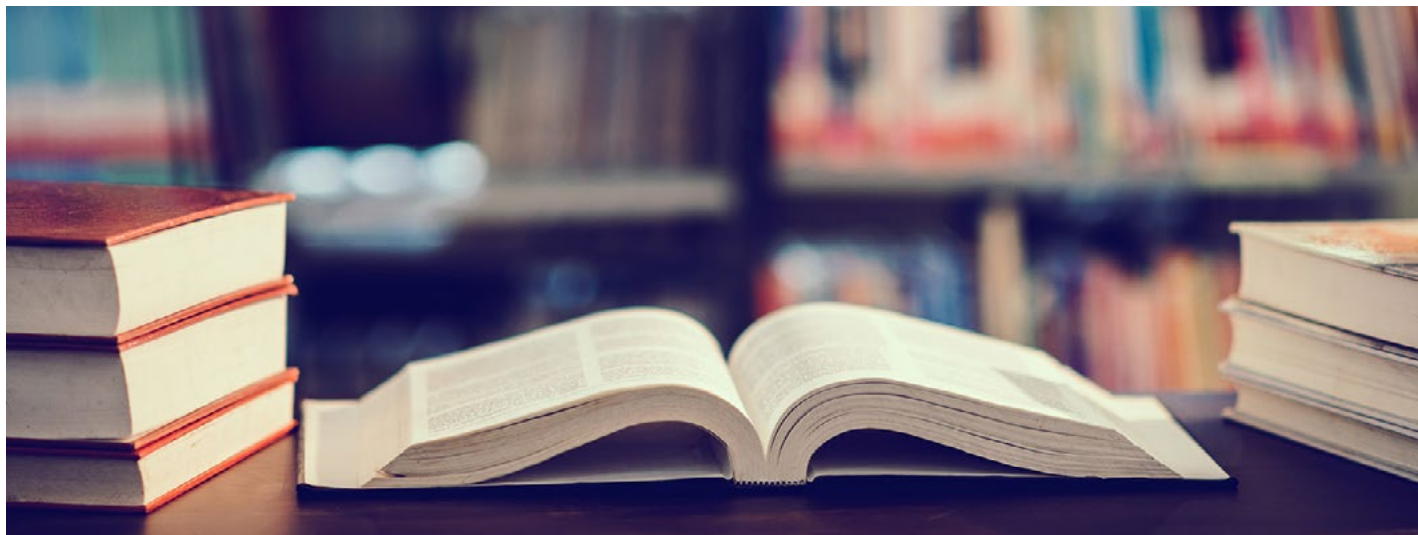
"A 2009 study at the University of Sussex found that reading can reduce stress by up to 68%."

New this year is a weekly Newsletter to students and staff. The archived copies are available to all patrons via this link: <http://gg.gg/mfq9h>. The news letters give updates on issues in the library as well as linked resources and a book review.

Behind the scenes major changes are brewing. Ms. Kehe, with the help of Ms. Hagen, last year's interim Librarian, developed a comprehensive document meshing research, reading and technology standards so that we would be able to begin ensuring that students are getting all the skills needed to be successful students in the next phase of their lives. This work continues this year as we identify when and where students will be exposed to and master these skills. The ideas supporting this work come from many sources, but a recent release from the National Institute of Education in Singapore: *Envisioning the School Library of the Future: A 21st Century Framework* had this quote that sums up our thinking.

"There is greater need for students to become independent learners who are able to negotiate and manage almost unlimited access to information in their everyday lives."

We know there is much more to do, and take comfort in the fact that we are constantly trying to improve the services we provide to all our patrons on a daily basis. We look forward to seeing you in the library. If you have books or resources to recommend drop us an email or stop by and make the recommendations to us in person.



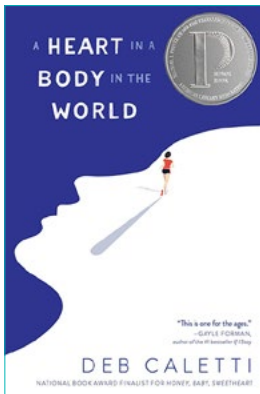


Image source from goodread

A Heart in the Body in the World
by Deb Caletti
Tragedy strikes sometimes. What makes us who we are is how we respond. In this wonderful story, Annabelle decides to run. And it is no small run. She will not let the 'Taker' take away anything else. On her journey she sees some amazing things and meets some fun people. All the while Grandpa Ed supports her and adds some much needed comic relief. A great story of overcoming a difficult event.



Image source from goodread

Nyxia
by Scott Reintgen
There is a new precious element that has been found on a planet far away. It is guarded by a wily group of aliens. They respect youth and children so our new 'miners' are young kids. Only thing is no one knows exactly why this Nyxia is so valuable. Times are tough and the company makes it worth the miner's risks to travel to another planet to mine for this new element. Find out what it is and what it does!

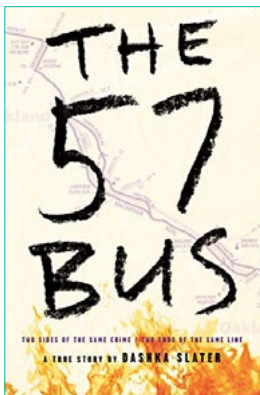


Image source from goodread

The 57 Bus
by Daska Slater
The true story of a young gender neutral student being attacked on a public bus in Oakland, California. The book recounts the difficult story and yet manages to teach the readers that sometimes good comes from horrible things. We get to learn about the strides being made towards gender equality, as well as how the juvenile judicial system has improved over the years. This is a difficult, yet fast paced read. We have it on Sora Audio or the physical book.



Image source from goodread

Armada
by Ernest Cline
Love to play video games? Ernest Cline's follow up to Ready Player One (RPO) is Armada. It is rare that the next book an author puts out after such a successful book is as good, in this case Armada is better. Following the path of a game player 'Zack' we find out that his passion for games and simulators could just save the world. If you never read RPO then skip it and go for Armada. It's a winner!

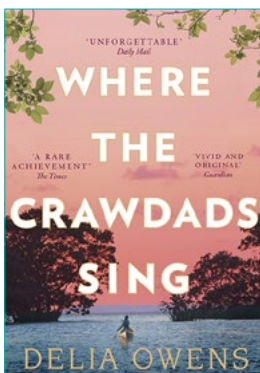


Image source from goodread

TWO BOOKS!
I recently did a quick book-talk on both **Where the Crawdad's Sing** and **Patron Saints of Nothing**.

Two books on offer for the grade 10 students. Both of these are excellent in their own way and great reads for adults too! *Crawdads's* is one of the best books of last year with an amazing female character, 'Marsh Girl'. In *Patron Saints of Nothing*, Jun is a young Filipino-American who travels to Manila to discover how his cousin mysteriously passed away.



Image source from goodread

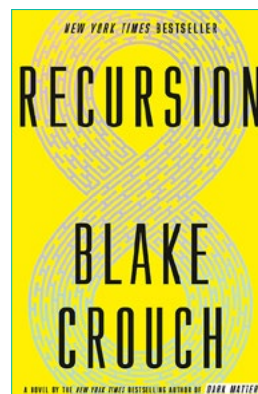


Image source from goodread

Recursion
by Blake Crouch
This is the second Blake Crouch book I've read and he loves to write about science and near future (possible) topics. In this suspenseful thriller, a machine is built that takes a person back via their memories. There are good ways to use the power and bad ways. It just depends on who is operating the machine. This wild story is tough to follow at times, but there truly isn't a dull moment. I also liked Crouch's *Dark Matter* which we are ordering.

Hope, Optimism and Perseverance

Justin Alexander, Principal



Welcome to the 2020-21 school year and to the first edition of the Touchstone magazine for this year. We have much to celebrate, even in these strange and uncertain times, primarily because of our good fortune and the strong response to the pandemic here in Thailand. Opening school in person in August was a wonderful achievement and it has meant so much to our students and teachers to finally be back in a classroom, surrounded by friends, colleagues, peers, and others from the ISB community. Whilst I continue to tip my hat to the amazing and outstanding work of our teachers during the second-semester of virtual school in 2020, the full-time online environment does not replicate the benefits and the joy of learning together on campus.

Welcome back everyone and a big welcome to our new HS students (more than 70) who have joined ISB from all around the globe. My colleagues have written articles elsewhere in this magazine outlining the challenges of supporting ISB students (new and returning) who battled entering Thailand at the start of the school year and as such have had a delayed entry into face to face learning at ISB. I will therefore turn my attention in this welcome to hope, optimism and perseverance for our HS community.

School life in my view has so many important elements - socialisation, participation, collaboration, engagement, wonderment, creativity, community involvement, health and wellbeing, and of course providing excellent learning opportunities for all of our students. ISB is well placed to provide these elements of schooling and we look forward to this year with hope and optimism given the current circumstances (much of which lies outside our direct control) to do so. What is in our own hands is the perseverance of our teachers and students as they go about the important work of teaching and learning at ISB.

I have already been impressed with the perseverance and commitment of our teachers and students as evidenced by our students'



attendance and participation in their classes (whether online or in person) and their performance in the first few weeks of school. Our musicians have also persevered with their rehearsals, practices and joining in our Band, Strings and Choir festivals in September and early October. The efforts of our Arts Director and Arts teachers to make these events happen in a safe environment is a testament to them and their commitment to the students in their care. It would have been much easier to simply cancel these events and say that it would be too difficult to host such an event, but instead we presented our students with an opportunity to learn from an outside conductor with students from other schools and come together to produce great music.

Similarly our athletics season has benefited from the strong push from our Athletics department and coaches to organise practices, tryouts and eventually schedule competitive games against other schools whilst following the guidelines as required. Once again, it would have been far easier to simply cancel athletics and wait until the pandemic is over, but our coaches and athletes have really persevered and are now making the most of the opportunities in front of them.

As the school year continues, I too have hope and optimism that the current situation in Thailand regarding the pandemic remains stable or even improves, but I am confident that our perseverance will not waver.

All the best for a wonderful year of learning for our students and again a huge welcome to our new families and students who have joined us this year.

Regards

Justin Alexander
High School Principal



Welcome Back and IB Status

Justyna McMillan, HS Dean of Academics



Dear Readers,

What a great start to the new school year! Although we are still facing some challenges and uncertain times, we are also very fortunate as a school to be back, face-to-face with our students and able to continue teaching and learning as close to 'normal' as possible. May it continue in this way.

We had a very unusual end to our last academic year and I wanted to take this opportunity to celebrate our graduating class of 2020, with particular focus on their IB results. In the height of the Covid pandemic, our IB students faced a roller coaster ride during the 2nd semester as the goal posts kept changing for the IB exams. In usual circumstances, students who pursue IB courses are expected to sit an end of program examination in each of their subjects at the end of the two year period. These exams are worth about 70% of the final grade awarded, with the remainder based on coursework (IAs) submitted by the student. The exams are always a tough challenge but are seen very much as a rite of passage for all IB students and are met with a huge sense of accomplishment. Moreover high exam scores are often used to help students gain credit for universities and colleges and in some cases are a prerequisite for being allocated a place for their course of study.

When the International Baccalaureate Organization announced that the May 2020 examinations were cancelled, due to the worldwide pandemic, this news was met with mixed feelings by students and teachers. On the one hand, no exams meant less stress for some students who found themselves already in a highly stressful situation. However on the other hand the cancellation of exams raised questions and concerns as to whether colleges and universities would accept students without the final grade which is largely based on their exam performance.

The IB decided to award final grades in the following manner. An algorithm was developed using:

- IA data
- Predicted grades
- Historical data of predicted grades from each school
- Overall performance data

We are extremely proud of our students who were able to achieve exceptional results in what was a very difficult year.

We had 136 candidates taking IB exams - this includes both course and full Diploma candidates.

99 students passed with the full IB Diploma, which is a 100% pass rate.

Our average subject score is 5.78 and an average total point score of 36.

In terms of our top scores we had:

- 5 student who earned 44 points,
- 4 students who earned 43 points,
- 5 students who earned 42,
- 7 students who earned 41,
- 4 students who earned 40 points

36 students earned a bilingual diploma in languages which include Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, French and Turkish.

Our IB results demonstrate that our students are passionate and adaptable learners, and the results are a testament to the excellent instruction, support and care of our teachers. Well done to the graduating Class of 2020! We hope you are just as proud as we are of your accomplishments. **Go Panthers!**

University Admissions in the Time of COVID-19

Swati Shrestha, College Counselor



We have all felt the many impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic globally to some extent. In the realm of college admission counseling, COVID-19 has turned an already fraught process on its head.

Recent graduates have had to be very flexible with future plans, depending on their destination country, their university, and their own comfort level in making a leap during uncertain times. The cancellation of IB exams placed greater importance on internal assessments, coursework, and predicted grades. Embassy closures resulted in cancelled or delayed appointments, interrupting plans to study abroad. Border restrictions have made international travel difficult or impossible. Some students have chosen to take a gap year. For new university students, this is certainly not the first year that anyone could have imagined, whether in person or online.

For rising seniors and juniors, research for the college admission process has changed dramatically. In the past, ISB has hosted up to 200 college representatives on campus to speak with our students about their institutions. This year students still have the opportunity to interact with admission counselors – virtually! As of September 25, we have made appointments with over 30 universities to meet with ISB students and families, and many more opportunities open to the general public. Students and parents can access our live and ongoing list of virtual visits at: www.tinyurl.com/isbcollege

Standardized testing, such as the SAT and ACT, is another part of the college admission process that has become even more con-

fusing than it already was. Throughout this year, College Board has left the decision up to testing centers as to whether or not they would be holding tests, despite the dangers of congregating large groups of people. Because of this, there has been hugely inequitable access to testing. This has driven more universities than ever to become either test-optional or test-blind. Test-optional means that universities will consider standardized testing if submitted, but because it is not required, not submitting test scores will not negatively affect an application. Test-blind means that universities will not consider standardized test scores at all as part of their application moving forward. Approximately 2/3 of four-year universities in the US – more than 1500 – are now test-optional or test-blind for applicants entering university in Fall 2021. Many will remain test-optional for future admission cycles, according to The National Center for Fair and Open Testing (Fair Test: www.fairtest.org). If so, this could give future college applicants the time to focus more closely on their academics in school, and to engage in other more meaningful activities. Fair Test maintains a database of US universities and colleges that are test-optional or test-blind, and is a great resource for students who choose not to take part in standardized testing. Fair Test notes that this list now includes “nearly all of the nation’s most selective universities and liberal arts colleges.”

Outside of the United States, universities have been working to make sure that they are able to evaluate students, regardless of any changes to testing or curricula as a result of the pandemic. Most universities are open to hearing from students to consider their

Quinnipiac
UNIVERSITY



situations on case-by-case basis. The University of Hong Kong, for example, is following updates around the world on the many different school systems they work with. They, and many other universities, are encouraging students to be in clear communication, so that university admission counselors can consider unique student situations on a case-by-case basis.

Moving forward, it is unclear what kind of an effect the pandemic may continue to have on the admission process when it comes to selectivity. University admission counselors are not sure whether they will see significant increases or decreases in applications. An NPR journalist spoke with Jim Bock, vice president and dean of admission at Swarthmore College: “Students [may] submit less because they couldn't actually see campuses [in person],” he said, or because of financial constraints due to the pandemic. Or, they may “hedge their bets and submit more.”

It is helpful to note that because the pandemic has affected students globally, individual students are not alone in any dilemmas they face as they begin the college application process. Most young people worldwide were not able to engage in any activities in their schools or communities in the spring and summer months. Most young people have been engaged in a form of virtual or distance learning, rather than having the opportunity to meet with teachers and classmates in person. Many young people have had limited access to testing. Because of this, universities worldwide have been working hard to meet students where they are in terms of the

qualifications they have earned, and the applications they are able to present. In the midst of crisis, university admission representatives have been responding to ever-changing situations as quickly as they can, whether it is virtual learning, exam cancellations, or changing methods of recruitment. It is an ongoing challenge, and ISB students have strong advocates in the college counseling office working on their behalf, and communicating with university colleagues.

The answers to questions regarding college admission can often be boiled down to “We’re not sure!” or “It depends!” However, ISB college counselors are always happy to use our expertise and relationships with university representatives to help our students as much as we can.

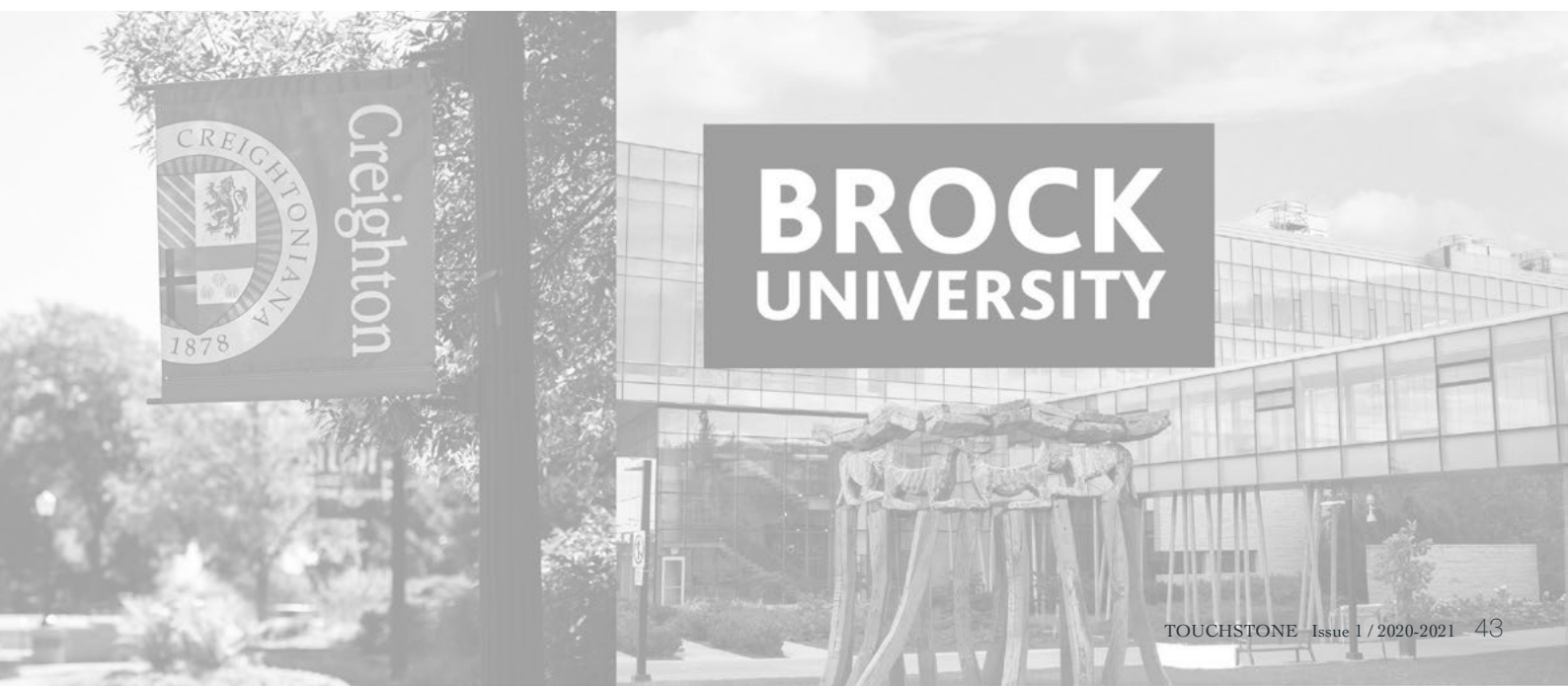
Resources and more information:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/isbcollege>

<https://www.ibo.org/news/news-about-ib-schools/the-assessment-and-awarding-model-for-the-diploma-programme-may-2020-session/>

<https://www.fairtest.org/two-thirds-of-us-colleges-and-universities-are-test-optional>

<https://www.npr.org/2020/08/12/900173338/how-the-coronavirus-has-upended-college-admissions>



Service Learning is at the Heart of ISB

Peter Assimokopoulos, CAS Coordinator



Service learning is at the heart of ISB. It is who we are.

Service learning requires students to take action, be proactive, and develop a programme for themselves through a range of activities. The Service Learning programme or CAS aims to develop students to be:

- reflective thinkers – understand their own strengths and limitations, identify goals and devise strategies for personal growth, and a willingness to accept challenges
- aware of themselves as members of communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment
- active participants in sustained, collaborative projects
- balanced – enjoy and find significance in a range of activities involving intellectual, physical, creative and emotional experiences.

In Grades 9 and 10, students are asked to engage in service experiences. In grades 11 and 12, students are asked to demonstrate commitment throughout the year with the three strands: Creativity, Activity, and Service.

All service learning experiences must show commitment, evidence of planning, evidence of action (taking part), and a reflection at the end. The reflection is to help students articulate their learning. Students are asked to collaborate with each other, with outreach programmes, with our surrounding committees, or our local community.

The key component here is commitment and planning. We strive for our students to have the ability to identify problems, reflect, offer solutions, work together, and find creative ways to enrich the lives of others.

Many students ask how many hours are required to complete their service learning requirement. If a student commits to an experience by planning with others and takes that plan to action, they will be

successful. Students are required to document the process and share their evidence of planning and engagement.

We are very fortunate here at ISB because we have over 50 clubs and councils in the high school. Take a look at the many posters hanging in my office. Our Panthers love getting involved. More than half our clubs are directly connected to service learning. For example, UNICEF - where students at ISB directly collaborate with UNICEF staff members to advocate for the protection of children's rights and to help meet their basic needs. Service clubs like Habitat for Humanity - a group of volunteers that work together to build houses for low-income families and many more.

Students can always sign up and take part. Students can check the CAS website (cas.isb.ac.th) and connect with any of our club sponsors and officers to see how they can join.

We recently started a CASables newsletter for our high school students. This newsletter will collect service opportunities students can get involved in. We always want our clubs to be generated by students, but sometimes they might not be aware of the opportunities offered. This will hopefully bridge that gap. Parents and teachers are encouraged to send service ideas our students can get involved in to me (petera@isb.ac.th) and Khun Pat (patarinb@isb.ac.th).

The important message I would like to communicate is that service learning is more than counting hours. We want our students to engage, to connect and to pursue their passion. These things do not have a timestamp or time limit. We want our students to understand that service does not have an end time or date.

The Service Learning Programme or CAS Programme directly connects to our vision at ISB. We want our students to enrich communities through the intellectual, humanitarian and creative thoughts and actions of our learners. Through thoughtful planning and hands-on experiences, students can work together to enrich our community and our surrounding communities.

New Pep Band Club at ISB

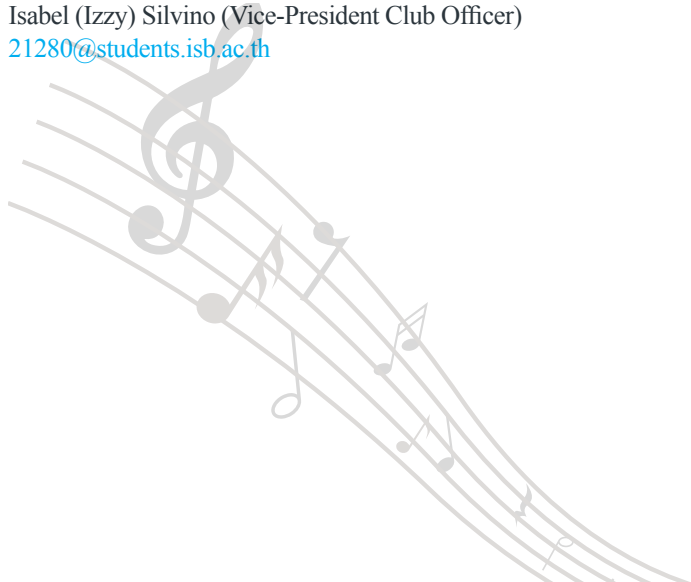
Yuya Tokai, Grade 9



Ever since I started playing my trumpet I always found a passion for playing and performing music. I was always excited about concerts and performances that our band directors prepared for us. But I wanted to look for more opportunities to play, other than class mandatory concerts. This year I became a 9th grader, and I found out that in high school I could start a new club. I took this opportunity to start the Pep Band Club where my club members and I perform short pieces during sporting events to cheer the Panthers, and to lighten the mood up! Club officers and I strongly believe that music is something all students can enjoy. Not only can having a wide age group allow many students to improve more with their abilities as musicians, but also to be able to socialize with other students from different schools within the ISB community. As of now we have 9 members, including the officers in the club. We currently lack varying band players in our club, so if you play a band instrument and are in Middle School or High School, please consider joining! If you have any questions or would like to join the club, please do not hesitate to contact one of the emails below.

Yuya Tokai (President Club Officer)
20696@students.isb.ac.th

Isabel (Izzy) Silvino (Vice-President Club Officer)
21280@students.isb.ac.th



Covid-19 Restrictions Not Holding Back Clubs

Sophie Muntzing, Panther Nation Opinions Writer, Grade 10

PantherNation

Covid-19 has brought on many restrictions that are affecting all of our daily lives. At school, we're told to wear masks, constantly wash our hands, clean our desks and stay 1-2 meters apart. We all know how these rules are affecting our everyday classes, but how are they affecting our clubs? Clubs were once struggling with the restrictions, but are now starting to overcome the difficulties.

Non-Service Clubs:

A lot of the non-service clubs are being affected by the COVID restrictions. The culture clubs, photography clubs and others aren't sure of their futures. They usually have big performances and events to look forward to as the highlight of their semester, but now they have to change their plans and adapt to the restrictions. I interviewed Femme, 12th grader and officer of Shutter Society, to get her opinion.

How has the atmosphere in the club meeting been, with the socially distanced desks?

"I would say the atmosphere is pretty much the same just because we spend the majority of our meeting time shooting outdoors. However, it has become a little harder to do some shoots eg. studio/closeup while social distancing because of space limitations."

How has it affected communications?

"We usually communicate via email and our Instagram page and those things are still working well for us. In meetings, communication is a little more challenging because we cannot get the members to gather around the camera all at once during demonstrations. We shift to teaching one-on-one, and we have found that to be quite effective for the members, especially if they are just starting photography." Taken by Femme

How has your club adapted to COVID restrictions?

"We try moving our meetings outdoors so everyone is not squeezed into the same room. We also try to focus on the service part of our club, which is taking photographs of school events because that complies with the social distancing policies."

Are there any opportunities that your club has to miss out on due to this?

"Definitely. A big part of Shutter Society is shooting events around school, and with the pandemic, we can not do as many now because a lot of them have been cancelled.

On the bright side, because of COVID, lots of exciting activities eg. Cultural Convention are now held at school, so we look forward to capturing those events which we normally would not have the opportunity to."

Are you disappointed about these missed opportunities?

"Like everyone else, we are disappointed about the missed opportunities, but since there is not much we can do, I think we should focus on how to make the most of the things we have here. For example, if shooting people is challenging because of COVID restrictions, we can try architecture photography and take advantage of the amazing facilities ISB has."

Do you think that these restrictions affecting your club are unreasonable?

"Not at all. Personally, I am just grateful that Thailand has been handling the pandemic well and we get to come back to school in the first place. The pros of having this sense of community back far outweigh the restrictions, in my opinion."





Even with the difficult restrictions, what are you guys looking forward to this year?

“We are looking forward to trying new photography styles we have not done before. In a way, having all these restrictions forces us to think outside the box for our photo shoots, and I am excited to see which directions our club takes this year.”

Service Clubs:

These restrictions have had the biggest impact on the service clubs since direct service is no longer an option. I interviewed Emilie, Senior and president of the Amnesty International club about how the restrictions would be affecting them.

How has the atmosphere in the club meeting been, with the socially distanced desks?

“I don’t think it really affected the atmosphere, from what I see our club members are still active in participation.”

How has it affected communications?

“It really hasn’t. The biggest change is less small group discussions, but I think overall we are still able to carry on as usual.”

How has your club adapted to COVID restrictions?

“We’re looking into non-contact club plans such as fundraising or advocacy. So yeah, indirect service can still make a difference. It’s just about finding the right way to help out.”

Are there any opportunities that your club has to miss out on due to this?

“Right now we’re finding some new activities to do since some of the activities and events that we usually plan such as Light Up Night and the refugee visit don’t seem like they are an option at the moment. Hopefully, we can still participate in these events once restrictions are lifted.”

Are you disappointed about these missed opportunities?

“Well, of course, these two things I talked about are the two main things we do all year so it’s gonna be really different, but I think we can make it work and do something just as impactful.”

Do you think that these restrictions affecting your club are unreasonable?

“No, I understand what the school has to do to keep us here and I think it makes sense. There’s nothing too radical about these restrictions.”

Even with the difficult restrictions, what are you guys looking forward to this year?

“We’re looking forward to getting our club members involved in the club and advocating for things as we always do and just trying to make a difference.”

Certain clubs are going to be more affected than others. Clubs are adapting and changing their plans to follow the guidelines, while also making sure that they’re completing their goals. The officers acknowledge that even though this may be a setback, they are still looking forward to what’s to come. Shutter Society will continue to create and Amnesty will continue to make a difference.

“Though travelling school events are cancelled, this is also a great opportunity to focus on our own community.” - Femme

“These times are, of course, challenging for us but it’s all about adapting our actions in order to make a difference. That’s what it’s all about and if we’re really passionate about it then these restrictions shouldn’t be able to stop us.” - Emilie

Resolving the Conflict in Yemen

Sara Khan, PantherNation Leadership Team, Grade 12



Image: UNICEF/UNI355858/Panjwani



Image: UNICEF/UNI341696

The spring of 2020 brought forth unprecedented transformations, with major social, economic, and political implications. Now more than ever before, an overwhelming number of individuals are experiencing severe economic hardships. As the global pandemic continues to rage, COVID-19 has left researchers struggling to tally mortality as “the coronavirus death rate has been compared to the death rates of the Vietnam War, Gulf War, and Iraq War combined.” (Lambert)

Many low-income, war-torn countries, such as Yemen and Syria, now face severe shortages of resources. Developing countries do not possess the infrastructure nor the economic prowess to sustain long-term lockdowns. If not killed by the pandemic, many impoverished communities are likely to be killed as a result of hunger.

Yemen is a nation located in the Middle East below Saudi Arabia. In 2011, however, the cumulative effects of the Arab Spring (series of anti-government protests, uprisings, and armed rebellions that spread across much of the Arab) greatly impacted the citizens of Yemen. At the time, the government was led by Ali Abdullah Saleh. Hadi struggled to deal with issues such as military attacks, corruption, and food scarcity.

Despite peacekeeping efforts, such as the National Dialogue Conference (NDC), during which James Benomar (UN envoy) facilitated a discussion between the representatives from numerous political parties within Yemen, such peacekeeping efforts were interrupted by excessive violence exerted by “The Ansar Allah” rebel group forcing Hadi and his cabinet to flee.

Already serving as the largest humanitarian crisis and development crisis in the world, with over 24 million people (approximately 80% of the population) in need of humanitarian assistance (UNICEF). The crisis has transcended into further chaos and urgency as the sweeping detrimental impacts of COVID-19 on the globe began to seize and infiltrate the streets of Yemen. COVID-19 is exacerbating the already overwhelming health crisis in Yemen. COVID-19 is ready to deliver a knock-out punch. (UNICEF)



The rapid rate of infection remains unknown due to lack of testing and reporting due to compromised medical and healthcare systems, however the United Nations estimate that up to 30% of the population has died as a result of this global pandemic. This additional barrier further hinders efforts made in the past by local civilians to tackle the expansive humanitarian crisis engulfing the nation.

Through adversity, unimaginable war, and devastating epidemics, somehow the citizens of Yemen have fought hard in pursuit of their aspirations of improving the situation and getting their lives back on track. This time, however, may be different. With a ravaged healthcare system, consisting of only three doctors and seven hospital beds for every 10,000 people, such health care facilities fail to provide adequate assistance needed by the population of Yemen during such arduous circumstances. (UNICEF)

Even among those who can afford healthcare, many chose to remain ill rather than seek assistance due to fear of stigmatization, violence, or community ostracization. To summarize, many Yemenis would rather die at home than seek care.

The future economic implications and ramifications of this pandemic on Yemen are astronomical, facing generations of socio-economic fallout if global action fails to be implemented. Remittances from Yemeni diaspora, normally totaling over US\$3.5 billion annually and were vital to the survival of millions, used to sustain many agricultural and industrial businesses. However, due to additional tension rising as a result of the oil crisis, many Yemeni expatriates affected by the drop in oil revenues remittances are projected to fall by up to 70 percent. The cumulative results of such implications will translate into millions suffering from extreme poverty, lacking facilities to provide them with essential survival such as food, water, healthcare, and education.

As an international community, nations possess the moral and ethical obligation to support Yemen while they are encapsulated within this catastrophic state. The United Nations has already begun taking



urgent and immediate action to tackle several social, economic, and environmental challenges connected to the crisis, also enabling the progression of the Sustainable Development Goals targeted for completion by 2030.

The public health sector in Yemen has been equipped with COVID-19 isolation centers, fueled by energy generated by solar panels, enabling the facilitation of healthcare services even with chronic lack of electricity. Further implementation of awareness-raising programs has also assisted communities in understanding COVID-19, allowing civilians to seek further assistance without fear of stigmatization.

In order to tackle the economic crisis, collaboration with the United Nations Sustainable Development Committee has empowered numerous small and medium-sized business which currently address COVID-19 personal protection, but which could also be potentially viable and successful in the future, in a world void of the pandemic. Efforts to generate more jobs are also in place, allowing citizens to make up for missed income due to job loss or decreased family remittances. (English)

The United Nations are taking action, but we need to as well. Despite these efforts, Yemen still lacks the assistance necessary to fill the huge funding gaps needed to address COVID-19 amongst their other needs throughout the country.

Please do your part, donate to the United Nations Development Program.

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An Athletic Montage

Chris Mott, Athletic Director



I have been a Dolphin, a Wildcat and most recently a Condor. However, none of these compare to being an ISB Panther. It is a pleasure to join the ISB community as your new Athletic Director.

My name is Chris Mott and I am originally from Australia. I have lived and worked all over the world including: Oman, Japan, Estonia, Turkey, the UAE and most recently in Lima, Peru as the Athletics and Activities Director at Colegio Roosevelt, The American School of Lima. I am joining the ISB community with my wife Georgina, son Hudson Grade 1 and daughter Eve Grade 4.



Virtual Cross Country

This year's Virtual Cross Country Run took place between October 2-9th. This was the first time ISB has taken on such an event, but it proved to be a great experience for all. A total of 884 Middle and High School boys and girls from 48 international schools participated. We are very proud of all the runners who took part in this first ever virtual event. Each school was asked to record their teams running a 5km (High School) and 3km (Middle School) time trial on a track. The ISB Cross Country teams completed their run on Thursday the 8th of October, and we look forward to sharing these results with the ISB community in the near future.

Invitational Tournament

Season One Volleyball and Soccer athletes had an opportunity to compete in two local tournaments, both hosted by ISB. These two tournaments were an opportunity for our Panther athletes to obtain some valuable game experience. The larger of these tournaments was held on the 9th and 10th of October. ISB had the opportunity to host 16 Varsity Volleyball teams and 8 Varsity Soccer teams. All teams were from throughout the Bangkok region.



The tournament was a great success! Students, coaches and ISB parents enjoyed the two days of games that culminated in the Saturday afternoon finals. ISB Varsity Boys and ISB Varsity Girls Soccer and Volleyball teams all played in their respective finals.

Our appreciation goes out to the schools that attended, but also to the wider ISB community. These events bring our entire community together and are celebrations of the teams involved.

We would like to acknowledge the ISB Booster Club who continue to show support and dedication to our programs. The Booster Club is always in attendance for these events and are always ready to offer as much support as needed.





BISAC Season One

While many schools around the world are experiencing closure and strict COVID-19 restrictions preventing teams from practicing sports, ISB has been fortunate to have had its first season of competitive sports. ISB has been able to host many events on campus in Season One. Furthermore, on October 31 and November 1 our U11-JV teams will compete in the BISAC finals all over the city of Bangkok in the following sports: Basketball, Tennis, Rugby, Touch, Cross Country, Soccer and Volleyball. We wish all our athletes well during their upcoming games. Go Panthers!!

Season Two (November-January)

ISB will most likely only be able to compete locally in Season Two. However, the school is planning to host as many events as possible to give all student athletes opportunities to compete. Our High School student athletes will be participating in Basketball, Swimming, Rugby, Touch and Tennis. For our ES teams (U11) Soccer season starts on November 9. Our Middle School teams (U13-U15) will have their Badminton and Soccer season starting on November 4.



Salad Recipes

Rika Gupta, ISB Parent



Salads for the Soul

I have always had a strange fascination for salad bars. Not your standard fare at hotel buffets or campus cafeterias with their insipid, wilted lettuce or uninspiring toppings straight out of a can from your local 24/7 convenience store. Rather, I am enamored by those niche, just-around-the-block healthy salad stops where the brilliant array of veggies, greens and mouth-savoring toppings beckon you to ditch your burrito for a bowl instead! So, in an attempt to knock off those few unfortunate pounds I seem to have packed on during the lockdown and end 2020 on a healthier note, here are two hearty, nutritious salad recipes to satisfy your tastebuds and keep you full!



CRUNCHY ASIAN SLAW

Ingredients

- 1 cup toasted instant noodles
- ½ cup toasted sesame seeds
- 3 cups shredded lettuce
- 3 cups shredded cabbage (purple or green or both)
- ¾ cup chopped spring onions
- 1 cup julienned carrots
- 1-2 large red chilli
- ¼ cup roasted peanuts

Dressing

- ½ cup neutral oil (rice bran, sunflower)
- ¼ cup vinegar
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp soy sauce

Method

Dry roast in a frying pan or oven roast the instant noodles. Break it up into pieces. Roast the sesame seeds on low flame in a frying pan.

For the dressing, first heat in a saucepan the oil, vinegar and sugar until dissolved. Once its cooled down, add the soy sauce and combine well.

Toss all the salad ingredients in a large bowl and add dressing making sure to coat well. Serve and eat immediately!





HARVEST BOWL

Ingredients

Butternut squash, roasted
(substitute: pumpkin or sweet potato)
Couscous, cooked
Baby Spinach or Baby Kale
Snap peas, lightly blanched
Cranberries
Pumpkin Seeds

Tahini Dressing

¼ cup EVOO
¼ cup tahini
1 clove garlic
3 tsp lemon juice
2 tsp ACV
¼ tsp salt

Method

Preheat oven to 200C and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Toss the butternut squash pieces with some olive oil and spread across the sheet. Bake in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes, or until lightly browned.

Follow the instructions on the box to cook the couscous. Let cool and fluff with a fork.

For the dressing, add all of the ingredients to a blender or food processor and blend on high until smooth. Make sure there are no pieces of garlic floating in the dressing.

Add the couscous, roasted butternut squash and rest of the salad ingredients into a bowl.

Toss the salad and dressing together until well coated. Top with pumpkin seeds and dried cranberries. Enjoy!

A photograph of a field of young green plants, likely corn seedlings, growing in neat rows. A dirt path runs along the left side of the field. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the field and some trees in the distance.

**Hey Warrior,
Keep going, keep growing.**