



Acorns International School

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Message from the Head of School / CEO

It feels like yesterday that our team was at the gate welcoming everyone to another exciting academic year! Giving in to clichés, time does fly when you're having fun! And when I look around the campus, that's what I see, students having fun while learning. Like when the Year 2 students were happily releasing parachutes from the second floor to discover how gravity works, or the time I walked into the Science Lab and saw our Year 7s having fun recovering dissolved copper sulphate crystals using evaporation method, or when our MYP students shared a read with our young ones in ECDC!

It definitely is a wonderful time to be a student, but we do not deprive our parents of the opportunity of having fun while learning either! It gave me immense happiness to see the involvement of our parents this academic year, be it our super-active Parent Teacher Organisation (PTO) members who have added exceptional zing to all our school events, or the parents who enjoyed the fun and games at our Coffee with Curriculum Coordinators (CCC), as well as those who sportingly participated in our Sports Gala.

As you all know, we perpetuate 'Action' through our curriculum, however, we are happy to share that we have been practicing it too. Over the last few months, we have tried to play an integral part towards social upliftment around us. In addition to the free Tally classes over the weekends, that has seen three successful batches, we are also supporting a few community schools through donations such as books, paints, and a roof. Our students have played their part too, like our Year 6 students who have been working tirelessly to support Nyaka AIDS Foundation,

Term 3 may be short, but is an action-packed one. Over the last few years, our school production has been the domain of the older students, however, this year, our Early Childhood have set out to prove their mettle in the play, Eddie the Penguin. We look forward to seeing you at the Play, as well as Celebration of Learning.

Happy Easter, to all those celebrating, and a restful weekend to all!

- Ameena Lalani - HoS/CEO

Message from Finance Department



Term 3 fees were due by **16th April 2019**. Late payments will incur a 5% surcharge. Please note, if you have paid fees in the bank kindly submit a copy of bank advice to the Finance Department.

Also, a polite reminder for parents about daycare charges. Students must be picked within 15 minutes of completing daily classes or clubs, whichever applies. Students who are not picked within this timeframe incur daycare charges, which is then added to your invoice of the following term. AIS offers a 15% reduction on one term's fee, following the introduction of a new enrolled student.

Date	Event
19 th Apr	Holiday - Good Friday
22 nd Apr	Holiday - Easter Monday
23 rd - 26 th Apr	Science Week
26 th Apr	Career Day (Y6 & MYP)
1 st May	Holiday - Labour Day
2 nd - 16 th May	Assessments
17 th - 20 th May	Midterm Break



Message from the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

PTO Behaviour Acknowledgement



At the beginning of the school year, PTO set a goal to acknowledge students who demonstrate positive behaviour and motivate students to behave better.

Through parent's generous participation in multiple fundraisers, PTO was able to accomplish their goal in Term 2.

MYP student behaviour is presently monitored through the use of detentions. On March 18th, PTO was able to throw a pizza party lunch for 51 students who had received no, or only 1, detention in Term 2.

PYP student behaviour is monitored and tracked through the use of the classroom clip-chart. On March 20th, PTO was able to excite students by bringing in three bouncy castles and cotton candy. The 152 students that participated, were the students who scored in the top 50% of their class on their clip-charts in Term 2.

All ECDC students were also thrilled to play on the bouncy castles and eat cotton-candy. All ECDC students present in school that day were able to participate as we felt it was not appropriate for their age to use a behaviour system.

It was a great time for everyone who participated and the students were very thankful to PTO for acknowledging their consistent positive behaviour.

However, PTO does understand that those students in PYP and MYP who didn't earn participation, were disappointed. Teachers have spoken to these students about how they can make improvements in their behaviour. They also have a completely fresh start in Term 3 and a new chance to demonstrate positive behaviour. In Term 3, there will also be "most improved" students who will be able to participate even if they still don't make the top 50%.

PTO hopes this was encouraging and motivating for all students and looks forward to continuing to partner with the school on promoting positive behaviour!

Thank you,
AIS PTO



World Scholars

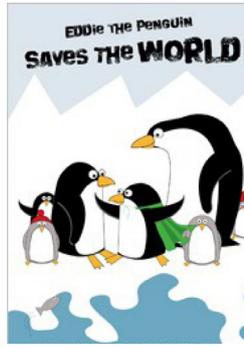


We had thirty MYP students compete in the World Scholars Competition in Kam-pala on April 27 and 28. Each team competed in six different challenges, and out of over 750 total competitors, our very own Nityagna Gogulapati was chosen to compete in the debate showcase of eight students, and in front of all the other schools. Our scholars had been training since early February, and the medals they all received at the competition were well earned. All of our teams qualified for the next Global Round, and most of our teams will be participating in the competition in Durban, South Africa, at the end of September.



100 Days

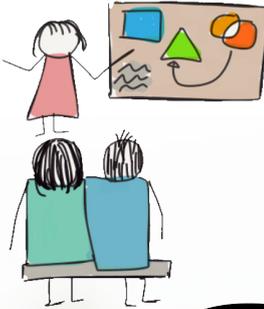
Just before mid-term break, we marked 100 days of the academic year. The year is really flying; 100 days past already. Every student wore a t-shirt with 100 as a theme: some had 100 gumballs, some 100 fingerprints. Students saw just how many 100 really is.



School Play

We have been working hard on the ECDC Production 'Eddie the Penguin Saves the Day!' and it is now taking shape. We can't wait to share it with you on **June 20th**.

Student-led Conferences



It was a busy lead-up to the end of term, with Student-Led Conferences and Sports Week.

Students took the lead in showing parents what they'd learnt this term. For our youngest students, this meant naming the objects in the pictures in their folders and around the classroom; for the oldest in ECDC, this was more of a discussion about what they'd been learning and how everything links together. It is inspiring to see our students explain their own learning.



The Performing Arts department kept working over the term break to take part in the Kampala International Schools' Choir Festival. Nine schools took part, working together on two performances (including one put together on the day) and each school showed off their vocal talents with their own song. The theme of

the event was 'Sing me a Story', so each and every song told a story. AIS sang 'Waving Through a Window' from the Broadway hit musical, 'Dear Evan Hansen'. The whole ensemble sang 'Sip from the Nile' and 'I'm Ugandan'. It was a fantastic experience for our students and we hope to take part again next year.

- Rebecca Hawkins - HoD ECDDC

Coffee with Curriculum Coordinator

We had a popping good time at Coffee with the ECDC Curriculum Coordinator!

During the ECDC presentation, parents formed teams and worked together to match developmental and learning outcomes with the correct age group. We hope you learned something new about how your child learns and what should be expected of their age group.

I want to thank all the parents who came and participated. If you have any questions about the ECDC curriculum please don't hesitate to ask me.

-Sarah Bowman ECDC CC



Assessments



The first round of formal assessments for PYP students happened in February. This is a mid-year point that allows teachers to test concepts and skills taught for reporting purposes. We normally have our own internally set assessments and external assessments; MAP testing (online) and ISA (written).

ISA results will be coming in later in May and Y4-10 will get their results sent home as soon as received. ISA assessments are a good benchmark reading, writing and mathematical literacy for international schools world-wide.

Ever wondered where ISA assessments come from?

ISA is modeled after PISA: the Programme for International Student Assessment. Every three years it tests 15-year-old students from all over the world in reading, mathematics and science. The tests are designed to gauge how well the students master key subjects in order to be prepared for real-life situations in the adult world. Why choose 15-year-olds? Because in most countries, at the age of 15, students can decide whether or not they want to continue their education. They therefore need to be equipped for adult life. PISA publishes the results of the test a year after the students are tested to help governments shape their education policy.

Coffee with Curriculum Coordinator



We had yet another session of engaging with parents regarding curriculum. We are always grateful to those in attendance since the feedback and discussions arising from these sessions are very useful to our pedagogical leadership team. Some of the queries that came up from the PYP session were;

Adoption of a school-wide approach to discipline and behavior

For the first time since its inception the PTO pulled off one of the biggest and most impactful behavioural reward systems yet. This was in partnership with our learning support department who have been working closely with teachers and parents in order to nurture positive behavior in our students. Our behavior policy is in its formative stages and revisions and improvements are constantly being made to ensure we achieve a school wide system of positive behavior reinforcement. We are still committed to lists of desirable attributes such as the Learner Profile as opposed to a list of rules and don'ts.

Access to resources, instructional materials and general information

Parents present appreciated the effectiveness of the newly formed and functional CPR groups as communication platforms. There was however a need expressed by most to receive more background and foundation in-



formation, especially regarding curriculum. We are currently in the process of compiling a comprehensive parent handbook that will serve as a manual for any AIS parent regarding all matters AIS. It will include answers to some of the Frequently Asked Questions, most arising from CCC sessions. Please look out for this document in the near future.

-Evans Kimani - PYPCC

Student-led Conferences



Term 2's conferences are always student-led; a session whereby students get to communicate their learning through, portfolios, presentations, reports and reflections. It is also a chance for our students to develop much-needed communication skills, as they discuss reports with their parents and set goals for the coming term. Term 2's report usually contains students' levels achieved in the tested subjects, as well as, a large component dedicated to student reflections. Conferences are also a good opportunity to get feedback from parents regarding student learning and we appreciate all the commendations and suggestions you give in the feedback forms provided.



Mock Exhibition

At AIS, the PYPX experience is a journey of many steps; one of the milestones is the Mock Exhibition. This is a time when our PYPX students go through a journey of self-discovery. Guided by the transdisciplinary unit – WHO WE ARE, learners get to find out more about themselves, their roots, beliefs, likes, dislikes, plans and goals. The final product is a display of colourful posters of 'ALL ABOUT ME'. This year's group received overwhelming support from all stakeholders to ensure their Mock Exhibition hit the mark.

Laura (6L): Our mock exhibition was fun and it made me more confident.

Arsalan (6J): It was fun and Mr. Jackson was so inspiring!

The Guest of Honour for the event was Jackson Twesigye, founder of the NYAKA foundation, CNN Hero 2012 and author, who gave a very moving speech about his journey through education and his work with NYAKA. He was really impressed by the showcase of student-driven inquiry and extended an invitation to the students to visit Nyaka School and mentor students there to achieve the same. Y6 students have, for the second year now, partnered with NYAKA to raise funds for orphaned children by running a sale of NYAKA merchandise and receiving donations from our staff and parent community. As part of their action component for the exhibition, this year's response has been overwhelming and we'd like to thank all the parents and staff who stopped to listen, buy or donate.

A special thank you goes out to Krishna (Y6L) who managed to become a goodwill ambassador for NYAKA outside of school and through spreading the word back home managed to link them with donors, nationally and internationally.



Y6 Overnight Field Trip

For a weekend every mid-year, Y6 students, teacher and mentors venture out for a fun-filled experience of bonding and teambuilding, as they prepare for the milestones to come in their time as Exhibition students. This year was no different; students got to work together and individually to complete tasks, an experience that most agreed built their confidence. The two days



and one night away were filled with both physical and mental triumphs and parents appreciated the growth and change it brought to their children. Here are some quotes from the Y6 Whatsapp groups;

Izabella's mum (Y6L): I received Izabella safe and happy from the trip. Thank you for giving them this experience.

Cuthbert's mum (Y6J): More thanks to Y6 teachers and the entire AIS team for exposing our children to such an

environment. It is a lifetime experience. Thank you!

Career Guidance



Lou Holtz, once put it out that; If you're bored with life – you don't get up every morning with a burning desire to do things – you don't have enough goals." During our interactions with learners, we have observed that this makes a lot of sense as learners will be more interested in learning activities which have practical applications in the natural setting. We, thus embarked on giving our students career guidance sessions to help them see the end before the start. This term, we had Dr Wayengera Misaki , a practicing medical personnel and lecturer at Makerere University Medical School sharing about his life and how to choose a career. The

education USA Adviser and the team from the American Embassy shared about the entry requirements to USA universities. The team from India exposed students to the available professional courses and entry requirements to universities in India. Our students had an opportunity to learn about oak trees and the acorns during a session with Dr Alan Hamerton, from the United Kingdom.



MYP Assemblies

Our students have had an exciting opportunity to learn, participate and challenge themselves during the MYP assemblies. They have engaged in activities such as reimagine the school anthem, recite poetry, perform magic tricks and dance.

Through these activities, we have seen our students improve their social and collaborative skills and have also proven to be better communicators and enthusiastic performers. We can't wait to have more of these assemblies that are on the first two Wednesdays of each month.

Francophonie

One of our aspirations is to nurture international-mindedness in our learners. Like the past years, we joined the rest of the world in celebrating the Francophonie Day at the French School on Saturday, March 16, 2019. It was a colourful event in which our MYP students performed a thrilling Salsa dance.



Assessments



MYP students were subjected to both internal and external assessments. Our internal assessments were both formative and summative based on criteria and ATL skills measured by the subject teachers. The external assessments comprised MAP Testing and ISA pen and paper tests.

Student-led Conferences

Student-led conferences provide a formal opportunity for a student to share his/her progress with her parent(s) and teacher(s). The student takes the major role of explaining his or her general progress and answers questions asked by the parent or teacher. Teachers play a supportive role to the students, stepping in once in a while to give clarity as required by the parent otherwise the student's presentation should be sufficient. It was a good time for students to reflect and set goals for the next term. The MYP student led conferences were held in the auditorium. Sincere gratitude is extended to all parents who turned up for student led conferences on March 22, 2019 and for the constructive feedback.

Coffee with Curriculum Coordinator



Coffee with the MYP Curriculum Coordinator involved a discussion about the value of mountains and sun and sweat, and why the MYP trekking trips may be some of the most meaningful experiences we can give to our young people. Held a few weeks before the MYP Trekking Trip to Karamoja, it served as a defence of doing hard things and, more importantly, walking alongside our learners as they do so too.

Karamoja Cultural Trekking Trip



Seventeen students and three teachers went on an adventure to Karamoja over the last break, for five days. The first few days were spent Camping in Moroto, and climbing up to the height of 3,000 meters of Mount Moroto. After spending an afternoon dancing and conversing in a traditional Karamajong manyatta, the next stop was several days in the Kidepo valley enjoying the company of ostriches, zebra, and a local elder who filled the campfires with old stories of the land. It was a whirlwind adventure, and everyone found significance and made memories both in the excitement as well as in the little things.

"I enjoyed the beautiful scenes of the countryside, as it was unlike anything I had ever seen before," Sharon, Year 9.

"I was inspired by the way the people live in happiness without their electricity," Isabel, Year 9.

"I don't want to forget the Karamajong people and how they creatively appreciate women and give them all the credit for everything," Qadirah, Year 9.

"I learned how to bare with life regardless of how hard it gets," Eric, Year 8.

"I loved the natural air and the natural light," Rida, Year 7.



Sports Week

For the first time in the history of Acorns International School, we had six house teams go neck to neck against each other in the sports events and an all MYP students' sports day event. The MYP students challenged each other in Olympic type athletics events which included shot put, javelin throw and track events. Prior to the final day, the MYP joined their team mates from Year 4-6 to compete in the colourful fan packed swimming gala on March 25, 2019.



100 Days at AIS



We celebrate each day spent at AIS, however, 100 days calls for a bigger celebration. On February 15, students commemorated this day in different ways, be it writing what they would do when they are 100 years old, 100 dreams for the world, 100 things they like about being a child, 100 things they are grateful for, having 100 minutes of reading and much more! They made connections to math concepts as well, by doing math numbers of adding up to 100, solving equations that add up to 100, building a tower of 100 cups, skip counting up to 100, planning on how to spend \$100.

The MYP students challenged themselves to colour up to 100 mandalas. The Year 10 students wrote down 100 English vocabularies, while the Year 9 and 8 collaborated to write 100 French and Kiswahili words. It was 100% successful!