



The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

Volume 13 | Issue 3 | December 2009

➡ In this issue...

- ▶ K. Festa'09 report...p. 3
- ▶ Office Updates...p. 4
- ▶ School Website...p. 5
- ▶ Inter-House Cross Country Report...p. 7
- ▶ KIST Language Policy Review...p. 8
- ▶ Model United Nations at KIST...p. 8
- ▶ MYP News...p. 9
- ▶ A Snapshot of the PYP Curriculum...p. 10
- ▶ Library News...p. 12
- ▶ Lower School Cross Country...p. 13
- ▶ Nihongo Notes 3...p. 15
- ▶ Global Changemakers...p. 16

Alone we can do
so little;
together we can
do so much.

-Helen Keller

From the Principal's Desk

I trust everyone had a restful as well as productive mid-term break.

School life is as busy and exciting as ever and in a few short weeks, so much seems to have happened. I would like to thank all those members of our community who put in an enormous amount of effort into making K. Festa'09 such a huge success. The variety of activities, items and food on offer, as well as the costumes and huge crowd made it an extremely festive and fun day. All funds raised on this day go toward grassing the playground. Unfortunately, we are still a little short and as this newsletter's quote says, so much can be achieved when people all work together. The Artificial Turf Committee has come up with more ideas to raise funds for the grass and I ask each and every parent to contribute, participate and support their efforts. The amount of joy students have already had through the artificial grass sample is evidence enough of how important this project is to the students in our school. We are still on track to begin work over the Winter Break and with everyone's assistance we will get there I am sure.

Another change that many people may not be aware of is that the first step in our new interactive website was launched very quietly on the weekend of the school festival. The internet "face" of the school has had a considerable facelift and I am sure you will agree with me that it presents information about our school in a more attractive and up-to-date way.

At this time of the year the school goes through the process of ascertaining staffing requirements for the upcoming academic year. Though this may seem early in the school year, it is in line with the recruitment calendar for international schools. This year, KIST will be attending fairs in Sydney and London as we did last year. We have a number of staff moving on to new ventures at the end of this school year. Among those are myself and Amanda Cooke.

The school has initiated a search for a Principal (Head of School) and for a Secondary Principal (the dual roles that I hold at the moment) and one for a Lower School Coordinator. Due to a re-structure of the Administration Team this position is new and replaces the former Lower School Principal. The Lower School and Primary School will be lead by the Elementary Principal and the Lower School Coordinator reports to the Elementary Principal. A full outline will be published in the next newsletter. I will still be involved with the school during the initial transition phase and consult on matters as they arise to ensure that the essential spirit of the K. school community endures and flourishes.

I would like to wish everyone a very good holiday and a wonderful start to 2010. I will celebrate Christmas with my family in Australia.

Anne Grahame
Principal

DATES TO REMEMBER



- December 10:**
Santa Photo Day
- December 16:**
Interim reports distributed
- December 18:**
Last day of Autumn Term
- December 19 – January 11:**
Winter vacation
- January 11:**
Staff Development Day
- January 12:**
Start of Winter Term
- January 18:**
Clubs and ESL start
- January 22:**
(K1 – K3) School holiday (enrolment interviews)
- January 27:**
Japanese New Year celebration
- February 11:**
School holiday
- February 15 – 19:**
(G3/G5/G7/G9) ISA testing
- February 22 – 26:**
No clubs this week (ESL as usual)

School Director's Message

This year's school festival, *K. Festa'09*, was a huge success thanks to everyone's support and cooperation. With clear weather and a total attendance of over 5,500 visitors throughout the day, we were able to achieve marvelous results toward our main objective of raising funds for the installation of artificial turf on the school playground. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you all for your efforts.

In the early years after the founding of KIST, the school festival began as a way to raise funds to purchase books and resources for the school library. Parents, students and staff worked together in order to provide as many books as possible. Since that time, the festival has grown in scale to become an integral part of the culture of the school. It has become an event that brings all members of the school community together, working for the benefit of all students.

What pleased me most of all was that this year, the results confirmed for me that the spirit of working together to achieve an end goal has taken firm root at KIST. Once again, thank you so much. I look forward to your continued support and cooperation.

Yoshishige Komaki



Memories of *K. Festa'09*



As a new staff member at KIST this year, I had no idea what to expect from the school festival day on October 24. Having seen quite a few similar such events elsewhere, experience told me that this was not something to get excited about. So what a sweet surprise to be able to enjoy this fantastic day.

What impressed me most was the participation. It seemed that the entire school community was not only "there", but actively and enthusiastically contributing to every aspect of the festival. From parents organizing and running stalls, to student performances and activities, and teachers in weird and wacky costumes. Everyone helped to create an atmosphere of fun, entertainment and giving.

Also important was that there was a clear goal, with obvious benefit to the students of the school. It seemed as though the purpose of the day had infected everyone with a collective energy and determination to exceed this goal, bring a grassed courtyard to KIST, and continue the improvement of physical resources at K.

The office staff at K. deserve a special congratulations for being the main organizing force behind the festival. The number, diversity and quality of food, stalls, activities, entertainers, prizes and events was way beyond anything I have previously seen from a school festival. To transform a school into a festival ground almost overnight was an impressive achievement.

As you can read elsewhere in this newsletter, more money was raised at this year's festival than any before. The target for the grass has still not been reached, but any event that brings an entire school community together with such spirit and good will can only be called a success.

Andrew Young
Science SAC



K. Festa'09 Report ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire school community for your support of K. Festa'09! It was a tremendous success and we hope you enjoyed the day. This year for the first time, we opened the festival to the general public on a trial basis. We were rewarded with a total general attendance of over 5,500 visitors, a record for our festival! We were very pleased that there were no problems with safety issues on the day. The aim of this year's festival was to raise funds to put towards the installation of artificial grass on the school playground and to renovate the Lower School playground. Our parent body at all grade levels worked exceptionally hard to help meet our target. Thanks to everyone's support, total sales reached 6,871,405 yen. After deducting expenses, 4,667,614 yen will be allocated to the artificial turf campaign and 207,746 yen will go towards participation in the Habitat for Humanity program. Unfortunately, we did not meet our target of 7 million yen; however, sales were 1.5 times that of last year and we sincerely thank everyone for their efforts.



Based on our experience this year, we plan to again open the festival to the general public next year. If you have any ideas or suggestions to improve the festival, please send an e-mail to friends@kist.ed.jp.

Detailed information on sales is outlined below.

Notes:

- For many classes, expenses for ingredients were covered through donations by families.
- All ingredients for the sumo food (chanko) booth were donated by the family of Tomoko Sakamoto (K2A) through the Kise-beya.
- Profits from the Haunted House booth (205,375 yen) operated by Grade 10, and profits from the Crafts and Science booth (2,371 yen) operated by Grade 11, will be put towards Habitat for Humanity participation.

K. Festa'09



Entrance Ticket Sales	¥529,100
Raffle Ticket Sales	¥1,187,100
Coupon Ticket Sales	¥4,062,000
Cash (including donations)	¥1,093,205
Total Sales	¥6,871,405
Expenses	¥1,996,045
Profit	¥4,875,360



(¥207,746 for Habitat, ¥4,667,614 for Artificial Turf)

Sales Details:

	Booth	Operated	Total Sales	Expenses	Profit
Food booth	Drinks & Lucky Dip	K1	¥458,550	¥0	¥458,550
	Sumo food (Chanko)	K2	¥129,600	¥0	¥129,500
	Indian food	K2	¥103,760	¥16,934	¥86,816
	Mexican food	G2	¥167,125	¥0	¥167,125
	Hawaiian food, Shaved ice	G3	¥238,146	¥0	¥238,146
	Yakusoba / Baby-sponge cakes	G8	¥151,728	¥0	¥151,728
	Cakes / Drinks	G9	¥118,350	¥0	¥118,350
	Korean food	G10	¥238,600	¥0	¥238,600
	Popcorn, Chocolate bananas	G11	¥130,725	¥30,728	¥99,999
	Thai food	Volunteer	¥189,600	¥70,604	¥118,996
	Pakistani food	Volunteer	¥104,625	¥40,040	¥64,585
	Crepes	Stall	¥81,275	¥0	¥81,275
	Candy Sales	Stall	¥107,440	¥93,120	¥14,320
Other booth	Face / Henna painting & Nail art	K3	¥149,000	¥58,478	¥90,522
	Bazaar	G4&5	¥483,525	¥12,424	¥471,101
	Can Badge Sales	G6&7 Students	¥176,372	¥130,620	¥44,752
	Air slides/Jumping Catch	G7	¥196,600	¥189,550	¥6,950
	Games	G8	¥389,500	¥79,143	¥290,357
	Cloakroom	Staff	¥4,000	¥0	¥4,000
	Bus Lounge	Staff	¥8,600	¥0	¥8,600
Habitat for Humanity	Advertising	Stall	¥150,000	¥71,400	¥78,600
	Crafts and science	G11 Students	¥6,625	¥4,254	¥2,371
	Haunted House	G10 Students	¥205,375	¥0	¥205,375



Donations

Donations	¥291,400
Contributions	¥90,000
Staff Donations (T shirt making)	¥31,565
Café Tomato	¥80,718
K. Shop	¥33,284
Soccer Club	¥10,000
Basketball Club	¥55,000



Office Updates

School support program

Morning bus help

We thank families for your continued cooperation with the School Support Program (SSP). As you know, one of the duties in the SSP is for morning bus help and is for the purpose of supervising students in the Lower School who ride the bus to school in the morning. On some occasions, we receive last-minute cancellations from parents unable to complete their duty for various reasons. On such occasions, we try to arrange for school staff to ride the bus in their place; however, as the bus leaves early in the morning at 6:40 a.m., it is not always possible to make such arrangements. When it is not possible, this results in a situation that is less than desirable in terms of student safety as no attendant is present.

To deal with these situations, we would like to introduce a system whereby parents who live along the route or close to the bus stops on the route can register as emergency attendants to act as replacements at short notice at times when parents rostered cancel at the last minute. The emergency attendants would, of course, be able to count this help towards their regular SSP duties.

Parents who are interested in registering as emergency attendants are asked to contact Mrs Naito in the office at admin@kist.ed.jp or 03-3642-9992. We look forward to hearing from you and thank you for your support.

Sign-up sheets

We would like to remind families that sign-up sheets for requesting preferred duty types and dates for the School Support Program are distributed two months before the end of each term for the following term. Final rosters are then distributed during the last month of the term. Both the sign-up sheet and the final roster are distributed according to each family's registered method of receiving communication from the school (i.e. paper or electronic format). Families who do not receive the forms for particular reasons are reminded that it is their responsibility to contact the school before the end of each term.

After receiving the final roster, please check it to ensure that you do not miss your scheduled duty. Please also be sure to arrive at school at an appropriate time in order to commence your duty at the time scheduled. It is very difficult to make alternative arrangements for parents/guardians who arrive late or cancel at the last minute. If you are unable to make it on a particular day when you have a duty scheduled, please be sure to notify the school in advance. Also, please try to arrange for someone else to complete your duty on your behalf. Parents/guardians who miss a duty or arrive late by 10 minutes or more will be required to complete an additional duty.

Uniform reminders

All families are asked to please cooperate in following the school dress code by ensuring that children wear the correct school uniform at all times. When a small number of students wear incorrect items, other students make the mistake of thinking it is acceptable to wear such items and the problem escalates. We ask for your support in helping us to avoid these situations. Please read the following reminders about the school uniform.

- As we have informed families previously, it became compulsory for students to wear the correct PE tracksuit (KIST blue tracksuit top and KIST blue tracksuit pants) from the beginning of the Autumn Term 2009. Students not wearing the correct tracksuit have been issued with a yellow Notification of Incorrect School Uniform slip. Families are reminded to please order the correct tracksuit as soon as possible. Furthermore, please ensure that your child tries on a tracksuit at reception first to check the size.
- We have noticed an increasing number of students wearing incorrect button-down shirts. Please ensure that your child wears the correct KIST shirt.
- For uniform items in sizes that are not available at school, families are able to obtain permission to purchase items from general retail stores. Before purchasing such items, however, permission must be obtained from the school in advance.
- During winter, all accessories such as scarves, knitted hats and gloves must be plain black with no stripes, patterns or brand names visible. The correct school coat must also be worn, including while travelling to and from school. Students not wearing the correct items are required to purchase them as soon as possible. For families unable to find suitable items, black gloves, scarves and knitted hats are available from reception. Please inquire at the reception directly for sizes and prices.
- A number of school club activities require a special uniform to be worn, however, this should be worn during club time only. Students should change into their correct school uniform at the end of the activity.



Technology fee

As advised earlier this year, an additional payment of 15,000 yen will be levied to families of students currently enrolled as part of the Technology Fee for the current school year. This will be divided between the remaining two terms: winter term (5,000 yen) and spring term (10,000 yen). These amounts will be added to the regular term invoices that are due on December 15 and March 15. For families who have already paid annual fees for the full year, additional invoices will be distributed before each term.

School Terms in 2010 – 2011

To assist families planning overseas trips during the 2010 – 2011 school year, we would like to inform you of the dates for the school terms. We hope that this early information will help ensure that students are back in Japan ready to start each term on the correct date. The complete calendar is currently being finalized and will be available next term.

Autumn term:

August 23 (Monday) – December 17 (Friday), 2010

Winter term:

January 11 (Tuesday) – March 23 (Wednesday), 2011

Spring term:

April 5 (Tuesday) – June 22 (Wednesday), 2011



Car Parking Problems

Despite repeated requests for cooperation, we have continued to receive complaints from our neighbors and warnings from the police department regarding families parking cars on the streets surrounding the school. The complaints refer to two main issues: (1) Cars lined up for almost 100 meters in the left lane along Kiyosubashi-dori at pick-up time completely blocking the flow of traffic; and (2) Cars lined up in front of the school gate in the street from the Akafudado supermarket. This situation continues to cause a disturbance to our neighbors and other vehicles using these roads. It seems there are families that believe if they wait in the car, they are not at fault; however, according to road traffic laws, by stopping their car on the road, these families are in breach of parking laws.

We are planning to survey all families in the school regarding the pick up and drop off of children. We will consider the results of this survey in determining measures to deal with the parking problem. Until then, we strongly urge all families dropping off and picking up children by car to cooperate with our request to use a public car park. To assist with the problem in the meantime, we ask that you follow these procedures

In order for as many families to use limited spaces in car parks, please agree on an exact pick-up time with your child in order to shorten the time needed to park.

To prevent overcrowding in car parks, please arrange with other families to stagger pick-up times. In particular, for students in Grades 1 to 5 who wish to play on the school grounds with their friends after school until 3:30, please don't take up parking space before 3:30.

If you are looking for a car park and can't get in at first, please continue driving around the block until a place becomes available.

Families coming to school by car are welcome to contribute ideas and suggestions for specific ways that we can work together to overcome the parking problem.



School Website

You may have noticed that the school website has been renewed. There is, however, still a long way to go.

The next stage of the renewal will involve a log in area for our currently enrolled families and various systems associated with this. When this area is complete, we will inform all families of the log in details.



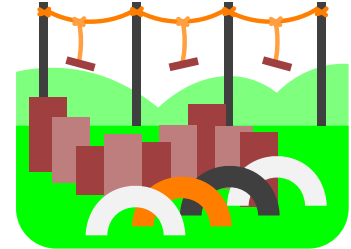
Lower School Update

Playgrounds

Lower School Playground

We are continuing to work on planning for the upgrade of our Lower School playground. This process is taking a little longer than hoped; however, we are confident that being diligent and patient in our work will ensure the best renovations possible. We have a team of Lower School teachers who have volunteered to help work on these renovations, we have also enlisted the services of a playground design company who are helping design and will implement the renovations.

Our teachers are working hard to maintain outdoor play experiences for the school day. Due to the shared nature of this space this can sometimes be difficult and time consuming. Therefore, we would like to request that families respect this learning space and not use it before or after school or during other school events. Unfortunately this often results in equipment being damaged or broken. Please ensure that your children know that this space is for teacher supervised use during school time only. The main playground space is available for use during other times.



Main Playground

We are working on the provision of playground resources for our young students playing in the main playground. We are currently looking for an appropriate position for a sandpit and climbing equipment, both of which we know are necessary and important for our young children's development both physically and academically.

Recently we had a donation of new Hoola Hoops from Mana's family (G1B). We would like to thank them for this and take this opportunity to ask other families if they have suitable playground equipment they would like to donate. If you have, please speak with Mrs Matamu (G2B) b_matamu@kist.ed.jp to check to see if the equipment is suitable.

Staffing

Unfortunately Ms Collings (K2A) will be returning to live in Australia at the end of the first term. Ms Collings has enjoyed her time here at K. International, however, family reasons have led her to make the decision to return to Australia permanently. We thank Ms Collings for her time here and her contribution to our school community. We wish her and her family well for the future.

During the Winter Term, Ms Collings will be replaced by Mr Jones, one of our regular relief teachers. In April, Mrs Astrop, who will return from maternity leave, will take on this position. We are confident that with the consistency of Ms Sterling and the professionalism of Mrs Astrop and Mr Jones, the students of K2A will continue to receive consistency and quality in education. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please speak with me directly.

Amanda Cooke

Lower School Principal

Mini Basketball News

The 63rd Koto-ku Athletics Festival—Mini Basketball Tournament was held on Sunday, October 4, Saturday, October 31 and Sunday, November 1 at Fukagawa Sport Center. The KIST Comets Boys Mini Basketball Team won the bronze medal at the tournament. Well done, boys!!

Congratulations also to Salam (G7A), Roshana (G7A) and Tyson (G6A) who were selected to represent Koto-ku at the 25th Tokyo 23 Wards Mini Basketball Tournament (Thomas Cup) which will be held on December 5,6 and 13. Good luck, boys!!

Eri Ozawa

Coach



Inter-House Cross Country Report

On Friday, November 6 on a beautiful sunny day, KIST held its annual Inter-House Cross Country event at Ojima Komatsugawa Park. It was an event where all year levels from Grade 2 through 12 took part. All students completed their courses and everyone ran extremely well. Congratulations to Honshu House (Red House) who was the victorious house on the day and all of the competitors from other houses, who competed so gallantly during the day. I would like to thank all of the parents who came along and supported the event and enjoyed a picnic with their children and I would also like to thank the teachers who gave up their time to make the day such a success.

Students who finished in the top three in each age group went through to compete in the Inter-School Cross Country competition, which took place at Ojima Komatsugawa Park on Friday, November 27. I look forward to seeing you there again next year.

Will Spring

Head of Physical Education



Results were as follows (= indicates tied placings):

Grade 2 Boys:

- 1st: Coco (G2B)
- 2nd: Zac (G2B)
- 3rd: Amane (G2B)

Grade 2 Girls:

- 1st: Minori (G2B)
- 2nd: Emily (G2A)
- 3rd: Ashley (G2A)

Grade 8 Boys:

- 1st: Shinnosuke (G8A)
- 2nd: Roland (G8A)
- 3rd: Abhinav (G8A)

Grade 8 Girls:

- 1st: Himeka (G8A)
- 2nd: Gina (G8B)
- 3rd: Miku (G8A)

Grade 3 Boys:

- 1st: Keina (G3A)
- 2nd: Shin (G3B)
- 3rd: Toshiki (G3A)

Grade 3 Girls:

- 1st: Hina (G3A)
- 2nd: Samantha (G3B)
- 3rd: Eleonore (G3B)

Grade 9 Boys:

- 1st: Shimon (G9B)
- =2nd: Abeer (G9B)
- =2nd: Alakhsa (G9A)

Grade 9 Girls:

- 1st: Monica (G9B)
- 2nd: Shifa (G9A)
- 3rd: Marie (G9A)

Grade 4 Boys:

- 1st: Sho (G4A)
- 2nd: Hiroshi (G4B)
- 3rd: Hikaru (G4B)

Grade 4 Girls:

- 1st: Seina (G4B)
- 2nd: Riko (G4A)
- 3rd: Yi-Ting (G4A)

Grade 10 Boys:

- 1st: Eric
- 2nd: Ryouzuke
- 3rd: Leo

Grade 10 Girls:

- 1st: Erica
- 2nd: Sung Hye
- 3rd: Na Yeong

Grade 5 Boys:

- 1st: Haruto (G5A)
- 2nd: Shouta (G5A)
- 3rd: Masaru (G5B)

Grade 5 Girls:

- 1st: Moana (G5A)
- 2nd: Sophia (G5A)
- 3rd: Lin (G5A)

Grade 11 Boys:

- 1st: Pyay Phyto
- 2nd: Keito
- 3rd: Jakub

Grade 11 Girls:

- 1st: Shreya
- 2nd: Da Hea
- 3rd: Saleha

Grade 6 Boys:

- 1st: Tyson (G6A)
- 2nd: Kai (G6B)
- 3rd: Mihir (G6B)

Grade 6 Girls:

- 1st: Nino (G6A)
- 2nd: Tabasa (G6A)
- 3rd: Yen Ning (G6A)

Grade 12 Boys:

- 1st: Sho
- 2nd: Min-Hyung
- =3rd: Dong Hyun
- =3rd: Aditya

Grade 12 Girls:

- 1st: Yuri
- 2nd: Katina
- 3rd: Joann



KIST Language Policy Review

As part of the action described in our School Development Plan, during the upcoming Winter and Spring Terms, KIST will be conducting a review of its current language policy. In 2008, the IB published guidelines for this process and we will be following the outlined procedures in this document. Some guidelines from the document appear below:

A language policy is derived from the school's language philosophy and is a statement of purpose that outlines goals for language teaching and learning. It is constructed around pedagogical and learning beliefs and is therefore also a statement of action describing practices for achieving and evaluating goals.

The language policy must be consistent with the stipulated principles and practices of the IB. The language policy must therefore:

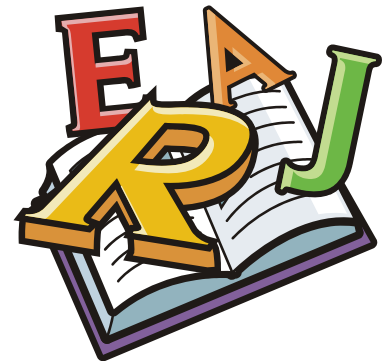
- *recognize that, since language is central to learning, all teachers are, in practice, language teachers with responsibilities in facilitating communication*
- *outline how students are to learn at least one language in addition to their mother tongue*
- *describe how the development and maintenance of the mother tongue for all learners is to be supported*
- *ensure that there are practices in place to provide inclusion and equity of access to the IB programme(s) offered by the school for all learners, including those who are learning in a language other than their mother tongue*
- *describe how the language of the host country is to be promoted*
- *recognize that administrators, teachers, librarians and other school staff will require professional development in the fields of language learning and teaching, and on how to make sure the language policy becomes a working document*

- *consider what resources and practices are to be used to involve parents in planning their children's language profile and development*

Each school, of course, exists in a unique social context with complex language and learning-related needs. A language policy must therefore also take into consideration the particular socio-cultural circumstances of each school community. Since these circumstances are not static, a language policy needs to be dynamic and flexible so that it can evolve with the changing needs of the school population. Thus it is essential that, when developing a language policy, there are initial and ongoing collaborative reflective practices in place that will monitor change and consider the views and wishes of the whole community. (Guidelines for Developing a School Language Policy, IB, 2008)

The first step is to establish a language policy steering committee. If you would be interested in finding out more information or participating in this language policy steering committee please contact me at d_rentoule@kist.ed.jp and I can e-mail you a copy of the full IB document and our current language policy.

Kind regards,
Damian Rentoule
Vice Principal/
Curriculum Director



Model United Nations at KIST



Mike Wagner
MUN Coordinator

On Saturday, December 5, 2009, K. International School will host a Model United Nations (MUN) scrimmage attended by four schools from around the Kanto Plain including Kinnick High School from Yokosuka Naval Base, Yokota High School from Yokota Air Base, Zama High School from Camp Zama Army Base and St Mary's International School. The keynote speaker will be Mr Justin Tilman, National Aeronautics and Space Administration Attache from the United States Embassy in Tokyo. At this scrimmage there will be more than 100 students participating in debates regarding United Nations concerns such as: Piracy, Child Soldiers, Drug Trafficking, the effect of the current economic crisis on the environment and Nuclear Disarmament as it pertains to Iran and North Korea. MUN provides students with the opportunity to learn about other countries and gain a different perspective on the issues affecting countries worldwide. In addition, through the use of debate and education, it allows students to be more responsive and reflective world citizens. This is the third year of the Model United Nations program at KIST under the sponsorship of Mr. Wagner. In our first year there were 10 students who participated; this year there are 52 students from Grades 9 to 12 who are involved in the program. Saturday will be a very busy day at KIST. Parents are invited to drop by the school to observe the students during the proceedings.

MYP News

Why MYP?

The IB Middle Years Programme – A guide for universities and governments (2009)

- 88% of IB World Schools consider pedagogy (constructivist approach, including student inquiry into significant content in real-world contexts) an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP
- 70% of IB World Schools consider ability and flexibility to develop course content (using an MYP framework) an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP
- 38% of MYP graduates achieve bilingual IB diplomas
- 44% of MYP graduates achieve a grade A or B, and 85% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A, B or C, in the theory of knowledge (TOK) course in the Diploma Programme
- 79% of IB World Schools consider academic rigour an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP
- 38% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A or B, and 78% of MYP graduates achieve a grade A, B or C in the extended essay in the Diploma Programme.

MYP Parent Information Sessions

There will be three parent information sessions planned for term 2 as outlined below. The number of participants for each session is limited to 15 to allow all attendees to be actively involved. There are two times for each session and if there is demand for more of these sessions, I will accommodate this at a later date. To book a place in any of these sessions please e-mail Ross Ferris directly at myp_co@kist.ed.jp detailing the session/s and times you would like to attend. Reminders will be sent prior to each of these sessions.

Ross Ferris
MYP Coordinator



MYP Grade 6 students explore levers during a Science lesson

Dates / Times	Subject
Monday, January 25 9.00 - 10.00 a.m. 5.00 - 6.00 p.m.	Concept-Based Curriculum – Learning through big ideas Key components of a concept-based curriculum and the advantages for the student to carry their learning throughout their lives will be explained with practical examples. The value of learning through concepts will be supported by some examples of higher level thinking that lead to a deeper understanding. Time will be allocated for questions.
Monday, February 8 9.00 - 10.00 a.m. 5.00 - 6.00 p.m.	Assessment in the MYP An explanation of criterion based assessment and how the MYP provides a framework for assessment. A comparison between criterion based assessment and other traditional methods of assessment will be provided clearly showing the advantages of assessment through criteria. The process for developing modified assessment criteria for Grades 6 to 8 will also be explained. The external moderation process will also be explained. Time will be allocated for questions.
Monday, March 1 9.00 - 10.00 a.m. 5.00 - 6.00 p.m.	The Areas of Interaction The role of the areas of interaction will be explained with supporting examples of KIST units of inquiry studied through each of the areas of interaction. The practical component of the Community and Service AOI will be specifically explained. The recently developed Approaches to Learning scope and sequence detailing the development of the ATL skills throughout the MYP will be shared and explained. Time will be allocated for questions.

Secondary Report Changes

The MYP and DP reports have been reviewed and will appear in a new format this year. The changes to reports will come in two steps, starting with the Interim Report and being finalized with the End of Year Report in line with changes introduced through the implementation of a new software system which will help us manage reporting information. We are making three major changes to our reporting processes:

1. We are trying to make our reports **easier to understand** for members of our school community as well as for outside institutions by reducing the amount of duplicated data. For MYP Student Reports for each subject, an overall level will be given for each subject specific criterion. In addition, a General Grade (1-7) will be given for each subject on the report. Task specific levels for each criterion are still available through the task specific rubrics that your children will have with their assessment tasks (please see your children for this information). Please note that for the Interim Report this year, only the General Grade Descriptor (1-7) will appear with teacher comments. For DP Reports, a General Grade Descriptor (1-7) will be provided for each assessed task as well as an overall General Grade Descriptor (1-7) for each Subject with a teacher comment.
2. We are trying to make our reporting processes **more environmentally friendly** by sending reports electronically. This will happen for the End of Year Reports. A hard copy of the Interim Report will still be sent this term, but the size has been reduced substantially due to the above-mentioned point.
3. We are trying to make student's documents more accessible to families by creating an electronic space for archiving all reporting documents which families can access through a secure online portal in our website. Families will be able to access all historical reporting documents related to their child through this portal.

We are looking forward to a clearer, more environmentally friendly reporting system in the coming years.

Damian Rentoule
Vice Principal/Curriculum Director

Primary School News

It is obvious that this year is quickly moving along as there are only three weeks left in the term. The Primary School has been busy lately with events and improvements.

I would like to thank the PE department for arranging our recent Inter-House Cross Country. They have spent much time and effort making the event the success it was. I saw many enthusiastic children being cheered on by their parents and staff as they pushed themselves to keep running when it became difficult. I hope everyone enjoyed the additional time this year for a picnic.

November has also been a time for the Student/Parent/Teacher Conferences. I hope you found the time valuable to learn more about your child, share more information about your child with his or her teacher as well as taking advantage of the opportunity to reflect on what has been accomplished already in order to make goals for the next year. Thank you to parents for taking the time out of your busy schedules to show support for your child and our school.

Teachers have been busily working on the Developmental Reports and PYP Portfolios in order to get them ready to come home on Wednesday, December 16. You may notice some changes to them which have been based on feedback during the last review cycle. There will be opportunities to provide feedback in the future as we start our next two year review cycle.

It has been an exciting time as access to ICT has been improving for our Primary students and will continue to

grow in the months ahead. In addition to the changes made over the summer, additional digital projectors for each grade level, 2 mobile computer labs with 4 laptops each, 6 individual laptops, 1 mobile scanning and videoing station, more digital cameras and a wireless network have been added to the resources teachers and students use. The addition of more laptops and other technology is continuing. In addition to hardware, we are adding a new member to our ICT team as our school's Educational Technologies Integrator. With software, Grade 5 classes are piloting the use of the online Mathletics program which is receiving positive feedback. Also, the school is making arrangements to begin installation of a new software database program which will be able to be accessed by you at home. All of these changes have been made to improve the education of your children and to improve the ease and efficiency of communication between families and the school.

Please take some time to let your child's teacher know how much you appreciate their newsletters. The next monthly set of single subject newsletters (Japanese, Art, PE and Music) was sent home this week. The purpose of the newsletters is to communicate to you what your child is learning and doing at school and to let you know how we are helping your child.

I hope to see you around school sometime during the term but if not, please have a safe, relaxing and enjoyable holiday break.

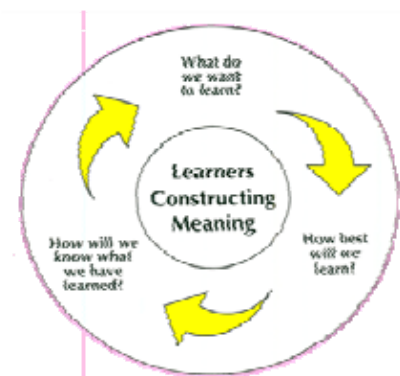
Greg Brunton
Primary School Principal

A Snapshot of the PYP Curriculum

When most people think of the meaning for the word "curriculum" the first thing that comes to mind is a written body of knowledge that students will be exposed to in school. In addition to this, many would include a set of academic skills students should acquire and maybe even a set of positive character traits that students will be encouraged to model as part of a school's curriculum. There are many debates about the merits of the endless variety of written curricula that exist for elementary students – which is the most rigorous, most developmentally appropriate, most culturally appropriate and so on. The IB Primary Years Program takes a different and much broader view of curriculum than the one expressed above. According to the PYP, "curriculum" revolves around the concept of learners constructing meaning, and everyone at a PYP school, including the teachers, is a learner. The PYP model of curriculum is student-centered. It is founded on the belief that learning occurs when students (and teachers) build on their prior knowledge and engage in activities that help them construct new understandings. This process involves continuous self-reflection, the

freedom to ask questions, the motivation to take risks and the desire to take action based on what one has learned.

So what does the PYP curriculum model look like? It is composed of three interrelated and equally important components. In keeping with the spirit of inquiry found throughout the Primary Years Program, each component is expressed as an open-ended question and compels teachers to think deeply about their own practice with regard to student learning.



What do we want to learn?**The written curriculum**

the identification of a framework of what's worth knowing

How best will we learn?**The taught curriculum**

the theory and application of good classroom practice

How will we know what we have learned?**The assessed curriculum**

the theory and application of effective assessment

The Written Curriculum

The written curriculum at KIST is planned and used in a developmentally appropriate way; it takes into account what students should learn and be able to do on the basis of what is best for their development during their primary school years, rather than simply on the basis of what works in the short term. The scope of student learning is developed from the IB Scope and Sequence documents, as well as other curricular models. These documents specify the phases of development and highlight specific learning outcomes that must be covered at developmentally appropriate times from K1 through to Grade 5.

The written curriculum is also based on each student's needs, interests and competencies. This developmental approach takes into account the different rates at which students learn and the variation that can occur in any age group. It is also acknowledged that learning is a balance between the intellectual, the social and the personal; each is important and each is interlinked with the others.

The Taught Curriculum

The second question, "How best will we learn?" represents the taught curriculum in a PYP school. The taught curriculum involves the methods teachers use to engage students with the written curriculum. It is not only "what" students will learn but also "how" they will learn it that matters in a PYP school. PYP teachers are expected to constantly examine and improve the practices they use to actively involve students in learning. Inquiry-based instruction and differentiation of instruction to meet individual student needs are featured within the wide array of best practices employed by teachers around the globe, and promoted and supported as best practice here at KIST.

Another method of strengthening the teaching and learning practices at KIST, is through a structured, collaborative approach to planning, using the IB planner which is designed to assist teachers in planning their inquiries. The planner is designed around seven open-ended questions such as how best will the students learn, how will we know what has been learned and how will we take action? Through the use of the IB planner, teachers consistently and frequently reflect on their teaching practices and adjust their teaching methods according to the student's interest, readiness, learning profile and their developmental stage of learning.

The Assessed Curriculum

The third component in the PYP definition of curriculum, **the assessed curriculum**, is concerned with the assessment of the actual learning that takes place for each student, a component that can often be neglected or inappropriately practiced. The development of a range of authentic and targeted assessment strategies, focused on the learning, brings balance and integrity to the curriculum and reminds teachers of its purpose.

The PYP defines assessment as 'the gathering and analysis of information about student performance. It identifies what students know (*knowledge*), understand (*concepts*), can do (*skills*) and feel (*attitudes*) at various stages in the learning process. It is the means by which we analyze student learning and the effectiveness of our teaching and acts as a foundation on which to base our future planning and practice. It is central to our goal of guiding the child, from novice to expert, through the learning process.'

The PYP further divides assessment into three components:

- **Assessing** – how we discover what students have learned.
- **Recording** – how we make note of our findings about what students have learned.
- **Reporting** – how we pass that information on to parents, administration and other parties directly involved in students' learning.

At KIST we use a variety of strategies and tools to report student growth to all members of our community: student portfolios; student-led conferences; teacher parent conferences and reports card.

Why do we assess?

- To promote continuous student learning and growth.
- To guide children through the five essential elements of learning (concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes and action).
- To celebrate what students can do.
- To set goals and plan for future student growth.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the learning program.

At KIST, we see the purpose for assessment as going far beyond assessing student growth in acquisition of knowledge. We also highly value the need to record and reflect on their development of attitudes, the learner profile and students independent decision to take action. Assessment of student growth in their understanding of concepts (big ideas that go beyond traditional subject areas), mastering of the transdisciplinary skills as well as their progress and performance in the following subject areas: language; mathematics; social studies; science; the arts; personal, social and physical education, are also essential to ensuring we cater for individual developmental needs within the programme.

To learn more about each of these essential components to the KIST curriculum, please come along to the three parent information sessions that will be running over the course of this school year. Please also refer to our school website and the official website for the International Baccalaureate Organisation: <http://www.ibo.org/>

Emma Homerlein
PYP Coordinator

Library News

Please read the following information regarding the use and availability of our school libraries.

Main Library

- Mainly for upper Primary and Secondary students
- Fiction and non-fiction books (excluding picture books)
- 12 computers for educational use

Junior Library

- Mainly for Lower and Primary students
- Picture fiction and easy illustrated non-fiction books
- Students are not permitted to visit the library by themselves. If there are no teachers present, students may not use the library. The library staff are helpers, not teachers.



Opening hours

The availability of the libraries for students in the Lower, Primary and Secondary Schools **outside lesson times** is listed below. If availability of the libraries change, students and parents will be informed.

Lower	Primary	Secondary
ML: 8:15 – 8:35 JL: 15:00 – 15:30 (Available for parents to visit with their child) ML: 15:30 – 16:30	ML: 8:15 – 8:35 JL: 15:00 – 15:30 (Available for parents to visit with their child) ML: Lunch Time (if no class is in the library) ML: 15:30 – 16:30	ML: 8:15 – 8:35 ML: 13:10 – 13:35 ML: 15:30 – 16:35

ML = Main Library / JL = Junior Library

Borrowing limits

Grade	Maximum
ECE	
K1 – K2	2
K3	3
Primary	
G1 – G5	4*
Secondary	
G6 – G12	6*

*This total does not include class texts.

- Any overdue books will be deducted from the total number of books that a student is allowed to borrow.
e.g. Sally (G1) has one overdue book. She will only be allowed to borrow a total of three books until the overdue book is returned.
- Any students with **two or more** overdue books will not be permitted to borrow further items until the overdue books are returned.
- **Lower and Primary School students** will not be allowed to borrow without a library bag.

Using computers and printers (Main Library)

- Available to Secondary students who bring their Student ID Card (Edy Card) to the library counter.
- Printing: B/W: 10 yen per page / Color: 25 yen per page

Satoko Yoshimoto

Librarian

Congratulations!

Victo (G3A) was selected by the Scout Association of Japan to attend a ceremony which was held on November 12 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the reign of the Heisei Emperor, Akihito.

We would like to congratulate Victo on his selection and hope that he enjoyed the event.



Congratulations to Mr Igoe on his acceptance as a PhD Candidate in Atmospheric Physics at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. Mr Igoe will start this undertaking next year and is a model example to our students of our school motto "Learning for Life".



Lower School Cross Country

On a beautiful, clear Autumn day, the K3s and Grade 1s took to the streets of Kiyosumi en route to Kiyosumi Park – the destination for this year’s Lower School Cross Country. Full of enthusiasm and laughter, the students arrived eager to participate.

First up were the K3s. One lap of the park was their target – a whole 520m. After the instructions had been given, the students rushed to the start line bursting with excitement. On the whistle, the students galloped away chasing Mr Southall on his bike. With staff placed around the course, the students had plenty of people to impress, and impress they did. One by one they crossed the finish line beaming with pride and large smiles – success!

Next up were the Grade 1s. After watching the K3s compete, the Grade 1s were keen to show everyone that they are made of the same tough stuff! Two laps of the course was the target – over 1km! This news was greeted with a mix of excitement and apprehension. On the whistle, however, we saw a remarkable sight; 40 Grade 1 students sprinting after the lead bike with no intention of ‘pacing themselves’. Two laps came and went in no time, producing tired, thirsty, battered and bruised Grade 1s as they finished the race with smiles on their faces. Again, the Grade 1 students surprised me and they too can be proud of how they represented the school and their families.

The effort from every pupil was remarkable and completely took me by surprise. The students did themselves, the school and their families proud.

I must also take this opportunity to apologize to the parents who missed their child’s race. We were ahead of time and I took the decision to get the races started rather than having the students sitting around too long as it was a little cold. We will ensure things run to schedule next time so that all can be involved. We are excited about making this an annual event for K3 and Grade 1 as a lead up to their participation in the Primary/Secondary Cross Country beginning in Grade 2.

Many thanks to all the staff that helped on the day, all the parents for coming along to support, but most importantly, to the students who made the day such a fun and special day.

Mark Ralph
PE Teacher



IT Support

Welcome to Christian Thompson who has been appointed as our new Education Technologies Integrator. Christian will be working within our IT team and will be responsible for a number of areas within the IT department including the further development of the systems to be integrated with the new school website and in providing training to staff in these areas.

Christian comes to us with a wealth of experience in information technology including several years as a web programmer in Romania, and before that, teaching experience at a number of international schools in Tokyo. Christian said of his new position: "I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to apply my twin passions, technology and education, to help ensure the students at K. International School reach their full potential."

We wish Christian all the best in his new position.



Secondary School News

As mentioned in the last edition of *The Comet*, in mid-November, Carmina (G12) attended the Global Changemakers' Global Youth Summit in London. We have further congratulations to offer Carmina. From this summit, Carmina was one of six students chosen to attend the annual World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos, Switzerland! This is an incredible accomplishment and one of which we are extremely proud. Carmina will have the chance to meet the leaders of the G8, including President Obama.

This is just one example of the many tremendous things that our students do and I am very proud to be able to let our school community know of these achievements. Carmina has written a short piece on her experience for the newsletter so please take the time to read it.

KIST places great emphasis on parent support of and involvement in their child's learning, and a few weeks back, parents came to school for Parent/Teacher/Student Interviews. I would like to thank those who attended for taking the time to participate in this important feedback loop on learning. Interviews do not necessarily need to be about areas for improvement but can also be an opportunity to celebrate achievements and a community building opportunity.

Finally, the previous edition of *The Comet* included information about the Student Representative Council (SRC) in the Secondary School. Unfortunately, the representative for Grade 8, Irene, was omitted. We apologize to Irene for this oversight.



Irene (G8)

Anne Grahame
Secondary School Principal

Orchestra Lovers

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the Secondary Music Teacher. My name is Trevor Adams and I have a special interest in the role that the Arts play in a 21st century education. To this end, that is why Composition plays a central role in my class music lessons. I would like to invite parents to attend some orchestral concerts in the Tokyo area over the next two years, where your children can experience music that will support the classroom composition program. There will be a meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, December 7. Please contact me by e-mail at t_adams@kist.ed.jp if you would like any further information or wish to attend this meeting.



Trevor Adams
Secondary Music Teacher

Help Wanted

Learning Support Assistant

We are looking for a learning support assistant for a Grade 3 student. Suitable applicants will have the ability to work closely with the classroom teacher in order to implement an individual learning program in conjunction with the regular class program-in particular reading. Implementation of the program may require the teacher assistant to make adaptations to class activities. Applicants should have experience working with children and show a patient but firm disposition. Applicants should possess strong English language and reading skills. The position requires the person to work with the student one-on-one for 2 hours a day for three mornings a week. The learning support assistant will work under the guidance of school staff, although salary and working hours will be a private arrangement between the student's family. This would be discussed at the time of the interview. Please apply in writing, including CV/Resume, to Greg Brunton (Primary School Principal) at g_brunton@kist.ed.jp.



Skillful sewers needed

We are looking for one or two parents who have sewing skills and could help with the creation of a wall display for the PYP Programme of Inquiry. This would involve the purchase of materials (school funded) and several hours of sewing. You would work together with the PYP Coordinator, Emma Homerlein, and the Lower School Principal, Amanda Cooke, regarding the design. If you think you might have the skills and time to help, please contact Amanda Cooke at a_cooke@kist.ed.jp.



Piano Tuning

We would like to express our gratitude to Mr Shimozawa (father of Shin, K2B) for tuning the four school pianos. This will enable students to listen to music correctly in tune during their music lessons. Thank you very much, Mr Shimozawa.



Inter-School Cross Country



The annual K. International inter-school invitational cross-country event took place on Friday, November 27. K. International School Tokyo had students in all events from Grade 1 all the way to Grade 12. The day was a huge success and a thank you must go out to all staff that assisted in the running of the day, as well as to the students for their efforts. There were some fine performances during the day and K. International was lucky enough to have many medal winners.

They were as follows:

Grade 1 Boys:

Silver – Hee Sung (G1A)
Bronze – Jun (G1B)

Grade 1 Girls:

Gold – Saki (G1A)
Silver – Maki (G1A)
Bronze – Maria Alexia (G1C)

Grade 2 Boys:

Silver – Amane (G2B)
Bronze – Zac (G2B)

Grade 3 Girls:

Gold – Hina (G3A)

Grade 6 Girls:

Bronze – Nino (G6A)

Grade 6 Boys:

Bronze – Tyson (G6A)

Grade 7 Boys:

Gold – Salam (G7A)

Grade 8 Boys:

Bronze – Shin (G8A)

Grade 9 Boys:

Silver – Shimon (G9B)
Bronze – Alakhsa (G9A)

Grade 9 Girls:

Gold – Monica (G9B)
Silver – Shifa (G9A)
Bronze – Marie (G9A)

Grade 10 Boys:

Gold – Eric
Bronze – Leo

Grade 10 Girls:

Silver – Erica
Bronze – Na Yeong

Grade 11 Boys:

Bronze – Pyay Phyto

Grade 11 Girls:

Gold – Jessica
Silver – Shreya
Bronze – Da Hea

The overall results were:

Lower Primary Trophy (Grades 1, 2, 3)

K. International School Tokyo	350
The Montessori School of Tokyo	320
The British School in Tokyo	100

Lower Middle School Trophy (Grades 4, 5, 6)

The British School in Tokyo	350
Yokohama International School	330
Tokyo International School	120

Upper Middle School Trophy (Grades 7, 8, 9, 10)

K International School Tokyo	510
The British School in Tokyo	360
Yokohama International School	210

School Development Plan

Action at KIST is guided by a clearly stated set of school wide goals. These goals are based on a set of beliefs based around the IB Standards and Practices, that form the foundation of our school's strategic plan for school development. By structuring our School Development Plan this way, members of our school community can trace the origin of action within the school back to the underlying beliefs, related to learning within a school community, that guide our planning and drive us forward. The KIST School Development Plan is now available on our website and we invite you all to read through this most important document. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments related to the plan which will be periodically reviewed.

Damian Rentoule

Vice Principal/ Curriculum Director

Nihongo Notes 3

Many students and parents ask me for ideas for studying Japanese at home. I'd like to introduce some websites that are easy to use and fun.



Stacey Isomura

ESL and Japanese Teacher

Sushi test <http://www.jp.f.go.jp/e/urawa/>

Click "Sushi test/internet Japanese test" on the right side of the page. It will take you to an interactive Japanese language test. This test is excellent practice for students who will take the Japanese Language Proficiency Test levels three and four. It starts at a very easy level and gradually gets more difficult. Each time you do well on the test you earn a piece of sushi which shows up at the end.

Kantango <http://www.kantango.com/>

This is a site dedicated to the study of Japanese vocabulary. You can make your own flashcards, quizzes, and practice online.

Kids Web Japan <http://web-japan.org/kidsweb/>

Finally, I'd like to re-introduce Kids Web Japan. This is an excellent site for learning about Japanese language and culture for students in Grade 3 to 8 and beyond. There are stories, games, video clips, articles, and much more. It can be accessed in English, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, French, German, and Spanish.

Global Changemakers

On 15 November, 2009, I arrived at Heathrow Airport in London. I was admittedly quite worried—I had no relatives in the UK and I was supposed to attend a week-long Global Changemakers conference. When I spotted a British Council official holding a sign with my name though, relief dampened my concern and I became excited for the week that I anticipated would entail debates about current issues as one of the 60 worldwide participants.

Yet the week that followed held so much more than discussions (in fact, intense debates usually took place at 2 in the morning). Rather, the week focused on putting our words into actions. For example, an entire day was devoted to 'Marketplace': a series of workshops that refined our skills of project management, media, research and launching our own Community Action Projects. We even learned how to speak about ourselves and draw in an audience in a time constraint of 27 seconds!



Throughout the week, we also had the privilege to speak with leading figures such as the Campaign Director of *Avaaz* and officials from *Make Poverty History*. Additionally, we were given private tours of organizations such as *Action Aid* and *Global Generation*. I would have to say, however, that the real highlight of the week was meeting the famous British comedian *Francesca Martinez*. In spite of having a mental disability, she is motivated enough to laugh her situation off by referring to herself as 'wobbly', while sending her audience into fits of laughter and inspiring them indefinitely. At a fancy reception later on in the week where we spoke with members of the British Parliament, I was happy to see her there as well and took the liberty of hugging and taking a picture with her.

I say unreservedly that the Summit week was the most life-changing week of my life to date. Today, I felt very humbled to learn that I am one of 6 participants chosen to speak in front of and with world leaders including Bill Clinton, Kofi Annan and Gordon Brown at the *World Economic Forum* in January at Davos, Switzerland. They are anticipating the attendance of President Obama so I am incredibly excited!

I am currently working with a friend I met at the summit on a Youth Directed Media Project tackling poverty issues that will be sponsored by the British Council, so do expect opportunities for the KIST community to get involved!

If there is one lesson that I take home with me from this conference, it is the thought that anything is possible. When I read articles pertaining to corruption and violence, I no longer feel discouraged but I instead see opportunities for change. The voice of the youth is one that is rarely ignored; therefore, we have the chance to push this world forward. If you're a K. International School student reading this article, remember that there is a whole world out there that is in your hands!



On that note, I should probably end this article before it gets even longer, but feel free to ask me any questions about the Summit if you see me around school. It is definitely worth applying to next year. I am certain that you would have the same amazing experience and meet the make the most incredible friends just like I did! Please contact Mrs Okude or Mr Wagner in the College Guidance Office for further details.

Carmina (G12)

Editor's note:

Carmina was selected as one of only six high school students worldwide to attend and participate in the World Economic Forum to be held this January in Davos, Switzerland. Quite an accomplishment. Congratulations, Carmina!