

The Cometa

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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"A farewell is necessary
before we can meet again, and
or a lifetime is certain for
those who are friends,"
Richard Bach

From the Head of School

Throughout this term I have had the pleasure of attending the Grade 5 PYP Exhibition; the Lower, Primary and Secondary Concerts; the Spring Welcome Party, Family Day, the final Habitat for Humanity dance and of course today's Secondary graduation ceremonies for the students of the MYP and DP. All of these events in their own way celebrate the unique nature of our programmes, our students and our school. Each and every one of them has been a joy to witness. The students have used their growing skills to share their knowledge, thoughts, reflections and experiences; their unique talents and abilities. Throughout these occasions, there has been the opportunity to watch our students demonstrate how they strive to be communicators, risk-takers, thinkers and inquirers.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our students on their work this year. They have provided our staff with a rewarding and satisfying year as we have watched them grow, develop and mature. I encourage all families to look through their child's portfolio and report card together when they arrive home on Monday and talk about the learning experiences that have taken place and the goals students have set themselves for the future.

Once again we are sad to have to farewell a number of teachers and students at the end of the term. Thank you to our teachers and students for their significant contributions to the school and its development. On a personal note, I would like to farewell all students, staff and parents and wish you all the best in your continued journey as members of the KIST community. I have enjoyed my time with the students here and have been privileged to work with some truly inspirational teachers. Farewell.

Finally, on behalf of the staff, I wish you a safe and enjoyable vacation. Rest up for a fresh start at the beginning of school in August!

Anne Grahame

Head of School

DATES TO REMEMBER



June 21:

End of year reports issued

June 21 - 24:

No clubs or ESL this week

June 22:

(G5) Graduation ceremony (Evening)

June 23:

(L/P End of Spring Term

June 24:

(S) End of Spring Term (Students return home before lunch)

June 28 - July 9 / August 2 - 20:

Summer Programs 2010 at KIST

August 19:

(K1) Parent Welcome Night

August 23:

(L/P/S) Start of Autumn Term

August 31:

(K2/K3/G1) Parent Welcome Night

September 1:

(G2-G5) Parent Welcome Night

September 2:

(G6-G12) Parent Welcome Night

KIST Learning for Life KIST Learning for Life KIST Learning for Life

Family Day

Family Day provides an opportunity for all members of the school community to interact through enjoyable game activities and to communicate in an informal setting. Held on Saturday, May 22, we were blessed this year with a sunny and warm day which enabled all the activities to be held outdoors on the main playground and to utilize our fabulous artificial turf.

Some of the activities this year included: piñata, tug of war, musical chairs, quizzes, relays, ball games, rope skipping and more. In addition, a number of information sessions were held throughout the day to introduce the Board of Directors, the Summer Program, the Founders' Awards and university enrolments. A special thank you board was also set up for visitors on the day to write messages to staff leaving KIST this year.

Funds raised on the day from the sale of food and drinks totaled 146,997 yen. This will be put towards the ongoing Artificial Turf Fundraising Campaign.

We would like to thank all the staff and parents who assisted with the organization and running of the activities and booths as well as all the families who attended and took part in the activities. We hope you enjoyed the day.





Family Day Feedback

Thank you to families that provided feedback about Family Day. Here is a selection of comments received.

- We participated for the first time. Our child had fun.
 Thank you all those who worked hard for the event!
- Might benefit from some practice beforehand.
- Great appreciation for everyone who put their effort to provide an excellent day!
- I would like to suggest a game for little children or students' siblings who are not in our school as they were just watching.
- The info session was useful, but I thought it would be everyone sitting down for a presentation, so was confused at first.
- It was a wonderful Family Day on a beautiful day!
- Not enough vegetarian food was available.
- Price of food and drinks were reasonable.
- Prefer it started earlier and end sooner.
- The games for parent-child and "moms only" are a great opportunity to connect with other families and enjoy the action.

- I heard you used to make teams by house colour. I think that is better because everybody cheers up and watches the games.
- It was OK, but I wanted to know 2 weeks or 3 weeks before the date about the time.
- I think it is better to have one class versus the other instead of girls versus boys.
- · Festive and fun! Great!
- Could tents be set up in the bus parking area for people to retreat from the sun and get out of the way?
- Thanks for the flexibility in changing a game that some parents could not do.
- Older students felt there were not enough activities for them.
- Activities could be a little more challenging.
- Overall it was a great effort with opportunities to talk to staff and other parents.

Final College Update

All the results are in and KIST students once again performed magnificently this year in acquiring admission to very excellent schools. This is the fifth year of having Grade 12 at KIST and in our short graduation existence; the list of schools that KIST students have been accepted to is very impressive. The list reflects two very important aspects: First, our students are excellent, well prepared individuals that colleges and universities worldwide seek out. Second, this list also underscores the value colleges and universities place on an IB education. Mrs Okude and Mr Wagner work tirelessly with each student to ensure that the 'right fit' is acquired. The conversations with students,



parents and colleges and universities throughout the world support the KIST philosophy. Mrs Okude and Mr Wagner spent all of Family Day speaking with students and parents across the grade spectrum in discussing strategies and choices for post KIST education. Mrs Okude and Mr Wagner are readily available to discuss options with KIST families: Mrs Okude: k_okude@kist.ed.jp; Mr Wagner: m_wagner@kist.ed.jp

KIST Class of 2010 (current G12) College Acceptance

USA

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY | STANFORD UNIVERSITY | UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA (WHARTON) | UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO | DUKE UNIVERSITY | DARTMOUTH COLLEGE | GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY | UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA | RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE | UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI | NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY | ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY | PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY | DRURY UNIVERSITY | PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY | UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO | THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

UNITED KINGDOM

IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON | KING'S COLLEGE LONDON | UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK | UNIVERSITY OF SAINT ANDREWS | UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW | COLLEGE OF FINE ART AND DESIGN LONDON (CHELSEA)

CANADA

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

JAPAN

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

OTHER

GLION INSTITUTE (SWITZERLAND) | SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN (HONG KONG CAMPUS) | UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG | CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Grade 4 and 5 Mini Athletics

On Friday, June 11, Grade 4 and 5 went off campus to participate in a mini athletics carnival as part of their PE Athletics Collaborative Unit. The day was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended, especially the students! Thanks to those parents who were able to join us to help cheer on the House teams. Each student earned points for their House when they participated in the events which included high jump, long jump, tennis ball throwing, rope ring toss and relays. Students also earned bonus points for cheering on their peers and

displaying team spirit. After tallying all points, Yellow team came in at first place with Red, Blue and Green all following close behind. We look forward to a rematch next year.

CONGRATULATIONS EVERYONE!

Emma Homerlein and the PE team!



Habitat for Humanity Update

Dear Parents, Staff, Students and Greater School Community,

Team KIST Habitat for Humanity would like to express their warmest gratitude for the unwavering support of time and donations you all have contributed. You have jointly made possible that a functional safe home can be provided for a family living in rural poverty in northern Bali, Indonesia.

The purpose of the year long fundraising campaign is to support the team costs toward participation in one of the world's renowned humanitarian tasks. K. International School Tokyo has established a tradition of student service learning in humanitarian aid, in conjunction with the internationally respected Habitat for Humanity organization.

The funds the KIST community has contributed will allow the school team to assist building a modest, yet stable home, for a family living in severe poverty. This is accomplished because you contributed funds towards the purchase of raw materials, and the team's travel to a rural location to assist local professional builders, alongside the family members who will occupy the home. Past excursions by school teams have proven a humbling experience, realizing the privilege of living in a sustainable dwelling with modern infrastructure and conveniences.

This collaborative project engages the fundamental 'Learner Profile' philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organization curriculum by fostering principled, caring, reflective, communicative, knowledgeable and risk-taking learners. These attributes represent part of the goal of our school curriculum in developing students into life-long learners with an internationally respectful and compassionate attitude. Once again thank you for your donations.

To learn more about the project, please feel free to inquire through team members during any of the school functions about their understanding or experience. Also, you can get detailed information on the work Habitat for Humanity does from their website: http://www.habitatjp.org/index_e.php

Daryl Bates

CAS Coordinator

Team KIST 2010—Facts

Team KIST will visit Indonesia from June 20 through 29.

This year's team consists of twelve students from Grade 11: Faye, Jessica, Hikaru, William, Matthew, Maung Pyay Phyo, Aki, Tahlia, Dingyun, Jeff, Junichi and Ralang. KIST teachers, Mr D. Bates and Ms Hudson, will accompany the students.

We wish Team KIST 2010 all the best in Indonesia!

Farewell to KIST

As you are aware, I will be returning to Australia at the end of this school year. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the students, staff and parents for four wonderful years at KIST. As many of you know, I began at KIST as a K3 teacher back in 2006. It has been a wonderful journey from there to where we are now. I look back at the positive changes and developments that have taken place and feel proud that our ongoing team work and collaboration has helped get us where we are today. As a school we continue, as we will always do, to work on various areas of development. I feel confident that with the current returning and incoming staff that the KIST community will continue to grow and develop in line with the vision of our school founders.

Recently, I re-read an article that I wrote for the June Newsletter in 2008. In reflecting on what was then my first year as Lower School Principal, I commented that one of the most enjoyable aspects of my job was getting to know a wide range of students, teachers and families throughout the school, from K1s all the way through to Year 12s. This has continued to be incredibly rewarding. These connections have helped me feel a part of the KIST community which, in the absence of my own family, has made my time in Japan one that I will fondly remember.

As you know, IB philosophy strongly advocates for lifelong learning; knowing that we still have much to learn and being open to what and who can help us is the sign of life-long learner. I have always been a strong advocate of first-hand practical experiences as essential to our learning journey. So, in true 'practice what you preach' style, my return to Australia will include a first-hand, practical learning journey of my own. On July 8, I

fly to China where I will begin a 3-month bicycle journey from Chengdu to Bangkok. I will ride through four countries, encounter monsoon season at its best and cross my fingers that life has equipped me with the skills necessary to deal



with the many wonderful and challenging experiences that will come my way. Clearly, cycle touring is not for everyone and some days, I waver between thinking I'm a spirited adventurer or just plain crazy! However, I hope that this story might inspire you to create experiences for both you and your children that will add just a little bit of spice to your learning journey.

As always, I leave you with a quote. This one comes from an unknown Internet source. It's no less profound than my previously used favorite quotes, but approaches reflecting on life from a slightly different angle, something we all need to remember to do occasionally.

"Life is not a journey to the grave with intentions of arriving safely in a pretty well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly used up, totally worn out and loudly proclaiming...WOW! What a ride!"

Thank you everyone, for everything!

Take care.

Amanda Cooke Lower School Principal

Teacher and Student Placements for 2010

As always, teacher and student placements for the new school year will be announced on the first day back in August. We have currently made tentative placements for teachers; however, there are often changes that take place during the summer vacation and therefore we will not be notifying families until this is confirmed. Teachers are currently working on class allocations for students. Classes will be re-grouped from this year's classes to create new classes for the new grade level. Class allocations will take into consideration a balance of gender, ESL, nationality, learning styles and needs, social dynamics and student/teacher relations. Teachers do their best to create a class that will function together as a cohesive group whilst meeting both individual and group needs. You will be notified of your child's new class and teacher on the first day back in August.

Shreya's Internship

Shreya (G11) has been accepted into a special internship program for distinguished high school students at KMD (Graduate School of Keio Media Design, Keio University) in Hiyoshi, Yokohama.

Shreya will do her internship from June 21 through July 23 under the guidance of Professor Masahiko



Inami, a specialist in Interactive Technology and Robotics and a former researcher at MIT Media Lab. One of his major inventions was used for the invisible man technology in a James Bond movie. An exhibition of his works is being held at the Miraikan in Aomi, Koto-ku, through Monday, June 14. For information, please check: www.miraikan.jst.go.jp.

This is a very exciting opportunity for Shreya and we wish her all the best with her internship this summer.

MYP Community and Service

Karlee's remarkable service experience in Thailand

A few weeks ago I went to Thailand with my mother for three weeks. For the first part of out trip, we did some volunteer work for the less fortunate. We went to Rayong first to work for Habitat for Humanity, to build a small house for a family of six in a Muslim community about 20 minutes drive from the city. At the building site, I was able to learn how to mix cement, lay bricks straight, and fill in a floor for a house. Then, we went to Pattaya by local bus to visit the Pattaya Orphanage. On our first day volunteering there, we donated some Japanese snacks, and a teddy bear because we

weren't sure exactly what to bring. On another day of our visits there, I sponsored a lunch for approximately 180 'residents' at the orphanage. I have been working afterschool by tutoring a student, and so the money I used to sponsor the lunch was money that I saved from my job. I was able to buy a healthy nutritious meal for the children of the orphanage.

At the orphanage I was able to hold and play with the children, and show them love. Because there are so many babies to one adult there, not every baby can be held or shown love, so we were able to help out with that problem.



I suggest if you are ever in Pattaya, Thailand, you should go and visit the children at the home. I have put the website below so you can look easily. If you allow the staff at the orphanage to do so, they will put up photos on their website of your visit and post the date you came. It is under 'Update news' and then 'News 2010'. I have photos from the day the lunch was held.

In all, volunteering in Thailand was an amazing experience, and I would definitely go again.

http://www.thepattayaorphanage.org

Karlee (G9B)

G7A Photoshop Technology Task















Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present Grade 1 teacher, **Erin Hoover**, who is from Canada. She has been at KIST since 2009. She will take on the role of Lower School Coordinator in August and will also be responsible for overseeing the music program in the PYP.



Ms Hoover on stage at the School Concert.

Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

Caledonia is a small town in Southern Ontario that is set on either side of the Grand River. The Grand River is the largest river within Ontario and makes my hometown a very beautiful, fun place to live!

· What is your favorite place in the world?

This is a really difficult question to answer! I've travelled to many countries and special places in the past and each one offers something unique and wonderful. A quiet beach with a tree to sit under and beautiful water to swim in comes pretty close to being my favorite place.

 Who would you like to meet if you had the chance and why?

There are many people I would like to meet if I had the opportunity! At this time, I think I would choose to meet Sir Edmund Hillary, not just because he showed such amazing courage and commitment, being the first person to climb Mount Everest, but because of everything that he has done since then. Instead of soaking up the glory and living a life of ease, he has worked hard for the children in Pakistan by building many schools and providing the boys and girls that live in small villages an opportunity to be educated. I could learn more by having a conversation with an inspirational person like Sir Edmund, than years of studying could ever teach me.

- Do you have any special skills or talents?
 I love listening to and performing various genres of music. I play the guitar and the trombone.
- Please share a little known fact about yourself.

 My favorite color is blue, I would like to have a pet pig one day and I am part of a band called the 'Can Cans'.
- What is your most prized possession?

This is also a difficult question to answer! I think I would have to say my collection of small percussion instruments I have collected over the years from the various places and cultures I visited.

- What words would you use to describe yourself? Energetic, positive and open-minded. When I asked my friends about this, they said that I had to add cheerful and fun.
- If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?

I am quite happy with the way I have lived my life so far. I try and be someone who makes things happen and not someone who just watches, waiting for life to pass me by. I don't want to reach the end and wonder "what happened?!?" but instead think "wow, what a blast."

• Is there anything you are trying to learn/improve about yourself at the moment?

I consider myself a lifelong learner in all aspects of my life. I hope if I pay attention I will learn something new everyday!

• Do you have any special message for your fans? Two quotes to ponder...

"The greatest gift we can give ourselves in life is a sense of our own ridiculousness." Anon

"Those who go through life knowing exactly where they are going, never get the chance to end up somewhere else." Anon

Free Dress Day Updates



On May 18, we had a very successful Free Dress Day. Proceeds from the event have been donated to the Kasumisou Foundation in support of the Rural Assistance Program which promotes green farming and a well drilling initiative in the Prey Veng Province, Cambodia. A total of 85,222

yen was raised. That is enough to fund at least four new water wells. Thank you for your support!

Greg Brunton

Primary School Principal

The first free dress day for 2010-2011 will be held on Tuesday, September 28. Proceeds from the day will be given to the SRC. We have decided that the theme for the day will be rainbow.

The rainbow represents the beauty and wonder of diverse elements coming together. What more appropriate symbol for an international school? In fact, this will be the theme for the next free dress day, organized by the SRC. We encourage you to theme your clothes according to a particular colour of the rainbow on free dress day. On this day, the whole school will come together for a memorable photograph: a giant school rainbow because we support diversity, not discrimination.

Student Representative Council

Thank You

Thank you to the Suzuki family (Koko G1B) for providing a Thank You Lunch for Lower School staff on Wednesday, June 9. The food was wonderful and



the staff really appreciated it. There was so much great food that many staff from across the school were able to enjoy it. Thanks Maki for organizing this for us.

Amanda Cooke on behalf of Lower School Staff

Resources Supporting Research Skills in Units of Inquiry in the MYP and DP

The IB Learner Profile Inquirer attribute describes students who acquire 'the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning'. One of the key aspects of independence in terms of inquiry is the skill of accessing a variety of resources. During units of inquiry students access a range of resources including small class sets of texts as well as core individually owned texts. There is another vital resource that we would like to promote in all of our units of inquiry next year.

As we move into the summer break I would like to remind all of the secondary parents about one of our school's most extensive sources of information, an online resource called Questia School. Using the Questia School database of books and articles is very different from the all too common technique of typing a couple of key words into Google and heading straight to Wikipedia for some quick cut and paste. In terms of the latter approach it is the equivalent of walking into a multi-million dollar fully stocked library the size of Tokyo Dome and merely sitting in front of the first

children's encyclopedia that you see and finishing your search there.

We would like to specifically target the development of research skills across our MYP and DP programmes in 2010/2011 and the independent accessing of resources is an important part of this specific skill set. To make sure that you are able to assist your child accessing the Questia resource the summer holiday will provide the perfect opportunity. All students from Grade 6 to Grade 12 have log in details and a password. Grade 5 students moving into the MYP next year will be provided with one before the end of the year. Please ask them to take you through the process and you can also go to this page (http:// www.questiaschool.com/search) and view the demonstration video. You can then log in with your child to explore.

You can see an example of a search below in the screen shot of an in text search. As you can see in the image, apart from the sheer number of resources available a search function allows you to pinpoint specific terms very easily.

In a search for 'environmental pollution' which showed 20,000 results of books, journal articles, magazine articles, newspaper articles and encyclopedia articles, I was able to search inside a selected item for 'organic matter'. The word is then highlighted and you can skim the text to find specific references to this term. This is a skill that highly proficient readers use and this function allows students to push themselves in terms of the level of text that they are able to access. In simple terms, they do not need to wade through dense texts looking for specific terms. As a reader I can scroll through the text and when I came to this paragraph I would know that it is time to read more closely if I was interested in the role of organic matter in environmental pollution, for example.

Knowing how to use this invaluable resource is an excellent way to support your child's learning.

Damian Rentoule

Deputy Head of School/Curriculum Director



"The Comet"

Nihongo Notes and International Children

It's almost summer vacation, for some families it can mean more exposure to Japanese, to others it can mean a lot less. For families going overseas during the summer break, it can mean little to no exposure to the language which can lead to forgetting what has been learned during the school year.



So, what are some ways to keep up Japanese if you aren't in Japan? The Japan Foundation has an excellent website for beginner to high intermediate learners of Japanese, called *Erin's Challenge: I Can Speak Japanese* (www.erin.ne.jp). It has video clips, practice drills, games, mini culture lessons and best of all it's FREE! I have used the site with students from Grades 2 to 11 and there really is something for everyone. Oh, if you look closely, you may find me in a few different places since I helped out in some of the sections.

What are some other, non-technological ways to keep up Japanese? Encourage your child to write a diary in Japanese which he or she can bring to school next year. Another way to keep up Japanese is to have a goal such as learning a certain number of kanji or new vocabulary, or reading a number of Japanese manga. It really only takes a few minutes a day to keep from forgetting and it will really pay off when the school year begins. Just remember it is vacation and keep it simple and fun!

I've been reading more about international children and highly recommend the following books which are all available at www.amazon.com:

The Multilingual Mind by Tracey Tokuhama-Espinosa (2003)

Raising Global Nomads by Robin Pascoe (2006)

and my favorite, <u>Third Culture Kids: Growing Up Among Worlds</u> by David C. Pollock and Ruth E. Van Reken (revised 2009 edition)

Speaking of going overseas, my husband who is a teacher trainer for Japanese language teachers, has been transferred to Germany for two years and we will accompany him. My children and I will get real life exposure to trilingualism, mother tongue maintenance, and the challenges of learning a totally new language. German grammar is so hard (a good thing about Japanese - no gender, no complicated verb tenses). We have had a wonderful three years at KIST and hope to meet many of you again in a few years.

Stacey Isomura

ESL and Japanese Teacher

Sino-Japan Youth Conference

Taisei (G8A) has been selected as one of 20 junior and senior high school students to represent Japan at the Sino -Japan Youth Conference to be held in Hong Kong and China from August 3 to 9.

As part of the selection process, Taisei had to submit two essays - one in Japanese about the potentiality of youth; the other in English about the future relationship between China and Japan. He also had to submit a report about the special features of his hometown. In his report, he focused on the Yatsuhigata tideland area in Funabashi. According to Taisei's parents, he has always had a keen interest in conservation and environmental issues and therefore incorporated this into his plan to attract more visitors to the area. For the final selection stage, he took part in an interview with conference administration staff.

We would like to congratulate Taisei on this wonderful achievement and wish him all the best at the conference in August.

Building/Carpentry Skills Needed

This request appeared in the newsletters for February and May. Unfortunately, as we have received no response, the sandpit has not yet become a reality. We ask for your support in helping us to provide a safe and enjoyable play environment for our young students.

We are looking for 1 or 2 parents who have building/carpentry skills that could help with the building of a sandpit for our main playground area. This would involve the purchase of materials (school funded) and a day or so to put it together. You would work together with Amanda and Greg to design the sandpit. Our young primary students are in desperate need of a place to dig and create, this being an important part of their social, physical and academic development. We have worked hard to help the children resist digging up our gardens, with the promise of a sandpit to come...please help us make this a reality. Please contact Amanda Cooke at a_cooke@kist.ed.jp if you think you can give some time to this project.

School Concert

According to many of those who attended, the School Concert held on Saturday, June 5, was one of the best yet at KIST. From the Lower School Concert in the morning with class performances and cute costumes, to the Primary Concert in the afternoon featuring songs, dances and instrumental performances, and finally to the Secondary Concert in the evening with rock bands, dances, vocal ensembles, instrumental performances and a play, all areas of the school were represented through a wide variety of musical and dramatic stage performances. With plans for the introduction of IB Music in the Diploma Program next year, the Performing Arts at KIST are alive and flourishing and the annual concert provides an opportunity to showcase the amazing talent we have at the school.

