



Since 1997

# The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

Volume 14 | Issue 4 | February 2011

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*"You give but little when  
you give of your possessions.  
It is when you give of  
yourself that you truly give."*  
—Kahlil Gibran

## From the Head of School

Greetings to you all! Much has transpired since the last issue of *The Comet*, with the first semester exams over and done and the second semester well underway. During the past month, the recruitment of teachers for next year has been the primary focus. I am pleased to report that a very experienced group of teachers have been hired, most with advanced degrees and IB experience. While it is always sad to experience changes in staff, it is comforting to know that qualified and experienced teachers will be replacing the void left by those leaving KIST. Big shoes to fill!

The primary issue that I would like to address in this message is the tuition letter that went out to parents on February 8, 2011. Many of you expressed that the tuition increase was quite sudden and unexpected, while others of you expressed concern over the reasons cited for the increase. I would like to take this opportunity to address some of your concerns.

First of all, the message about next year's tuition was distributed hurriedly in order for recent applicants to be able to make informed enrollment decisions. I was not aware that this letter was sent out and therefore did not have the opportunity to proof it, or I would have tried to provide a more detailed explanation. It would have been optimal for you as current parents to receive a thorough explanation about the tuition increase first, and on behalf of the school, I apologize that this did not occur.

The School Handbook states that "tuition and other fees need to be adjusted from time to time. Before adjustments are made, notification will be given as far in advance as possible." Given the mission of KIST to offer an affordable education, meeting expenses with receivable income has been an ongoing issue, and as a result, efforts are underway this year to implement a budgeting process to more adequately balance income with expenses, and a financial plan to more predictably ensure financial sustainability.

The operating budget of a non-profit international school is derived primarily from tuition and fees paid by parents. Establishing an appropriate budgeting process this year has been a time-consuming but necessary endeavor, and the tuition and fee schedule for next year was established as part of this process to more adequately meet expenses.

In addition to the budgeting issue, KIST has begun the process to earn credibility as an accredited international school. The preliminary visit will occur in April, and then will follow a two-year self-study to address specific criteria in all areas of the school.

*Continued next page*

## DATES TO REMEMBER



- March 21:**  
Student-led conferences
- March 25:**  
No clubs on this day
- March 26 – April 3:**  
Spring break
- April 4:**  
School resumes
- April 5 – 7:**  
WASC accreditation visit (see p. 4)
- April 5 – 11:**  
(G12) DP mock examinations
- April 11:**  
Clubs resume from this week
- April 16: \*\*Date changed!\*\***  
Spring Welcome Party (PTA) (see p. 7)
- April 18:**  
School photographs (New and absent students)
- April 22:**  
(G12) Semester 2 reports issued
- April 28:**  
School newsletter issued
- April 29 – May 8:**  
Golden Week vacation

*Continued from previous page*

To meet accreditation requirements, we will need to substantially improve specific resources and programs in several areas of the school, to include the library, applied and performing arts, technology, PE facilities, enhanced math/science program, governance, school nurse, language support, etc. Such improvements will require substantial additional funding in areas that have previously been under-funded.

To improve resources, programs and facilities, it is common practice in international schools to periodically raise tuition and fees, and some do so every year. In the case of KIST, added to this is the need to establish a sound budgeting process and ensure financial sustainability, and the need to be recognized as an accredited international school. But

at the center of all efforts are our students, for the focus of everything we are doing revolves around offering them enhanced opportunities to increase their learning, develop their talents, and ensure they leave KIST as global citizens prepared for life in the 21st Century.

I hope I have addressed some of your very legitimate concerns, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss this further.

With warm regards,

**Nanci Shaw, Ph.D.**  
Head of School

## Facebook: Friend or Foe?

We have all heard of Facebook and many of us are addicted to it. There are many different social networking sites on the Internet today, but Facebook is possibly the most popular. Did you know:

### People on Facebook

- More than 500 million active users.
- 50% of active users log on to Facebook in any given day.
- Average user has 130 friends.
- People spend over 700 billion minutes per month on Facebook.

### Activity on Facebook

- There are over 900 million objects that people interact with (pages, groups, events and community pages).
- Average user is connected to 80 community pages, groups and events.
- Average user creates 90 pieces of content each month.
- More than 30 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each month.

[All information was taken directly from [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)]

But did you also know that if you are **under the age of 13 it is illegal** to have a Facebook account and you are breaking Facebook's terms of agreement by

giving false information to Facebook?

KIST is very concerned about how some students are using Facebook and we are asking parents for their help. Facebook is a great way of connecting to friends all over the world and sharing PERSONAL information. But when the information or statements turn towards each other or adults, this is where Facebook is our foe.

I'm sure that every student has had something said about them on Facebook that they wish hadn't been. How do we stop this from happening again? It is interesting how we would never say these types of comments to each other's faces, but students feel it is okay to say them for millions of people to see! This is the biggest problem with Facebook, when we make a negative comment to someone in person we can see how they react and most times stop! Human nature! But on Facebook, we don't see how they react so we continue with the negative comments.

KIST will not tolerate misuse of Facebook and any kind of bullying towards students or staff members. We ask parents to be involved with their child's account and talk with them about proper behavior on Facebook.



REMEMBER, FACEBOOK IS PUBLIC FOR ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS TO SEE AND IF YOU DON'T WANT THE SCHOOL OR ANYONE TO KNOW ABOUT SOMETHING, THEN DON'T PUT IT ON FACEBOOK.

Here are a couple of simple hints for parents about Facebook:

- Please check your child's privacy settings on Facebook: under Account - Privacy Settings - Sharing on Facebook - make sure that only *Friends* can see your child's information.
- Parents should know your son or daughter's password and should monitor Facebook activities.

**Robin Schneider**  
Secondary School Principal

**facebook**

## College Acceptances and Conditional Offers

### The letters begin to arrive

Our Grade 12 students are beginning to see the results of their hard work in November and December preparing college applications. The notification season has begun and thus far, KIST students have fared very well. There is always a certain amount of apprehension as the letters and e-mails arrive; providing that warm reassurance that you, as a student, have promise, or worse, being advised that you are just not right for a certain college or university. KIST students have come away in this early round of offers and acceptances feeling very good about themselves.

From the American schools, we have acceptances and scholarship money from:

**Pacific Lutheran University**  
**Michigan State University**  
**University of Southern California**

Our students also have acceptance letters from:

**Purdue University**  
**Worcester Institute of Technology**

From the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, our students have received conditional offers from:

**University of Sheffield**  
**University of Manchester**  
**University of Leicester**  
**University of London (Royal Holloway)**  
**University of Kent**  
**University of Sussex**  
**University of Leeds**  
**University of Saint Andrews**  
**Kingston College**

In the case of the UCAS colleges and universities, offers of acceptance are conditional based upon their final IBO exam grades. So our students are very happy to have the offers, but know that they must perform well on the end of year exams to ensure a seat at the schools. The American schools have guaranteed a seat for the students providing they do obtain their IB Diploma.

The waiting, as well as the letters and e-mails, will continue to arrive for our students through the Spring; The Japanese and many of the Asian schools will send their announcements in late Spring and up until the end of July. Then the decision as to which school to attend must be made and the parents begin the process of realizing their children will soon be off to new adventures.

In the College Guidance Office, we are still busy as the Grade 11s and 10s begin the college search. Thus far this year we have had 25 colleges and universities visit the KIST campus and talk to our students. As always, parents are encouraged and invited to attend these sessions. The information is posted on the College Guidance Counseling Moodle site. Parents and students can always drop by and e-mail the counselors: Mrs Keiko Okude ([k\\_okude@kist.ed.jp](mailto:k_okude@kist.ed.jp)) and Mr Michael J. Wagner ([m\\_wagner@kist.ed.jp](mailto:m_wagner@kist.ed.jp)).

**Keiko Okude and Michael Wagner**  
 College Counselors



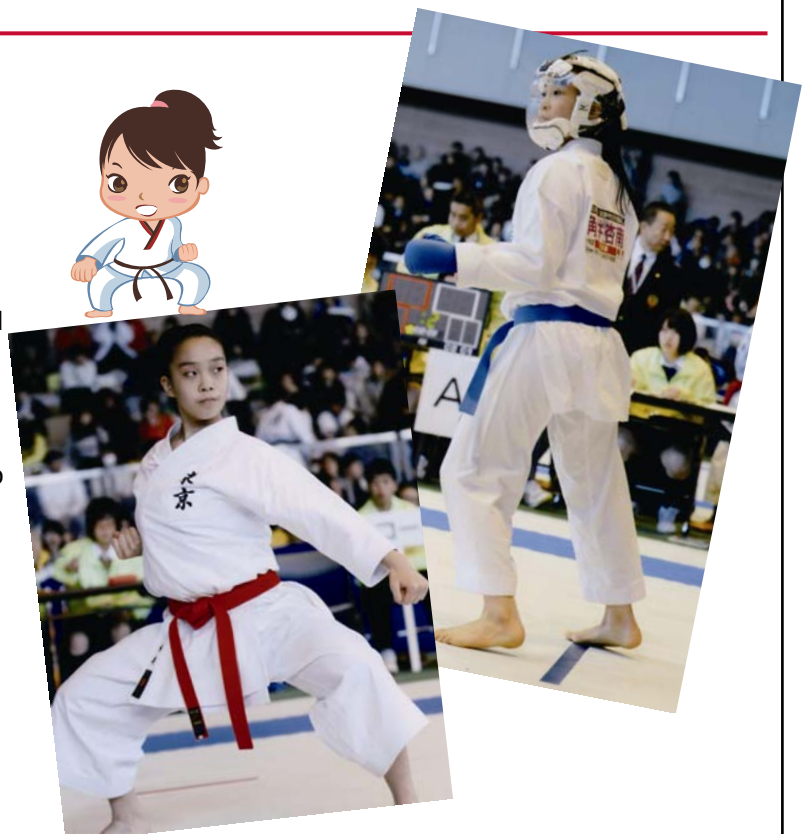
## KIST's Karate Kid

On December 19, 2010, **Anna** (G8A) competed in the 5th Annual All Japan Junior High Karate Hamanasu Tournament in Tatsumi, Tokyo.

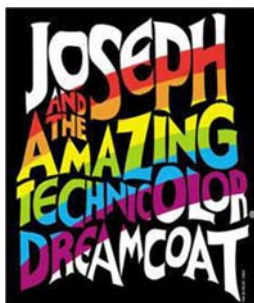
First, players compete at a tournament held every summer. The top eight competitors from Grades 7 and 8 (Junior High School 1st and 2nd year) then compete in the all Tokyo tournament. From these eight, two competitors were then chosen to represent Tokyo at the national tournament that will be held at the end of March in Hokkaido. Anna was chosen as one of the two representatives for Tokyo.

At the national tournament, which is one of the largest tournaments in Japan for this age group, Anna will be competing against two representatives from each of the 47 prefectures.

**We congratulate Anna on her selection, and wish her all the very best in Hokkaido!**



## On Stage with Joseph



You may have seen posters up around the school advertising the **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat** musical that is coming to Tokyo in March. I am very proud to announce that we have nine (9) KIST students that worked very hard to make it into the children's choir for this special US stage production. They have been very busy practicing every day after school for the past three weeks!

In order to show our support towards The Arts as well as our KIST community, the Grade 2 to 5 Elementary classes have been given the opportunity to attend on Monday, March 14 and the Secondary students on Saturday, March 12.

If you would like more information on the event, please visit the following site: <http://hpot.jp/joseph> or feel free to e-mail me at the address below.

Enjoy the show!

**Erin Hoover**  
Elementary Music Teacher  
[e\\_hoover@kist.ed.jp](mailto:e_hoover@kist.ed.jp)



### The players...

**Keri** (G4B)  
**Ibuki** (G5A)  
**Riko** (G5A)  
**Yi-Ting** (G5A)  
**Jaime** (G5B)

**Seina** (G5B)  
**Wataru** (G5B)  
**Hee Won** (G7A)  
**Su In** (G7B)

### Performance schedule

May-11	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	
1:00pm			●	●			BLACK			●	●	●	
2:00pm					●	●		●					
5:30pm			●	●							●	●	
6:30pm	●	●							●	●			

## Preliminary WASC Accreditation Visit

We have received word from Dr. Marilyn George, associate director of Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), that she will be visiting KIST for the preliminary accreditation visit from **April 5 to 7, 2011**. This visit will include scheduled meetings with parents, students and staff, as well as the Board of Directors to explain the accreditation process and to gain input about the school.

The purpose of the initial visit is to determine ongoing improvement and assess the readiness of KIST for initial accreditation. With a focus on student learning and well-being, the criteria for initial accreditation are organized into four categories:

- **Organization and Governance**
- **Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**
- **Support for Student Personal and Academic Growth**
- **Resource Management and Development**

Within each category are specific criteria that must be met. Depending on the level of mastery, KIST will be awarded one of the following:

1. **Initial Accreditation Status**, in which the school will be fully accredited for a period of one to three years, pending completion of the all-school self-study.

2. **Candidacy Status**, in which the school is moving toward accreditation but is not fully accredited pending evidence of planning and resources to meet WASC criteria and completion of the all-school self-study.
3. **Denial of Accreditation**, in which the school does not meet WASC criteria. The school may reapply pending evidence of planning and resources to meet WASC criteria.

After the initial visit, a report will be generated that assesses the school's readiness for initial accreditation and offers recommendations for improvement. This report will be available to the KIST community once it is received.

The award of accreditation provides quality assurance, university recognition, ongoing school improvement, international credibility, and an improved school for the whole community. The driving concepts of an accredited international school include being:

- **Mission driven and vision led**
- **Focused on student learning and well-being**
- **International and intercultural**

**Nanci Shaw**, Ph.D.  
Head of School

## Elementary School News

### Mr Brunton's Corner

Do you want to learn more about what is happening in the Elementary School, find resources to help at home and do not want to wait until the next issue of *The Comet*? If so, then "Mr Brunton's Corner" is the place for you! The site is new but we are continuously building it each week to provide parents with the information they have suggested we share more of.



Ms Homerlein, our PYP Coordinator, posts information about the program, her informational sessions, and answers to other common questions. To see some quick news and photos about Elementary School events and events in other classes, please visit the Elementary Events section. Ms Hoover, our Early Childhood Coordinator, has made some postings, too, which parents have found helpful. You can also learn more about the Student Representative Council, as well as view some resources for math, science and IT.

If you have not received the e-mailed announcements sent from the site roughly each week, please make sure you update your e-mail address in your profile section on the site and enable it.

Be sure to check your class's site weekly as the teachers have been working very hard to keep you informed. Please let me know if you have any suggestions on how to make this resource even better.

### Greg Brunton

Elementary School Principal

## Read-a-thon 2011

I hope everyone is finding room in their day to read! Just a reminder that the organization we are supporting is [RoomtoRead.org](http://RoomtoRead.org).

Also, March 7 is Book Character Day – dress as your favourite book character. Each class will parade in their costumes during the morning assembly. Good Luck!!

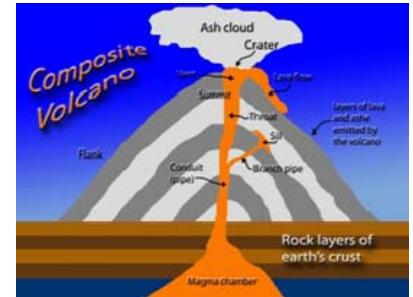
### Diana Hudson

Elementary Literacy Coordinator

## Elementary Science

### Science Skills: Vocabulary (Science words)

Scientists use scientific words to explain what they have observed and experienced. So we need to:



- Describe characteristics/features of objects and events accurately.
- Talk and write about what we observe.
- Use scientific words such as observation, prediction, data, diagrams and measure when we record our scientific findings.



### Cool science fact #4:

*The earth isn't perfectly round; it is slightly fattened at the north and south poles.*

### Susan Lee

Elementary Science Coordinator

## Mathematics Skills and Technology

In mathematics, it is essential that students learn the basic skills in order to progress to more complex calculations. Even though this often requires the memorizing of basic number facts, it doesn't have to be boring! With the use of technology we can make it fun, enjoyable and rewarding.

For those of us lucky enough to own an iPhone, iPod Touch or an iPad, there are many applications which can be easily downloaded, and many are free.

There are also numerous free math games available online. Below are just a few examples to help you and your children get started!

<http://www.kidsnumbers.com/>  
<http://www.prongo.com/games/>  
<http://www.arcademicskillbuilders.com/>  
<http://www.coolmath4kids.com/>

### Kevin Yoshihara

Elementary Mathematics Coordinator



## ICT @ KIST (and around the world)

In this issue, I wanted to share with you one of my secrets to staying informed about and connected to the latest technology innovations in schools from around the world. My secret is the SmartBrief on EdTech e-newsletter.

### SmartBrief on EdTech

The Future of K-12 Instruction

SmartBrief on EdTech is a daily e-newsletter designed for education stakeholders such as teachers, parents and school administrators with an interest in the education-technology world. SmartBrief EdTech editors become your personal research assistants, handpicking, distilling and disseminating the best, most useful news from a wide range of sources from around the world.

Some of the latest headlines from SmartBrief on EdTech:

- Can iPads engage students in reading?
- How teachers can use Twitter
- Social-networking tool for tweens is headed to schools
- Schools face challenges in adopting digital textbooks
- Could schools go all-digital by 2015?
- How to make the most of Skype in the classroom
- Schools find no easy answers on cyber bullying

SmartBrief on EdTech e-newsletters are FREE, simply sign up by visiting:

<http://www.smartbrief.com/edtech>

**Erwin Dumenden**  
Elementary Technology Integration Coordinator  
Grade 3 Teacher

## Influenza Prevention



Recently, all students and staff in the school received a box of 60 face masks through a generous donation from the family of one of our Grade 2 students. With an increase in the number of cases of influenza throughout the winter season, we sincerely

thank the family involved on behalf of the whole school community for this very timely and thoughtful donation.

## Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present **Mark Cowe** who joined KIST in 2007 as our DP Coordinator. Mr Cowe also teaches History and Theory of Knowledge (TOK).



Mr Cowe in action at the Grade 10 camp.

### • Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

I am from Edinburgh in the UK. I believe that the region of the UK that Edinburgh is located has the most golf courses of any similar sized region in the world. What a great excuse for a visit!

### • What is your favorite place in the world?

It would have to be the Himalaya in Nepal. You feel like you are on the roof of the world.

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

I think it would be Nelson Mandela. Everything I have read or heard about him has been so positive it would be amazing to have the chance to meet him in person. Imagine spending almost thirty years of your life in prison and still having the compassion and hope that he has for humanity.

### • Do you have any special skills or talents?

For some reason, I don't have any problems breathing in thin air! When I go really high in the mountains I don't seem to feel different at all. The top of Mt. Fuji was no different to the bottom!

### • Please share a little known fact about yourself.

My arms are too long for my body! Seriously, I was born with one leg longer than the other. In fact, when I was 14, the difference was 5 cm! However, thanks to the wonders of medicine, I had an operation when I was at high school which made them much more equal. As a result, I think that doctors and people who work in hospitals are some of the most important professionals in the world.

### • What is your most prized possession?

I have a calendar which my family in the UK sends me at the start of every year. It has the birthdays of all my relatives overseas on it so I don't forget to send messages of congratulations. I would be lost without it!

### • What words would you use to describe yourself?

Positive, enthusiastic, sociable.

### • If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?

I didn't travel outside of Europe until I was 21. I should have taken more advantage of overseas exchanges and study programs when I was at high school and university.

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

I am trying to complete another university qualification in international education in my spare time. This is proving tough to balance with a full time job at KIST. Keep it quiet but I had to ask for an extension for one of my assignments...

### • Do you have any special message for your fans?

Be yourself and take advantage of the opportunities that life will present you.

## Library News

### Sakura Medal program

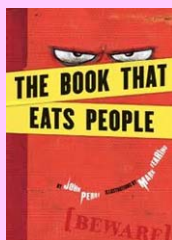
Until April 23



Students may now borrow books as part of the Sakura Medal program run by international school libraries in Japan. Students in participating schools decide the most popular book from a selection chosen by school librarians from books published in the last three years. For every five books read, students may place one vote, so they are encouraged to read as many books as they can. More information about the program, book reviews and comments from the authors, all of which are updated daily, may be viewed at the website shown to the right.

### KIST Sakura Medal Current most frequently borrowed titles

Picture Book Chapter Book Middle School High School



<http://www.sakuramedal.com>

### Database online trials

We are trialing the Britannica School Online program until the end of March, and the World Book Online program from March to April 4. The websites can be accessed from outside the school using the usernames and passwords given below. The sites features up-to-date definitions and offers links to related websites, so please take advantage of the programs for the remaining period. After trying out the programs at home, please let us know if you have any thoughts and opinions. We are also planning to trial the Grolier Online program from Scholastic in the near future.

**Britannica:** URL: <http://school.eb.com> | Username: kist | Password: m28uy9wp  
**World Book:** URL: <http://www.worldbookonline.com> | Username: ibridge | Password: primrose

### Book recommendation

What kind of organization is "Room to Read" which supports the Readathon? The founder, John Wood, quit a key post at Microsoft's international division and set out to improve education in developing countries. What was his turning point, and what were his reasons for establishing "Room to Read"? Two books that outline his experiences are currently available for viewing in the Junior Library in both English and Japanese.

Satoko Yoshimoto

Librarian

[s\\_yoshimoto@kist.ed.jp](mailto:s_yoshimoto@kist.ed.jp)



## Spring Welcome Party



The PTA Steering Committee and KIST Parent Partners (Class Parents) are joining forces to plan the annual Spring Welcome Party for families new to KIST, as well as for current families and staff. The event will take place on **Saturday, April 16** from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., and everyone is encouraged to come and enjoy a time of meeting friends and making new ones. So bring your

blankets for a picnic on the grass. Bento boxes may be pre-ordered through the café, or you can bring your own lunch. Drinks will be available to purchase. More information will be forthcoming about food orders, but please mark your calendars now!

**Date:** **Saturday, April 16, 2011** (Date changed due to preparation for the Tokyo election on April 9)

**Time:** 11:00 – 2:00 p.m.

**Venue:** KIST on the Green

## PTA Upcoming Dates

- **Wednesday, March 16 (9:00 – 11:00 a.m.):** Spring Welcome Party planning
- **Wednesday, April 6 (9:00 – 11:00 a.m.):**
  - Spring Welcome Party planning
  - WASC accreditation with Dr Marilyn George
- **Wednesday, April 27 (9:00 – 11:00 a.m.):** PTA officer nomination meeting
- **Wednesday, May 11 (9:00 – 11:00 a.m.):** PTA officer nomination meeting
- **Wednesday, May 18 (6:30 – 8:00 p.m.):** **PTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (for all parents)**  
KIST and PTA news, PTA Constitution, election of 2011-2012 PTA officers



## Office Updates

### Student withdrawals

If you are planning to withdraw your child from KIST at the end of March, please submit a **Student Withdrawal Form** (available from the school website Contact >> Forms page) directly to the office as soon as possible.

Furthermore, if you require documentation such as record of attendance statements, copies of school reports and the like, please request these using the **Request for Documentation Form** also available from the school website. Please note that the charges for these documents have been reduced.

### Winter wear



We would like to remind you that during winter, all accessories such as scarves, knitted hats and gloves must be plain black. These items are available to purchase from the school reception at a low cost.

Scarves/Knitted hats:	300 yen
Gloves:	200 yen

### Lost and found

During the winter months, there has been an increase in the number of lost uniform items. If your child has lost any items, please check the "Lost and Found" box beside the school reception counter.

There has also been an increase in the number of students taking uniform items belonging to other children by mistake. Please check that all uniform items are clearly marked with your child's name so that they can be returned.

Please be aware that all items remaining in the Lost and Found box at the end of April will become donations to the next KISTival bazaar.

### Use of ID cards

We again remind all families that **it is compulsory for all students from Grades 1 through 12 to scan their school ID cards at the entrance gate every morning when they arrive and every afternoon when they leave**, regardless of whether or not the gate has been opened by someone else. In addition to reasons of safety, the records of scanned cards are used to double check students who may have been marked absent by their homeroom teachers.

Other reminders for using ID cards:

- School bus users are not required to use their cards; however, on days when they do not catch the bus, they must scan their cards at the gate.
- Students in K1, K2 and K3 are not permitted to use or carry school ID cards. Parents of students in these grades are asked not to allow children to use the cards due to the dangers involved in opening the entrance gate and leaving the campus alone.

- Parents are required to bring their parent ID cards on every occasion when visiting the school and scan them at the gate.
- Cards may not operate correctly if scanned on top of other cards (e.g. Pasmu, Suica). Please separate the school ID cards from other cards before scanning them.
- Students or parents who have lost their cards are asked to apply for a replacement at the school office as soon as possible.

### School support program (SSP) sign-up procedures

Both the sign-up sheets and rosters for SSP duties are always distributed to all families in the school community via the E-Communications e-mail system in the following months:

Sign-up sheets: **February, May, November**

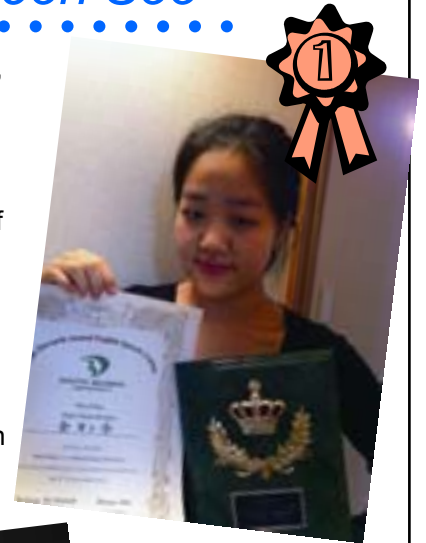
Final rosters: **March, June, December**

If you are not receiving these e-mails, please be sure to contact the office.



## Smiles for Yeon Soo

Toward the end of 2010, **Yeon Soo** (G10B) participated in an English speech contest held at Daito Bunka University. The theme of the contest was "energy". Based on this theme, the title of Yeon Soo's speech was "The Transparent Wall". She spoke about the energy of smiling and how it can make the wall between people transparent.



Due to her efforts, Yeon Soo was awarded...

**FIRST PLACE**

*Congratulations Yeon Soo on your wonderful achievement!*





## Sunshine for the Children

My name is Karlee from Grade 10A. Last year I was able to visit an orphanage in Pattaya, Thailand and volunteer to work for the Habitat for Humanity Organization. During my winter vacation, I went to Thailand again with my mother. We went to a unique kind of orphanage called SOS Children's Village Bangpoo, in Thailand (Bangpoo is just outside of Bangkok). We visited for a few days, and gave a donation of food.

The orphanage is a small village with 12 houses for the 125 children who live there. In each house, there is a 'Mother' and 8 to 12 children. The Mother takes care of



the children as if they are her own, and loves and cares for her family. At the Bangpoo Village, there is a kindergarten, a small library, and small playground for

the children to enjoy. The village is almost 40 years old, so many of the things they have there are old and need replacing.

This brings me to my Personal Project. Every Grade 10 student do a Personal Project in their final year of the MYP. I dedicated my project to making a website called Sunshine for the Children, which will let our KIST Community know about the children's needs, and how we can help. In the future, I will continue to use the website and plan fundraisers to raise money for the SOS Children's Foundation. In the future, I will also be advertising fundraising events and offering chances to earn C&S points or CAS hours for the older students at KIST.

I had a wonderful time visiting the Children's Village. I was able to



see the inside of a family's house, and play with the children. I was also able to play basketball with some of the children.

My website is not yet fully functional, but please take a look. The URL is below.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. My e-mail address is on the website.

**Karlee (G10A)**

<http://www.sunshine4thechildren.weebly.com>

## Grade 5 UNHCR Excursion

In December, as a part of our Where We Are in Place and Time unit, Grade 5 went on an excursion to the UNHCR, which stands for United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. KIST was the first international school to visit the UNHCR. Mrs Shimada showed us a DVD called "Working with Refugees – Activities of the UN Refugee Agency" which was in English. After that, another bilingual commissioner did a question-and-answer session with us. We had so many questions that we ran out of time!

Below is some of what we learned at the UNHCR. We learned a lot of things, and as a result we all thought we want to help the refugees. Some ways that we can help is donate money to the UNHCR who will give it to refugees in need in the form of practical items for them to use. Just 500 yen can buy a blanket or 3 buckets of water or 10,000 yen could build a house for a family. The UNHCR also gives clothes to refugees. Other companies such as the famous clothes store "Uniqlo" also helps the UNHCR by providing recycled Uniqlo clothing to the refugees. UNHCR helps refugee children

with education and skills needed for future jobs in their new homes or when they return to their home country. UNHCR helps all types of refugees such as asylum-seekers, stateless people and returnees.

We learned so much at the UNHCR. If you would like to learn more about refugees and the UNHCR please speak with any of the Grade 5 students or visit the websites below.



The UNHCR also donated a copy of the DVD we were shown to the school so all KIST students can learn more about refugees.

**Ibuki (G5A)**

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/teaxis/vtx/home> (English site)  
[http://www.unhcr.or.jp/protect/index\\_e.html](http://www.unhcr.or.jp/protect/index_e.html) (Japanese site)

## KIST Community Helps Fund Cure for Cancer

Pietro is twelve years old, the champion of a maths competition in Washington in the USA. This boy is remarkable because he participated in the competition just five days after he had brain surgery for medulloblastoma, a tumour in his brain. While keeping up with chemotherapy and frequent MRIs, he continues to work hard at school and loves to ski. Every night, he prays for children who don't have supportive family and friends like him. Pietro, this remarkable boy with amazing potential, deserves to live a full life. Yet, one in five children diagnosed with cancer don't survive. It is for Pietro and children like him that we began our latest SRC project, to raise funds for St Baldrick's Foundation, which sponsors research for cures to children's cancer. It is for them that the SRC Executive Council: PPO, Matt, Ryosuke and Shreya, have agreed to shave their heads if we raise 300,000 yen.

The incredible generosity of teachers and staff, students and their families and friends, have helped us raise 150,000 yen already. PPO and Matt are, therefore, already scheduled to shave their heads! If we raise 300,000 yen, all four of us will go bald.

What convinced us to let go of our hair for this cause? PPO's cousin died of cancer at the age of sixteen. He wants to help others live a full life. Matt believes it's the right thing to do. Ryosuke went through some turmoil before making a decision, but he also saw that a child with cancer would value a life-saving cure more than her hair. Shreya thinks it's the least she can do, if it will inspire others to contribute to cancer research. All four of us, whether male or female, are not going to use wigs or hats to cover the shiny, bald result of this inspiring project.

Ms Erin Hoover, the Lower School Coordinator and Elementary music teacher, has taken the same brave decision. A donation race, with one donation box for her to shave, and the other for her to not shave, will decide whether she takes the shaver to her head or not.

We thank everyone who has helped us already, and encourage you to spread the word to your friends and organisations – we are accepting donations from anyone. They can be sent directly to our account on the St Baldrick's website, or put in one of our donation boxes at school, or sent to the office. We are going to organise a dance party to raise

funds for this project, and the shaving of the four SRC Executives will take place then – please come and see! Ms Erin's shaving will take place at the Elementary School assembly. But, it is in your hands whether we shave or not! Please help to make this dream a reality.

Thank you!

**Shreya (G12)**

SRC President, on behalf of SRC and Ms Hoover



*The current and possible future face of Ms Hoover*

*New looks for Shreya, Matt, PPO and Ryosuke?*



## KIST in the News

On Monday, February 21, "The Nikkei" newspaper (Nihon Keizai Shimbun) published an article on the increase in the number of Japanese students studying at overseas universities. The article, which appeared on the front page, included reference to international schools in Japan, and in particular, KIST was mentioned and a photograph featuring a number of our Secondary students in a mathematics class was also included. An outline of the main points from the article is provided below.

- Dissatisfied with the Japanese education system, more and more people are heading to universities abroad.
- A student who was accepted by both Tokyo and Yale University, initially entered Tokyo-University, but found that he had reservations on the structure of the lectures, and so decided to transfer to Yale.
- At K. International School, 80 percent of the Japanese graduates who are able to go on to a Japanese university end up going to a university abroad.
- There have been seven new international schools established in Japan in the last 10 years.
- In South Korea, over 50,000 elementary school students studied abroad.
- From this Spring, Panasonic and IHI will employ more foreign graduates.
- At a company which had 60,00 applicants, as little as 60 of them had the fundamental skills that the company was looking for. In particular, there was a decline in arithmetic ability.
- To solve this problem Waseda University are receiving guidance from a designated high school in China, and they no longer require applicants to speak Japanese when taking entrance exams for their science and technology department. They intend to increase the number of overseas students from the present number of 3700, to 8000.
- It is vital that Japan, too, has a strong university that can attract students from all over the world.



Photograph taken from The Nikkei newspaper online edition, February 21, 2011

## Live @ Edu

As part of KIST's ongoing effort to support your child with his or her studies and school life, KIST will implement Live@Edu for the whole school community.

Live@Edu is a free, easy-to-use Microsoft Outlook Live e-mail service that also includes access to other programs and services, including Windows Live SkyDrive™ which provides a significant amount of online storage. One of the main reasons this service was chosen was the integration with the current KIST IT infrastructure including Moodle and Office 2010. For more details about these services please see the separate supporting documents sent together with this issue of *The Comet* (English only).

In order to roll out this service in the smoothest manner possible, we will begin with three pilot programs, one each for Secondary students, Elementary students and parents. Our Secondary pilot group is G11 and G12; the Elementary pilot group is Grade 5 and the parent's pilot group will be our newly formed PTA steering committee. Our goal is to understand the needs and demands of the school community as we strive to keep everyone connected and streamline communications.

As we gather feedback from our pilot groups, we plan to roll out Live@Edu across the entire school community in time for the start of the next school year.

We would like to inform the school community that we are also planning a major upgrade of our school network in the next couple of months; in particular our wireless network will be upgraded so that we will be able to provide wireless Internet access to all members of the school community. More details will be released at a later date.

For more details online about Live@Edu, please see the links below.

### English

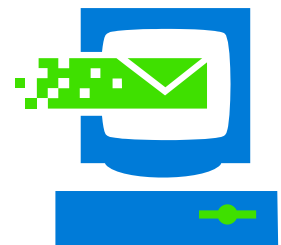
<http://www.microsoft.com/liveatedu/free-email-accounts.aspx?locale=en-US&country=US>

<http://www.microsoft.com/student/en/us/software/live-at-edu.aspx> (English only)

### Japanese

<http://www.microsoft.com/liveatedu/free-email-accounts.aspx?locale=ja-JP&country=JP>

**Robert Whittaker**  
IT Software/Hardware  
Coordinator



## Helping Children Discover Self-Discipline



Children's misbehavior can be frustrating and disturbing for adults, but we also see it as an opportunity to teach, a chance to model self-discipline and character.

Emotional development, like other learning, takes time and learning opportunities. And children, being the excellent imitators that they are, will follow our example – for better or worse.

If we yell at children, they will yell; if we hit them, they will hit. Or they will become perpetual victims of others' aggression. We get better results when we discipline calmly and teach our children to express their feelings in acceptable ways. When teachers share, children share; when parents are courteous, children are more cooperative.



Here are a few things that we do in the classroom; they also work for parents.

**Be clear and consistent.** Set and discuss rules and consequences. Rules should be clear, simple and few. Some adults have only one basic rule: *You may not hurt*

*yourself, others, or things.* For example, to stop a child from hitting another child, kneel and calmly state, "You may not hit Ben. People are not for hitting." Then add, "I know that you are angry. Can you tell me why?... OK, how can you let Ben know that you want to use the blue car?"



**Offer choices:** "Do you want to brush your teeth now, or do you want to brush after we read a story?" "What would you like, milk or juice with your snack?"

**Ignore certain behavior,** like cursing or stomping, if it is not harmful. A child will quickly learn that he will gain nothing by acting up. On the other hand, he will learn that good behavior gets results and favorable reaction from grown-ups.

No matter what we adults do, there are times when children lose control. Aggressive acts may call for removing the child from the action in a brief time-out. However, a time-out period may backfire if used in the spirit of punishment ("Go to your room right now!") The point is to give the child a few minutes to cool down. Those minutes come in handy, too, for helping a frustrated parent or teacher cool down – and think of what to do next!

**Erin Hoover**  
ECE Coordinator  
[e\\_hoover@kist.ed.jp](mailto:e_hoover@kist.ed.jp)



## Computer Programming in Grade 5



The Grade 5 students are currently working on a "Programming and Math" unit in which they are learning how to create simple computer programs which can calculate multiplication tables and the area of geometric shapes.

Our ultimate goal is for the students to be able to program their own "Janken Game" using the skills they are developing.

The students are using a freely available Microsoft program called SmallBasic ([www.smallbasic.com](http://www.smallbasic.com)) which is designed with beginning programmers in mind.

Who knows, one of our students could be the next Bill Gates!

**Christian Thompson**  
Education Technologies Integrator

## The Physics of Floods

*Damien Igoe was a physics and mathematics teacher in the Secondary School from 2006 to 2010. After leaving KIST, he returned to his home country, Australia, and is currently living in the Lockyer Valley area to the west of Brisbane. Below, he shares with us his account of the floods that ravaged the south-eastern corner of Queensland earlier this year.*

Hi everyone at KIST from Mr. Igoe in the Lockyer Valley, Queensland! I am now living in a town with less people than a Tokyo train in rush hour!

It is amazing how fast time flies, it has been about 8 months since I said my farewells, left Japan and returned to Australia. In that time, I finished the Masters degree that many of you saw me doing, and many helped me with. Also in that time, alongside so many people in this state, I faced nature's fury with the devastating floods that you may have heard of in the news.

This was no ordinary flood; there was no warning as a wall of water several metres high ripped through much of the Lockyer Valley. The town I live in is on a hill, so we were not directly flooded, but we were completely surrounded and had local landslides (including across the street from my home). The main highway was cut due to the flood waters washing away the roads, or flood waters completely covering the roads or landslides blocked the road. All other roads suffered the same outcome. There was a time when the supermarket down the road ran out of things like milk, bread and fresh fruit; this happened all across the Valley. Many people were stranded and could not get home.

The skies here were filled with Army helicopters as they



*Although this immediate area was not flooded, we still had a "sheet" of water rush over the backyard.*

evacuated the entire population of the next town to us, of 300 people. The Army were amazing, alongside the Police, State Emergency Services and so many people—they were there for us.

These floods also affected the major cities of Toowoomba and Ipswich, and parts of the capital of Queensland: Brisbane suffered some damage due to the flooding. The flooding covered three quarters of the state of Queensland. The cyclones occurred further north, but also caused considerable destruction to places like Townsville and even inland to Mt Isa (find a map of Queensland and look up these places and you will see what I mean).

Thankfully, the waters subsided and the roads started to open and supplies came back to the supermarket shelves. However, homes, businesses, schools and such were damaged, some were completely washed away, and so many people were in dire need of help, just to get back on their feet—in some cases, to start all over again. But this is where a wonderful thing happened: volunteers, possibly over a million, went in and helped clean up. They helped their family, friends, neighbours and even strangers to clean up. It seemed that everyone did their bit. I did my small bit: I spent a day in a tractor workshop that was flooded and helped clean the mud and clear the damage.

Then I went with some friends to an evacuation centre in a place called Helidon, that along with Grantham and Murphy's Creek, was utterly destroyed, and donated clothes, food, soap, towels, and many other things. I remember when this elderly

gentlemen tried on one of the shirts, it fit him perfectly, he came up to me and told

me what happened to him and his wife: He was in Grantham, the worst hit town, about 30 km west of where I live. He saw the wall of water shatter his home, and he and his wife just got out of their car before it was washed into a river. They arrived at the evacuation centre only owning the clothes that they were wearing—and now, he has a very nice shirt! There are so many true tales like this that have come out of this disaster, mostly tales of hope - where people, instead of feeling sorry for themselves, joined in as a volunteer to help someone else.

Over a month has passed since the floods, and the damage, even to areas near here is still clear to see, entire farmlands are still covered in mud, debris still litters some paddocks, Grantham is still cut off. Many roads are still wrecked, but are now passable. It may take a while to fully recover, but the people here are strong and resilient and will rebuild. Everyone here has changed from this event, including me—I am closer to my family than ever before and am more willing than I have ever been to go and help a relative, friend or a stranger in need.

I sincerely hope all my friends and everyone at KIST are well, and to all you students, I hope you keep on doing your best; challenging yourselves and being the best you can be.

See you all around,

**Damien Igoe**  
Secondary Teacher, 2006-2010



*Mr Igoe without his beard and moustache.*

## Basketball Season 2010-2011

Basketball at KIST this term has been very busy with all four teams having plenty of games and training sessions.

### Boys

The boys under 18 team, coached by Mr Bates, had three warm-up games before Christmas against Lycee Francais Japonaise (LFJ), the American School in Japan (ASIJ) and Aoba-Japan International School. With two wins and one loss heading into the regular season, the boys were full of confidence.

The first game of the season was against Columbia International School. Despite missing several key players, the team put in a spirited performance, eventually going down by 12 points. After beating the British School in Tokyo comfortably in the next hit-out, we were ready to attend the annual Yokohama Invitational Tournament hosted by St Maur International School and Yokohama International School. Again missing five key players, we put up very good performances against Yokohama International School,



Osaka International School and International Secondary School (ISS), eventually finishing in fifth place. After a week with no games, we were ready for our double header home games against Canadian

International School and KAIS, winning both games very comfortably. After another win against ISS we were ready to face the might of Columbia again on

their home court. After a very impressive game where all players played their part, we eventually lost by eight points. With one game before the play-offs, we are currently sitting on second place on the table and are positioned very nicely to make an assault on the ISTAA Basketball Title.

The team has been well led by captain Maung Pyay Phyo (G12) with Brandon (G11) grabbing many excellent rebounds and scoring impressively in tight situations. Tyson (G7A) and Salam (G8B) have shown that KIST basketball is in safe hands in the years to come, and Adam (G9B) has provided valuable support scoring many scintillating baskets.

### Girls

The girls under 18 basketball team, coached by Mrs Spring, began their season with a warm-up game against the American School in Japan (ASIJ) before Christmas. The girls showed some good signs for the season ahead but were outplayed against an older more experienced team. The girls' season opener was against Columbia International School at home. The girls again showed some very good signs and displayed some excellent teamwork, eventually going down narrowly. The girls showed great dedication attending training sessions two or three times a week including many morning practices. We ventured over to Yokohama to play in the Yokohama Invitational Tournament hosted by St Maur International School and Yokohama International School. We played three games against the Yokohama International School, St Maur International School and the Canadian

Academy Kobe; all of the games were well fought out with the girls displaying a



brilliant performance against the Kobe side going down by one point in a nail biting finale. After a narrow loss to Canadian International School, the girls recorded their first win of the season against International Secondary School (ISS). The girls have been well led by Shifa (G10B), Sara (G10B), Ria (G10B) and Mei (G10A). Monica (G10B) and Karlee's (G10A) rebounding and defensive efforts have been excellent. The G9 girls Michiru, Naishi, Erika, Gina, Nina and Emma will ensure that KIST remains a strong basketball force in the years to come. Well done to all girls who have played thus far this season and we wish them the best of luck in the coming weeks for the play-offs.

I would like to give a huge thank you to Mr Bates and Mrs Spring for their efforts with the coaching this year. They have not only given up countless hours before and after school, but also on weekends. Without your dedication and commitment, the school basketball program would not be as successful as it currently is. I would also like to thank all of the students led by Miku (G9B), who have assisted with the scoring, shot-clock, time-clock and fouls for each of our home games this season.

The under 14 boys and girls season has just begun and there will be a report in the next newsletter.

### Will Spring

Head of  
Physical  
Education



# ArtScape 2011 Opening Party



**ArtScape 2011 Opening Party**  
 4:00-6:00pm on Friday February 25th  
 (Exhibition Open From:  
 February 25- March 6th, 2011 )  
 Please be our guest and enjoy food and drinks  
 whilst you preview the work of the major  
 international student art exhibit in Japan.  
 Share with us, this unique opportunity  
 to view excellent art works spanning all genres  
 produced by over 600 students from 50 nationalities.

## At The National Children's Castle

5-53-1 Jingumae Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0001 Hours open: 12:00- 5:30pm (closed Mondays)  
 TEL 03-3797-5666/ FAX 03-3797-5676 (9AM- 6PM)  
 About 8-10 minute walk from Shibuya or Omote Sando Stations

To reach the Castle, use the following train lines: JR Yamanote, Inokashira, Saikyo, Toyoko, and Denentoshior Ginza, Hanzomon and Chiyoda Subway Lines.

From Shibuya Station (code G-01, Z-01), walk up Miyamasuzaka past the Shibuya Post Office towards Aoyama Dori (R246) and Aoyama University, The Castle will be on your Left.

From Omote Sando Stn (Code G-02, Z-02, C-04), take the B2 Exit, walk past OVAL building, towards Shibuya along Aoyama Dori (R246). The Castle will be on your Right, near the overhead crossing.

Buses from Shibuya Station for Shinbashi Station Kitaguchi stop across from Aoyama Gakuin University.

Paid parking is available, but space is limited. 300 yen/ 30 min., 2 meters high. (8:00AM- 10:00PM)

We would like to thank our sponsors for this event: National Children's Castle, and Top Nutti Tourist



For further information contact Steve Tootell, Artscape 2011 Coordinator email: [tootell@gol.com](mailto:tootell@gol.com)

