

THE BANYAN



Issue 61

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Zhuhai International School: *weekly newsletter*

FROM THE FIRST FLOOR

Dear ZIS Community,

We woke this morning to the news that nearly all international arrivals to China are to be suspended effective midnight tonight. As we continue to evaluate the implications of these restrictions, we will remain in contact with our community to keep you up to date.

This announcement does not alter our current planning for the weeks ahead. Our commitment to distance learning to support all of our students remains as do our preparations for the re-opening of campus once the Guangdong officials permit.

As shared previously, we remain committed to all of our learners, whether in Zhuhai or abroad. We will continue to support all learning once on campus and through distance learning no matter where in the world our students are.

To our families and teachers presently overseas, we know you are disappointed to be temporarily barred from your planned return. We will overcome this challenge and remain linked by our commitment to our mission and our strong community ties.

Spring Break

A reminder that the announcement of our Spring Break holiday being treated as flexible and may arrive at short notice. Soon after we hear about the date for the re-opening of campus, families will be notified of the week break. If we arrive to the originally scheduled break (April 6-10) we will take that time as the holiday.

Daily Temperature Recording

All families should have received the survey link where you are asked to report the daily temperature of your child. This is most important for the families who are able to return to

campus once it re-opens. For our families whose return is delayed by today's announcement, please fill in the travel related question still and begin to record your temperatures two weeks prior to your scheduled return flight (once it becomes available).

IB Examinations & eAssessment

We await the further announcement from the IB that will clarify how Year 13 student will be awarded their diplomas and certificates. We also anticipate news on the Year 11 eAssessments shortly. Once available we will share the update with those students and families directly.

Parent Feedback

You are welcome to continue to use the parent survey to share your feedback. The survey remains active and is checked regularly: <https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/87DWDuat>. We have endeavoured to reply to all responses, so if you have not received a reply, please make sure that emails from zischina.com are permitted to arrive to your inbox. Please as always feel welcome to write the relevant Heads of section as well.

Each day brings new challenges and working together I know our community is well equipped to face them for the good of our young people.

Warm regards,

Andrew VanderMeulen
Head of School



Perfectly Primary



Dear school community,

In our teacher groups, we have been collaborating with each other to share ideas and to plan our curriculum integration. We have found ways to continue meeting the curriculum standards while also meeting the guidelines put forth by the IB.

Education is a service to which our team at ZIS is resolutely committed. Education is not a place. It is all of the things we do each day to meet our shared goal of nurturing young minds. It is the care we show our students. It is the time we take to answer questions. It is the details we put into the activities we set. It is the partnerships we have formed with families. It is the dedication to working through the uncertainty and the unknown together until we can meet again.

Teaching and learning in the primary years is without question most effective when done in-person. Humans are social beings; children especially so. We have a need to interact with one another, so it only makes sense that this has been a trying time for us all. And yet, we continue to meet any challenges we face head-on. Together, all things are possible. Thank you for your continued support during these past couple of months.

Warmly,

Dr. Lana Staton

Head of Primary

Our commitment to inquiry-based instruction during distance learning:

- remain on course with the curriculum and the learning expectations planned for the semester
- design learning experiences that inspire student creativity and cultivate their critical thinking skills
- provide timely feedback on student learning
- select the best technology resources to host content and facilitate communication
- respond to student and parent questions on technology and learning issues
- maintain an open-minded approach, learning to grow and adapt through collaboration with our teams and community.



Secondary Segment



Dear students and parents,

Online learning continues to develop. Over the past few weeks we have adopted new platforms for communicating online, notably Teams and Zoom. Online oral exams have adjusted to the realities of online assessment and visual arts coursework also continues at home, with adjustments for online assessment. There has been an important input from parents which is being shared among the school staff and this calibrates our services to students' needs better. Some subscription services have defaulted to free for one month or two, or longer, such as InThinking, Learninga-z, theoryofknowledge.net, Paper Plainz, Desmos and Kognity and these have been shared with teachers. Assessprep and ManageBac online marking of work are taking greater prominence also in the current online learning environment.

Overall summative assessments are continuing as we remain aligned with our planned

curriculum and an inquiry driven approach to learning. In our new learning environments visual literacy, speaking, listening, collaboration and communication remain the foundation for learning. As we prepare for the weeks ahead, we refine and adapt to learn from the weeks past.

Kind regards,

Micheal Coffey
Head of Secondary



LS Space



Finding Happiness through Interaction in a Digital World

About 10 years ago, while out for a jog, I listened to Eric Whitacre, a contemporary composer, talk about music. Through his TED talk he shared how joining a choir while studying at the University of Nevada, transformed him. Here he witnessed, “people together, this shared vision [...] For the first time in my life I was a part something bigger than myself.”

After getting his Masters Degree at The Julliard School, publishing pieces, conducting, and working as a professional classical composer, Eric was ready for something more. A fan videoed herself singing one of his pieces and posted it on YouTube and he got an idea. Why not create a virtual choir?

Hoping for 50 singers, he shared the score of his original piece, *Lux Arumque* (Light and Gold), and waited. 185 singers from 12 countries responded. With help from a friend, those 185 videos were put together and made into one. It received 1,000,000 hits on YouTube in the first month (and that was in 2010).

Lux Arumque is one of the most beautiful pieces of music I’ve ever heard. Seeing and hearing these strangers, from all over our globe, sing together to make something incredible is so special.

Here we sit, after another week of distance learning and quarantine. How many digital connections have we made and reinforced? Are we a part of something bigger that inspires us and brings beauty into our day? I think we are.

Eric Whitacre has produced many more virtual choirs. The last one had 8,000 singers from 120 countries. Take a minute to watch, listen, and be inspired.

The TED talk: https://www.ted.com/talks/eric_whitacre_a_choir_as_big_as_the_internet

Lux Arumque: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D7o7BrlbaDs>

About the Virtual Choir: <https://ericwhitacre.com/the-virtual-choir/about>

Warm regards,

Mirjam Berghuis
Head of Learning Services



Lunch Menus,
our food safety guidelines,
and past editions of
"The Banyan" Newsletter
are available
at zischina.com

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