

THE BANYAN



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Zhuhai International School: weekly newsletter

FROM THE FIRST FLOOR

Much of this week I had the chance to attend the EARCOS Leadership Conference where 1100+ educators from the East Asia Region have gathered to share in discussions on best practice and to learn new strategies and directions for school growth.

The keynote speaker of the event was Sir John Jones, author of "The Magic Weaving Business" and co-author of "Winning the H Factor: the secrets of happy schools". Renowned for his work on innovative education, creativity, and leadership, Sir Jones led auditorium through a look at the changing world and its impact on education: what we should leave behind and what we should take with us.

One of the questions he posed the crowd is relevant for all of us, including our students. He challenged us: what kind of thinker do you want to be: a poverty thinker, a probability thinker, or a possibility thinker?

The *poverty thinker* can only find the shortcomings in situations and fails to see the positive.

The *probability thinker* has more perspective but only operates in the safety of guarantees.

The *possibility thinker* is innovative, optimistic, and energized - willing to explore, test, debate, and create.

Sir Jones didn't have the time to ask us to envision how students can be taught to be possibility thinkers. Had he, I think the answer lies in promoting a growth mindset in students, convincing them that very little about them is fixed or pre-determined, and that they have power not only to change themselves, but also others and the world. When we accept the challenge to be dynamic, principled, global citizens, as presented in our mission statement, we *all* need to be possibility thinkers.

Warm regards,
Andrew VanderMeulen
Head of School



Sundowner 2018: A true community event!





UPCOMING EVENTS

Hallowe'en Fun with FoZIS

Wednesday, October 31

ISTA @ Guangzhou

November 2-4

Week Without Walls

November 12-16



Perfectly Primary



Dear ZIS Community. It's been another busy week in the PYP. In Year 1-6 our second units of inquiry of the year are taking shape. Our students are busy asking questions, conducting research and taking action as part of their learning. All classes are engaged and excited about these inquiries that will culminate in our Week Without Walls beginning on November 12th.

This Friday morning we took a break from our regularly scheduled PYP events such as buddy classes, assemblies and house challenges. This is because Friday was the first day of MAP testing for our Year 4-6 classes. MAP stands for Measure of Academic Progress, and it is an assessment given to students at international schools all around the world.

These assessments allow us to chart our students' progress as they move from year to year. The data we receive from the assessments also allows us to see where our class wide strengths and weaknesses are, and it allows to identify the learning needs of each individual student. Good luck to all Year 4-6 students as they try their best on these MAP assessments.

Thanks for reading everyone! Have a great weekend!

Jordan Rose
Head of Primary



Secondary Segment



Middle Years
Programme

Diploma
Programme

I was reminiscing recently on the twenty-two years I have been teaching mathematics and science. I often reflect on students in my classes past and present and try to work out when they were successful and when they were not and what factors contributed to this. One of the things that stand out in my mind is called “stoicism”.

What is stoicism? It is “get up and go”, perseverance, grit, resilience, endurance, the ability to not just bounce back after failure but to move on and try again.

We are all responsible for our own success and like it or not, we will get out of things exactly what we put in. A masterful baker knows that he not only has to have the right ingredients and for those ingredients to be quality but that it also takes practice to produce something that is truly outstanding.

Our role as educators is to equip our students with the certain tools that lay good foundations, engage students to be searching for more and better tools (or invent their own) and to celebrate both success and failure because these are both powerful diagnostic tools which lead to empowerment. The only factor left is practice and that is something the students must do alone.

Parents and teachers, together must provide guidance and pose questions for reflection so that students move towards SELF-discipline, SELF-reliance and SELF-determination.

Does your student/child “wing it” take the path of least resistance, do the bare minimum or what is easiest or do they plan, revise/edit and re-work, challenge themselves, be strict with themselves and do more than is required?

Does your student/child make excuses for not having things done or done well or blame others when things don't work out or do they take responsibility for their part (or lack thereof) and reflect on how to improve the situation for next time?

In the words of a great, great man who lived well before our time..... **Marcus Aurelius** “You have power over your mind - not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.” He speaks of being strict with yourself and forgiving of others. Hold YOURSELF to higher standards and only then can you be greater.

I also like “Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.” And suggest we apply it to here at school.... “Waste no more time arguing about what a good student should be. Be one”

Being a life-long learner is something that I value greatly and in supporting our teachers to strive to provide even better learning environments as part of their professional journey, I have asked all of the students to complete a SWOT analysis of each of their classes. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. We asked students

to reflect on the teacher, the environment and themselves in each other these categories and honestly feedback what things are working, what are not and why, what things might provide positive change and what things might prevent positive change. This information will aid us as in providing better learning environments.

As always, I encourage parents to be part of this process. Ask questions, demand high standards from your child's teachers and help us be a better team.

Warmest Regards

Vanessa Leah
Head of Secondary



LS Space



Greetings from the Library

This year the library has undergone reorganizing of the physical space allowing greater flexibility for all users. There are multiple zones to meet varying needs including an area for group work/teaching, story time/comfortable reading area for all levels, and space for individualized focused work.

This year ZIS students will again be participating in Battle of the Books (BOB). Students are currently reading a variety of books chosen by the Pearl River Delta Librarians based on interest and ability. ZIS had teams participate at all levels, performing well last year, and students are excited about participating once again this year. A number of students were asking about BOB even before announcements were made to the student body. Competition will take place during March 2019 at several international schools in the area. If your student is interested in participating and has not spoken to their teacher yet, there is still plenty of time to become involved before the competition.

During library time this year PYP students have experience a variety of activities: digital citizenship lesson on cyber bullying, book care, locating books in the library, using the Dewey decimal system, and story time, to name a few. We also have some trial databases to assist with research and writing for MYP and DP students.

Alan Barbee
Senior Teacher Librarian

On November 25th our Year 13 student Ethan Fowler will participate in the annual UNICEF Charity Run in Hong Kong. While most charity projects are limited to a one-off money donation, this one enables students to start a running program and raise funds for the most vulnerable kids in Africa.



If you are willing to join the race or contribute to this worthy charity, feel free to visit the official run website <http://run.unicef.org.hk/> or contact Mr Mike Piotrowski, the project supervisor at mikep@zischina.com



Lunch Menus and past editions of "The Banyan" Newsletter are available at zischina.com

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