



NEWSLETTER

Changchun American International School

NOVEMBER 2013

The Principal

Bryan Manditsch

Yet again, I am going to keep my article short because the other contributors have written large amounts about the events of November. I will only add that, very quietly, the school has been busy most Saturdays of the year, covering a range of activities and services. In November, we were open for the four-hour SAT testing from the USA on the first Saturday, then the following Saturday was two-days of official PYP training for 25 of our staff. After that was the big and successful Christmas Market, organised by the PTA. The fourth Saturday were the Cambridge English exams, taken by the majority of MYP students.

Finally, as detailed elsewhere in this newsletter, the last day of term (13th December) is a Parent Teacher Conference (PTC) for MYP/DP, and a Student Lead Conference (SLC) for PYP. Please make every effort to attend on the day – it is an important source of information for both parents and teachers.

Best regards,

Bryan Manditsch

Principal

PYP

Aga Chojnocka

Community

November is here and so is the snow. Children welcomed the change of weather with their usual excitement and love going outside during recess, which is why we would like to remind all the parents to make sure children wear proper snow boots, pants, jackets, scarves and gloves, so that they can enjoy their time outside without the risk of catching a cold.



Programme

We are well underway with our inquiry into the following units:

Pre-k Through our five senses we express our ideas and feelings

K-1 Light is all around us and we use it in many ways.

K-2 Homes reflect cultural influences and local conditions.

PYP 1 Learning about previous generations helps us understand the connections between the past and the present

PYP 2 All living things go through a process of change.

PYP 3 Choices of the role models reflect the beliefs and values of individuals and societies.

PYP 4 Biodiversity relies on maintaining the

interdependent balance of organisms within systems

PYP 5 Distribution of energy resources affects communities' and individuals' access to equal opportunities.

To build our knowledge, experience and further understanding, we have used the local community and resources. Pre-K, PYP1s, PYP 5 have gone on trips supporting their work in the unit. They visited local neighbourhoods, parks and museums to make connections, observe different forms, and describe changes around us.

Next month, December 13th, 8:30-12:30, we will hold our Student-Led Conferences.

Student-Led Conferences (SLC) provide students with an opportunity to talk to/with their families about their educational progress.

Each student invites his or her parents to attend a meeting concerning the student's educational goals and progress in meeting those goals. The students will also take their parents on a tour of the school and other specialist classrooms. The meetings are facilitated by the student and follow an agenda that the student has developed prior to the meeting.

During the meeting:

- the student shares his or her educational goals and examples of his or her work (portfolio)
- the student also analyzes his or her strengths and weaknesses, and reflects upon the educational consequences of choices the student has made
- the student, teacher(s) and parents determine what each will do to help the student move closer to the student's educational goals.

Once students have learned how to prepare for and conduct a SLC, students can be asked to conduct conferences with their parents at home on a regular basis.

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Professional Development

For the past two weeks we have been working in collaborative groups, addressing the following issues of language and learning:

- What ways of learning language, about language, and through language do we focus on in our particular age group?
- What learning/teaching strategies are most effective for our age group?

Teachers collaborated, shared their experience and expertise in the following groups:

- Pre-k and K-1 teachers joined by Ms. Joyce and Ms. Bonnie
- K-2 and PYP 1 teachers joined by EALT Ms. Marsha, PSPE Mr. Steven
- PYP 2 and PYP 3 teachers joined by EALT Mr. Rhys, ICT Mr. JAY
- PYP 4 and PYP 5 teachers joined by Ms. May and Ms. Lemon, Music Ms. Rebecca

Our finding and agreements will be included in the latest version of CAIS language policy, and will guide our everyday classroom practice.

Projects

Ms. Krista's "Caring Spirits" are visiting local kindergartens that need our help and support on Saturday, November 23rd and the Saturday of December 6th. If you want to make a donation, prepare a Christmas gift box, provide canned food or winter clothing, you can leave them at the Reception or in Ms. Krista's classroom. Please mark the items for "Caring Spirits".

CAIS made sure Ms. Krista and "Caring Spirits" have two school buses to take care of transportation on those days.

Events

In the spirit of appreciation of other cultures and traditions children in Pre-K made Thanksgiving cards and talked about Thanksgiving celebrations.

December 10th is Human Rights day, and on this day, even more than on any other day,

we want to bring children's attention to the issues of Children's Right and Human Rights in different countries. You can talk with your child at home about Children's and Human Right and help us raise their awareness of issues related to those topics.

Since a lot of our students celebrate Christmas, we will also spend some time in December discovering different Christian traditions from all over the world.

Communication

If you have any questions concerning the standards and practices of the Primary Years Programme, please go to www.ibo.org or contact the PYP coordinator at achojnacka@caischina.org

If you have difficulties receiving emails from homeroom teachers via Managebac please contact PYP Department Assistant Ms. Lena Liu at lliu@caischina.org

THANK YOU!

MYP

Ann Gaillard

As the season of joy and caring is fast approaching, it is only fitting to highlight Community and Service, which is an integral part of the Middle Years Programme. How do we live in relation to each other? How can I contribute to the community? How can I help others? These are just some of the questions that MYP students reflect on as part of their weekly 45-minute period Community and Service with Ms. Julia.

Students are encouraged to identify issues with local and global significance to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They are then challenged on finding ways to address the issue and explore possibilities that can benefit the community. This term, MYP 1 students did their share in waste reduction by being actively involved in the school's efforts to sort reusable materials. Most of you had the pleasure of being served coffee and tea by the MYP 2 students during the

October Parent – Teacher Conferences. The MYP 2 students also assist P.E. classes by getting the materials and equipment ready for other students to use. Our MYP 3 and 5 students share their love of books by reading to our Kindergarten students. The MYP 4 and 5 students raise funds to support the Little Angel Kindergarten. The MYP 4 students is also getting ready to participate in the Habitat for Humanity projects to help in the worldwide effort to build decent houses for low-income families. Here are some of our students' thoughts on their service activities:



Community and Service Student involvement:

Andrew on collecting reusable materials:

Thursday, 10 October: We gave out trash signs to put on the trash can for each classroom. We made the signs ourselves in the second floor office. We printed, laminated and cut them out: brown for cans, yellow for bottles and green for paper. Dustin and I went to the third floor and distributed the signs to the teachers. We are doing this to remind teachers and students to put the recyclable things in the right container.

Sanjoli on Gym Clean up:

Thursday, 31 October: This week we went to the gym and Mr. Bob opened the door for us. Sara and I pumped the balls again and I felt as if there were more balls than last week. I also put a few shuttle cocks in their boxes and when we were done, we played some games. Helping out in the gym is a good activity because we become stronger by pumping balls and we learn to collaborate with others too. We were happy to be

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helping in the gym and we felt good doing this activity.

Eunchae on raising funds for Little Angel Kindergarten:

Wednesday, 16 October: The night of the CAIS Christmas market, Sarah, Lea, Carolina, Sofie and I went to Charne's house to prepare for the market. We baked a hundred cupcakes, painted candles and made Christmas cards. I had to catch a taxi and go back home at nine, but it was worth it. On Christmas Market day, we had separate tables for the bake sale, and arts and crafts. I was on the arts and craft table for almost four hours. We had our donation box in front so people could donate as well. One person donated 500RMB in an envelope which surprised us. We also got a lot of Christmas boxes, and I was truly surprised at how people were willing to help others. Sometimes there were letters as well, which made me smile. In total, we earned 3153 RMB. This was a new experience for me, and it was a big success! I felt so proud of myself on that day.

Sera on reading to her Kindergarten buddy:

Thursday, 21 November: I have read books with Stephen twice since this activity started. Stephen reads books and I would correct the words that he read wrong and doesn't know. After reading a book, we played word game. He tells me one word in a book and I find the word. While reading the book, I sometimes ask what's going to happen. And when he wants to draw something about the book, he drew the characters.

He wants to make a book called the "Magic Pot" but we are running out of time so we will make it next week. I really like reading with kids in K2. They are really cute. I felt good when he told me to come and sit with him, and when he told his teacher that I was his best friend.

Cherry Ma on raising funds for Habitat for Humanity Monday, 18 November: In recent years, many natural disasters destroyed numerous families and houses, and a charitable organization called "Habitat for Humanity" helps homeless people to build new houses. We want to be a part of this project, so we decided that we would go to Yunnan or Sichuan in October 2014 as Habitat for Humanity volunteers. In order to pay for our travel expenses and buy construction materials, we need to earn money on our own. Our class discussed how we could do this. Our first idea was to sell food and Christmas wreaths during the Christmas Market. Charne and I sold cup

cakes and puff and we let the kids decorate their own cakes. Kevin performed magic tricks for the little kids. We raised about 2,000RMB. This is the start of something big.

If you are interested in becoming involved in our service projects and activities, please contact our Community and Service supervisor, Ms. Julia Kang. The teaching staff hope to see you in our next Parent - Teacher Conferences on 13th December (8:30am – 12:30pm) where the MYP 2 students are again looking forward to serving you hot drinks guaranteed to warm bodies and hearts.

Best regards,

Ann Gaillard
MYP Coordinator



CAS - Raising Funds

The MYP 4 and 5 students raise funds to support the Little Angel Kindergarten.



CAS - Reading Buddies

MYP 3 and MYP5 share their love of books by reading to their kindergarten buddies.



CAS - Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity projects to help in the worldwide effort to build decent houses for low-income families.

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DP

Santo Kurinawan

Exam week

From 13-15 November, DP1 and DP2 students sat their exams. Teachers will now assess the papers and follow this with exam reflection in class. The exam result has an essential impact on the final grade on the next report card. It is important not to be complacent after a high score, nor give up despite a low exam result. This is one of the school's methods to assess where we are in the exam preparation, and at the same time it will stimulate student's knowledge and skills. This is an important stage for students and the teacher, as well to prepare for the next steps.

Report Card

Report cards will be sent home on 11th December, and before the winter break we will have the next Parents-Teachers Conference, on Friday, December 13th, 2013, 8:30am -12:30pm. This is a valuable opportunity to build communications with you, and to find out what things can be improved for our students during the winter break. It is important to have in mind that this winter break might not be a full holiday, especially for the DP2 students as there are many final assignments that will be due shortly after we come back from the winter break.

Uniforms

To increase school discipline and save some of the teacher's time, we have sent many reminders to all DP students about school uniform. Students are expected to have the correct uniform; one upper item and trousers or skirt, no jeans. Students without proper uniform will not be allowed in to class. Students will be sent to the school shop to buy the uniform or stay in the lobby's waiting room until their parent/guardian bring their uniform to school. Thank you very much in advance for helping us reinforce the wearing of uniform at school.

Teacher observation and teacher's professional development

(TOK, online and on site)

A good teacher can always be a better teacher. As a part of our commitment to lifelong learning, November is teacher

observation time, where we are building a professional education community who learn together and finding out how we can improve our classes. Students might notice this, as there is more than one teacher in some classes this month. The follow up of this activity is to identify teacher strengths and areas of improvements, or as an input to the school's professional development plan. Also, we just had our IB TOK in-school workshop (with a trainer from Sydney, Australia here) and currently there are number of teachers doing their online or on-site IB workshops, with the school's support.

Santo Kurinawan
DP Coordinator

Counselor's Corner

Michael Hayes

Happy Holiday season to everyone in the CAIS family. May Santa bring happy holiday wishes to all DP2 who have applied to University. DP2 students should have completed all applications to the US and UK prior to leaving for the Winter Holiday. Completing those applications will allow DP2 students to have a great holiday without having to hurriedly apply at the very last minute causing much stress in their lives. Plus most scholarships are awarded by applying on time to Universities. Santa has brought a lot of visitors to CAIS this Fall, and in December CAIS will host two great schools on our campus. On Dec.9th (Monday) we will host SCAD, a famous School in the US for Art and Design with a campus in Hong Kong. This month we had visits from several universities from around the world. Should you have questions about any of these please feel free to contact Ms. Amy or Michael Hayes by phone 8458-1234.

Thank you
Michael Hayes
Counselor



College Visit

George Washington University Admissions Representative Kevin Hostetler chats with CAIS guidance counselor Michael Hayes during a visit this month to our school. Mr. Hostetler gave a presentation to our students about the exciting prospect of attending college in the United States.