

THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

An International School?

Parents sometimes (and understandably) assume that the label “International School” means something. Unfortunately, it doesn’t really.

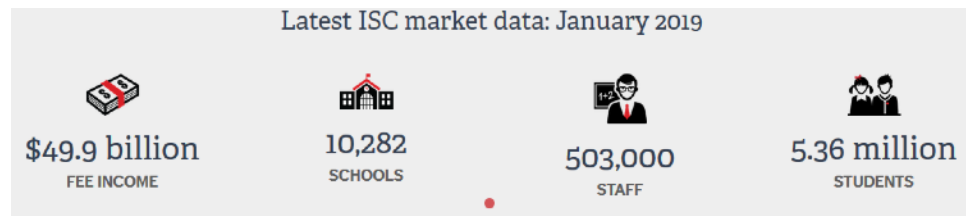
There is no “Head Office”, no authority that allows and approves the use of the adjective “international”, no reliable metric that guarantees that an “International School” in one country has anything at all in common with an “International School” elsewhere.

Anyone anywhere can set up an institution and call it an “International School”.

And they do.

How many international schools are there? No-one knows. No-one can know because there is no meaningful definition of an “international school”.

For what it’s worth, one research organisation offers these startling numbers



<https://www.iscresearch.com>

What is clear is that the number of school choosing to market themselves as “international” is burgeoning. What is also true is that most (all?) of the growth is in the for-profit sector.

A School or a Business?

This is a question that comes up again and again. Are we a school or a business? WIS is a company with fees, customers, and bills to pay. In that sense, we are a business. But our “business” is running a school.

So, my answer is always that we are both. But we are a school first, and a business second. Put it this way – the “school” is the reason we exist, not the “business”.

Alas, all over the world new “international” schools are being opened (or existing schools bought) by consortiums and businesses whose priorities are very much *business* first and *school* second.

Frankly, schools like ours are by now a minority. And the number is shrinking every year.



Contents

- From the Director p. 1 - 2
- Primary News p. 2 - 4
- Secondary News p. 4 - 8
- Other News p. 8 - 11

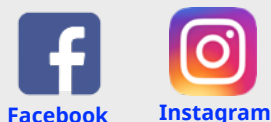
Dates to Remember

May 2019

- **06 - 10:** Week A
- **08:** BoD meeting @ 18:00 - staffroom
- **25:** Africa Day - Public Holiday
- **29:** Secondary AA End
- **30:** Ascension Day - No school
- **31:** School Closed



VISIT US ON:



WEEKLY PUZZLER

The puzzler is back.
This week let's look at a
row of five switches,
either switched on or off.

How many different
ways can the switches
be arranged so that no
two adjacent switches
are both off?

Challenge: can you solve
it without a drawing?

Please send solutions, or
any fun and interesting
puzzlers to
pfarrell@wis.edu.na



And what defines “schools like ours”? Well, being not-for-profit is a good start. But another key indicator is the structure of governance. Which brings us to...

The Board

In any school the Board is the ultimate authority. Decisions of strategic or even existential importance may be taken – must be taken – by, and only by, the Board.

Happily, decisions that are existential are few and far between but annually there are decisions to be made that will directly impact teachers, parents, and students.

The WIS Board of Directors must number no fewer than seven members and no more than twelve. There is no requirement that all members are current WIS parents but they usually are. They are all volunteers and, apart from a bottle of water and a few limp sandwiches once a month, they receive no compensation for their time.

Most of the Board's work is conducted in open sessions. That is, any member of the WIS community is welcome to attend meetings to watch and listen.

(Do please note, however, that you are there as an observer, not a participant.)

The next Board meeting is on Wednesday – the 8th. It will be in the Staff Room on campus and starts at 6pm. If you are curious to see how the Board operates, what decisions are made and how, or if you are maybe thinking of offering to join the Board yourself, please feel free to attend.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

As I mentioned in last Friday's Oryx, I've been in Sharjah, UAE this week serving on a NEASC school visit team. Unlike an inspection where such a visit results in the school being given a pass/fail, the purpose of a NEASC visit is to evaluate a school's own self-study compared to what's been observed by the visiting team; in other words the visiting team's job is to evaluate whether the school is doing what it says it's doing.

During the week the team has observed various aspects of the school including visiting classrooms, and meeting and talking with the various stakeholders in the school community. The culmination of the visit is a written report of what's been observed, along with commendations and recommendations. The resulting report should support the school in celebrating what it's doing well and taking onboard the visiting team's suggestions for improvement.

One of the aspects I enjoy about participating in these visits is the camaraderie and collegiality that results from working together for 12-14 hours a day over a week's time. The visiting team for this particular visit included fifteen members representing eight nationalities and schools in eleven different countries.

While an accreditation visit involves long hours and intense time with observing classes, reading the school's self-study and the evidence to support it, meeting with various factions of the school and writing reports, there is time to make professional connections through interacting and sharing about our varied experiences. It's a wonderful professional development opportunity that also encourages reflection on

one's own school's progress with the NEASC standards.

**Regards,
Beth Smith**

Concert of Colours

The idea of putting together a concert started in my classroom during a music lesson with the lower primary classes. The students had to do movement to music activities with scarves and ribbons and this amalgamation of colours, little giggles and just watching the kids and seeing their excitement, all contributed to the idea of a lower primary music concert with the theme of colours.

I approached Ms. Jan and told her about my idea and before you could say "rainbow" she shared a script that she had prepared. Ms. Junelle was on board assisting with our Masters of Ceremony, stage setup, script rehearsal, lights and other things, to name just a few.

As the saying goes the rest was history. Meetings with homeroom teachers, the arts department and the go-ahead to showcase our Lower Primary kids in a concert quickly became a reality. We encountered some challenges, but with a dedicated effort from the team the concert soon came together wonderfully.

A special thank you to SLT, the Arts department (Ms Heike for helping complete our beautiful rainbow on the backdrop and the pot of gold. Ms. Genie Ms. Sigrid for preparing the backdrop, Ms. Kate doing the make-up and so much more). Also thanks to Ms. Charné and Ms. Madelein for their help with the costumes, administration, make-up, decor etc.

A special note of thanks also to French (Laetitia) and Portuguese (Jacky F) teachers, in Lower and Upper Primary each Home room Teachers and Educational Assistants (assisting with various tasks from the start to the end of this journey).

Thank you also to Mr. Danai for the sound and recording on the night, including the students that assisted with the making of the movie.

I would also like to especially thank each and every Lower Primary student and especially my choir students - Well Done on your fantastic performance!

A special thank you also to the audience for cheering on the students after their performances. This was indeed a team effort, great job WIS!

I have shared a link with you below to access a video that you can enjoy and relive our colourful evening. Click on the following link <https://youtu.be/IDZKz3omClw> and enjoy!

Michelle Du Preez

PE Dance Unit

In this last unit of the year, we will be working on a dance unit. Students will explore dance moves with two apps:

1. The [Dances from Fortnite - app](#) or [Challenge for Fortnite Dances](#) (made up of dances from Fortnite) there is no opportunity to play any games in this unit or the Dance Fortnite app itself, as they are only dances. See video of one dance [Best mates](#). The Fortnite app has dances only. It is different from the Fortnite Game app.

[Video of class use](#)

2. [iDance app](#) - various genres are explored while teaching students how they can choreograph.

As part of their warm-up students will be exposed to how dance is choreographed through the "[Michelle Obama's fitness campaign](#)" in collaboration with Beyonce and the Lets Move song.

The choreography can be found at these two links:

[Choreography - Part 1](#)

[Choreography - Part 2](#)

Towards the end of the unit, in the lower grades, students will be challenged to lead the four-minute warm-up independently, without using technology. The 4th and 5th Grade students are exposed to the choreography and are encouraged to be risk-takers and lead the dance after four sessions, with two students leading every class.

Students are exploring how dance is used to develop fitness and how professional teams use it to improve players' coordination and agility. They are also exploring how dance is used to communicate messages. In small groups, they will design a short choreographed piece using google slides to record their moves that they can showcase to their peers.



Students from Grade 2P engaged in the 'Let's Move' warm up.

Edwin Chinyemba

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Collectively, we need to lead our children to become competent and able citizens of the world they will move in one day: **PARENTS-LEARNERS-SCHOOL**

Next parent info session: Tuesday, 28 May @ 18:00 - Instructional Coaching & Service Learning Initiatives

WIS is accredited by NEASC (The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Commission on International Education). To be accredited is an important aspect of our processes. It gives us an idea of where we are and where we want to be and need to be in order to be in line with international standards of education. We recently embarked on the new ACE Protocol NEASC has introduced. The need to develop a new protocol for accreditation arose because of the inherently different way we educate young people today - compared to just 10 years ago.



ACE (Architecture, Culture and Ecology of Learning) represents the three domains of its interdependent and interrelated Learning Eco-System. "The ACE process supports schools on a journey of evolving from a traditional 'school' with a safe, secure, predictable and sustainable environment into a thriving learning community in which learners have voice and choice and in which evidence of Impact is gathered systematically and thoughtfully. In a true

learning community all stakeholders – students, teachers, parents, leaders, Board members – are ‘learners’.” (ACE Learning Introduction, NEASC/CIE 2017).

In the past eight months, we have worked in the Middle School to start to create exactly such a learning environment and experience for our learners. Since this is a distinctly different way of teaching and learning, the process needs a lot of support and guidance. Teachers and students get this in school. We have had various Professional Learning events for our teachers and in classes, teachers address the changes with the students.

For parents, we have had regular parent information sessions where we walk parents through the process. Some parents have taken up these opportunities to get to know the new way we approach teaching and learning. I would like to share some of their feedback here in the hope that this will encourage more parents to attend our information sessions.

- *I wish this was the way I had been taught at school. I can't wait to be a part of WIS Middle School in August 2019!*
- *Thank you for the information session yesterday evening. It is indeed inspiring to see the commitment that the WIS Middle School has in bringing about change in the delivery of content; preparing the children for the dynamic landscape of opportunities they will be challenged with in the future.*

It is encouraging and challenging at the same time for a parent (having been taught differently) to appreciate the broad nature of learning that the children are exposed and challenged with seemingly at a very early age. From the session yesterday, it quickly emphasised the concept that the classroom extends far beyond the school boundaries.

I note changes in my child particularly with the self-reflection, it places responsibility on her which is good. I am less sure about the grading but hope that in time it will also make sense, as registering growth as set by the criteria is very important but on the other hand the distinction of excellence is something society still ascribes to. I believe attending the sessions will further enlighten my understanding of the modality of grading.

Once again I am inspired and wish to commend your team for this effort.

- *It is a pleasure to be able to be involved in your children's learning progress. I come from a previous school, where being able to communicate with school staff or even just a teacher was such a huge route to take...*

I think the fact that the school invites us as parents, to see how our children are progressing and growing in their life skills and learning profile, is just a blessing. Being able to do what we did last session, such as the small assessment, is very good to realise what the kids do, and how they feel while they are writing their assessment, to help them to realise what is the best way to study, and how they can improve themselves.

... the parent info sessions that are happening since January 2019, for the changes brought forward in the Middle School are very informative, explanatory and above all show the amount of hard work and hours being put into changing our school to a more accurate and innovative learning environment for our children. I think the new system for the Middle School in learning, educating and assessing the learners is the best change that could happen.

- *Thanks for last night, I find these sessions very informative and fail to understand why so few parents take the time to involve themselves in the changes happening in Middle School.*

Since this was not my first session and I also had a sit down with Mike a few weeks back, I think I am starting to grasp the concepts and can feel the mind shift. And I am so happy to see this positive change.

It is encouraging to read these testimonies from our parents. While the process is still ongoing, it shows that we seem to be doing the right thing and moving in the right direction. We need to make sure that our children/learners are prepared for the world they will embark on once they have completed their formal education.

We, the older generation, still have very little understanding of what awaits our children once they move into the corporate world. But we know that it will be a distinctly different world we moved into when we finished our



education. We know that they will need very different skills and competencies in order to be able to manoeuvre their way through their working life. So what we need to do, is give them these skills and competencies while they are still learning - as early as possible in their learning journey. In one of my earlier articles I wrote about VUCA (see image below). This means, that our children are entering a world that is **Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous** - which means that it is no longer predictable and they need to have the confidence and ability to work and live in this environment.

It would be great if we could convince more parents to attend our parent information sessions. In the end, the aim is to support our children's/young adult's growth and learning and that can only happen with a collective effort - from school, from home and from our young generation.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

THE SPCA WINDHOEK

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) is a non-profit animal welfare organisation which has its main aim of saving, protecting and providing care and treatment for abandoned, sick and injured animals.

Cruelty against animals in Namibia has been on the increase in recent times, and the SPCA plays a pivotal role in rescuing and assisting animals that are maltreated. This non-profit organisation runs purely from public donations. The centre of operations is located opposite Maerua Mall and can house up to 350+ various animals at any one time; who come to them due to a variety of circumstances.

I began volunteering at the SPCA in August 2017 and continue to go there every Saturday from 9am-12pm. The SPCA is always looking for extra help from volunteers. From playing with cats or walking dogs, the extra attention the animals gain is valuable as any form of human exposure makes them more adoptable. At the SPCA I often walk the dogs, play with the cats as well as take photos of the animals who are up for adoption.



Students often ask me why I wake up early to spend my mornings during the weekends volunteering at the SPCA and my response has always been the same. Why not? There are many benefits to why young people should be encouraged to volunteer at non-profit organisations such as the SPCA. Mainly you learn responsibility and time management. At the SPCA, volunteers are expected to behave in a professional manner. This means that students are required to be responsible with their decisions to ensure that animals are not endangered.

Volunteering at the SPCA encourages civic responsibility. Through volunteering you get to contribute to a cause you care about. Therefore, if you are passionate about saving animals, volunteering at the SPCA, would allow you to feel that you are involved with your community and contributing to making a difference. Dogs experience

something known as 'Kennel Stress'. Kennel stress refers to the behaviour dogs begin to exhibit when they are transitioned to a kennel. Signs of kennel stress include hiding in the back of the kennel, being less active or even starving themselves. By simply taking the dogs out for walks this can easily be cured.

The SPCA also provides a platform in which students can slowly start contributing to the community. Not everyone is comfortable with interacting with human beings. I remember a student who initially stated that she was not comfortable interacting with 'strangers'. However, as she began to volunteer at the SPCA, she met new people. This ultimately led to her becoming more comfortable when interacting with people she has never met before and from this she was motivated to begin volunteering at other organisations which incorporated more communication. She now volunteers at another non-profit organisation which provides a safe and nurturing learning environment for Namibian children and youth coming from disadvantaged communities.

On the other hand, volunteering at the SPCA will teach students how to manage their time. It allows them to incorporate an activity into their busy schedule of additional school work and extra-curricular activities. Being an IBDP student studying for final examinations, the SPCA visits have allowed me to begin my weekends stress free. I could start the day with a relaxing activity, getting ready and prepared to be productive for the remainder of the day. In fact, it is scientifically proven that spending time with animals helps lower your stress levels.



Through working at SPCA Windhoek, I realized how simple acts of service can make the biggest of differences especially when it comes to helping animals. I also found that working together with other volunteers and sharing a common collaborative effort helped me develop my team-working skills further!

Stella Nghinamundova, Grade 12, WIS



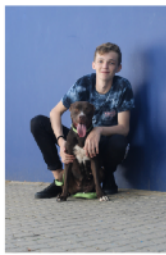
I have learned from volunteering at the SPCA that you shouldn't judge the animals by their age/appearance but rather judge them by their personality. All of them have their own different, amazing personality!! I have learned that its not right to breed or buy, while shelter animals die! And lastly I have learned that every minute you spend with them, makes a huge difference in their lives. No matter how little or how much time you spend with them, deep down you know that they appreciate it! And to me it makes my day to see their eyes light up while you spend time with them😊❤️

Tanya Engelbrecht, Grade 11, Windhoek High School



I love playing with the dogs and animals in need of a home. It makes me so happy. I gained a lot of experience and saw how much work it is. One learns how to challenge oneself and can discover hidden talents like posing with cute doggies in order to find them a home:)

Valerie Trübenbach and Roland Friedrich, Grade 11 B, DHPS



I've learned that volunteering at the SPCA not only benefits the dogs but also gives me the satisfaction of building new relationships with dogs and helping out

Luca Monteforte, Grade 11, WIS

By volunteering at the spca I was able to take my mind off of school and hang out with my friends. Helping the shelter was a fulfilling experience and a great opportunity.

Cédric, Grade 10, WIS



I have learned that the love that animals give is endless, and that they deserve endless love and care too-despite their situations. I learned to become more patient as sometimes they weren't so easy to deal with, but the outcome of seeing their joy after a walk is priceless.

Belinda Ronni, Grade 11, WIS



Dora Huang, Grade 11, WIS



Ashia Whitelock, Grade 12, St Paul's college

After my IBDP, my goal is to ultimately organise my own off-site event where the public can interact and potentially adopt a new member to their family. After asking around, I have observed that many people seem to believe that animals in shelters are somehow not compatible; therefore, they do not want to 'adopt'. After hearing this, I told myself, 'If people do not want to come to the SPCA to see that these animals are not 'damaged', let us bring the animals to them'. I believe that this will open the eyes of the public for sheltered animals. With this in mind, I have recruited more than 50 students from the different schools In Windhoek to attend the SPCA training course and volunteer during their free time. Together with this team and guidance from the General Manager and Staff of the SPCA, I hope to make an event like the envisioned one possible in the upcoming months.

As my life as a Windhoek International School student is coming to an end, I would like what I started to continue and encourage every student to push beyond their limits and start giving back to the community. Not only will this experience provide you with an insight to CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service) should you choose to do the IBDP, but at the same time it gives you a de-stressing session.

I call out to all WIS students who are older than 13 years to volunteer their time to the SPCA. Please continue to show support for this organisation which 20 of the Grade 11 & 12 students have done over the past 18 months. Help these animals in need on a daily basis as well as finding a loving family and a place to call home.

Hazim Ashraf Hishamuddin, Grade 12

Sports

Judo

This week we conclude our Judo taster sessions. Sensei Stompie has delivered practical session to all of our secondary learners over the last two weeks. We are very fortunate to have secured the services of Sensei Stompie, he has taken time out from his training schedule as he prepares for the African Nationals in Johannesburg in July. Judo is going to be one of our new offerings to the Afternoon Activity option in Semester 1, 2019.



Cricket

Cricket is a sport that that often divides opinion. How can a game played over 5 days still be a draw? Why do players applaud the opposition? Whats the difference between a googly and a leg-break?



The discerning and enthusiastic cricket fans in Windhoek were treated to an ICC (International Cricket Council) tournament last week. This annual event was hosted at Wanderers Cricket Ground and Affies Park and involved all the Division 2 nations. Competing teams were Oman, PNG, Canada, USA, Hong Kong and Namibia. The two best teams qualify for the next World Cup so there was a huge incentive for the participating nations to emerge on top.

History was also made during this event as Namibia emerged as winners with a win against Oman in the final play-off match.

Australia's Claire Polosak will become the first woman to officiate in a men's one-day international when Namibia play Oman in the final of the World Cricket League Division 2 in Windhoek later on Saturday.

The 31-year-old had never played cricket but blazed a trail in 2017 when she became the first woman to stand in a men's top-level match when New South Wales played a Cricket Australia XI in a one-day match in Sydney. "I am thrilled to be the first woman to stand in a men's ODI and how far I have come as an umpire," Polosak told the International Cricket Council (ICC) ahead of Saturday's match. "It really is important to promote women umpires and there's no reason why females can't umpire in cricket. It's about breaking down barriers, creating awareness so more females can come into the role." Full Article - [History made at Wanderers Cricket Ground](#)

Helping with football coaching

Thanks to Ransom, Seabe and Malik in Grade 9, for putting their coaching and communication skills into practice. The boys experienced first hand what it's like to share and impart their knowledge to younger learners as they help out with Primary Football practice.



Thomas Jackson-Read

Warehouse Theatre Fundraiser

Warehouse Theatre Windhoek opened its doors in 1989 and since then has been at the centre of Namibia's art scene, providing a home and a platform for local artists, and hosting numerous noteworthy international artists.

As a completely independent entity with no external financial support, the Warehouse Theatre has decided to create a CrowdFunding campaign to tackle the financial woes we currently face as we attempt to avoid closure during this harsh economic climate, which has also seen a decline in sponsorship and dwindling audience figures.



Last weekend the Warehouse Theatre held a two-day fundraising event which kicked off with a concert on Friday evening. Three former WIS students took to the stage and captivated, enthralled, dazzled and generally wowed the audience. Gave me a warm, fuzzy feeling in my heart, not to mention a certain amount of pride.



From left to right: Melanie Aiff (aka Mel Mwevi) - IGCSE class of 2010, spent the last two years of school at Abbott's in Cape Town and went on to study at AFDA in Cape Town. **Nasim Tekie** - IBDP class 2014 - now studying Medicine at UNAM School of Medicine. **Vitore Kaonjua** - IBDP class 2016 - also studying medicine at UNAM School of Medicine.

And if you wish to have more information about keeping the Warehouse open..... <https://www.gofundme.com/keep-warehouse-theatre-windhoek-open>

Edwina Rimmington

THANK YOU FROM THE PTA!

The PTA would like to wish an enormous THANK YOU to everyone in the WIS community who made the Family Braai and Earth Day Celebration a success last Saturday. We had an incredible turnout for the Fun Run, Car Boot Sale, Mini Olympics, and Music Concerts at the PLC. The love for the WIS community was strong!



Here are the WINNERS from the activities of the day:

- *Fun Run Pizza Party: Grade 3C*
- *Guess the Sweeties in the Jar: Omer Babluki*
- *Mini Olympics Team: M&Ms*
- *Lucky Prize 1: Sven Greiter*
- *Lucky Prize 2: Clara Karipi*
- *Lucky Prize 3: Ekaterina Shino*

Specific thanks goes out to:

- *The cleaners who worked tirelessly to ensure there were proper restroom facilities in the absence of running water as well as cleaning the school before and after the event*
- *The Pioneers Park Neighbourhood Watch who worked in the heat to provide delicious food for attendees*
- *Matthew Black for serving as our Emcee for the day*
- *Artificial Intelligence and The Ells for donating their musical talents*
- *Those who generously provided goods for our Lucky Prize drawing*
- *The PTA Team who gave hours of their time to make the event happen*





It takes a community to pull off fun events like this, and the PTA looks forward to more exciting school celebrations in the future!

Keri Dziuban

