



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

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Dates to Remember

September

27 - September - 2 October: *Orange River Field Trip - Year 10*

30 - Primary Parent Teacher Conferences

30 September - 1 October: *Secondary Parent Teacher Conferences*

October

1 - World Math Day Practice Period Starts

2 - Primary and Secondary Assembly and End of Term 1



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sport @ WIS

We are the only school in Windhoek operating on a Northern Hemisphere calendar (August to June) and this has considerable advantages. It aligns us with the great majority of other international schools throughout the world and, similarly, it aligns us with the university admissions cycle in North America and Europe.

But it has one very considerable drawback and that is our ability to play sports with other local schools. A different academic year, different holidays, and different exam periods mean that our ability to compete in leagues is severely compromised and some big, attractive tournaments take place when many of our students are not even in the country.

But where there's a will, there's a way. And the will is certainly there. I have met with several teachers who are very keen to see the sports programme at WIS grow and develop and we are actively exploring some promising options to have more competitive matches against other schools in netball, volleyball, field hockey, and football (or soccer, if you absolutely must) for starters.

Sport is not an 'extra' but is an essential part of the school curriculum and it is imperative that we strive for the highest standards, just as we do in academics and the arts. And, while I'm at it, let's dispense once and for all with the idea that competitive sport is somehow damaging to children. What nonsense. Learning how to win, learning how to lose, learning to work in a team, learning about commitment, learning how to respect rules, and much more are what children get from training and competing. And we would be a poor school if we did not value these lessons in life.

More Shade

As I write, I can see through my window a couple of men busily digging the foundations for three large canopies that will be erected beside the bleachers to the east of the field.



Teacher of the week

**Teacher: Melissa Kandido - English,
Arts and Geography**

I revel in Windhoek blooming. If I could mail the smell of the Acacia in Spring back to Omaha, Nebraska, I would. The purple Jacaranda trees make me want to click my heels in the air. Palm leaves erect fans of spiked Edward Scissorhand fingers overhead like skyward propellers. I build my joy on these sprouting discoveries, for they keep my outlook fresh with awe. Every day of the past year, the landscape has brought peace to my being. (Right now, in Omaha, they are experiencing flooding, so my parents tell me they will try to send the 14 cm of rain our way.)

I am a poet, dancer, writer, mother, dreamer, daughter, athlete, wife, and of course, teacher. Raised in Omaha (Malcolm X's birthplace), earned my undergraduate degree in African Diasporic Studies from Macalester College in St. Paul, MN. I studied at the University of Zimbabwe during a semester in my junior year. After graduation, I worked at Stanford University for the Martin Luther King Jr. Papers Project and then back to the University of Minnesota Law School's Institute on Race and Poverty.

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These have very generously been donated by the PTA and will provide much needed shade both for events and for more informal gatherings. (I am sure they will be heavily used by students during first and second breaks.)

As always, we are very grateful to the PTA for everything they do for the school.

With best wishes
Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Thank you for completing the electronic conference preference form. This format for signing up for conferences seems to be the most efficient way for scheduling conferences. If you have any suggestions for improvement of the form, please feel free to send them to me.

Your child should have brought home the conference confirmation today (Friday). If you didn't receive notification of your child(ren)'s conference please send me an email as soon as possible.

As a reminder the conferences are being held, Wednesday, 30th September. This is not a regular school day for the students as they only come to school for their conferences. The three-way conferences involve the student, parents/guardians and teacher. During the conference the students discuss their learning and understanding with their parents/guardians and teacher. The role of the teacher and parents/guardians is to support the student during this process.

In preparation for their role in the conference, students have reflected on what they are doing well and what areas they can work on developing further. During the conference the student, parents/guardians and the teacher together identify the student's strengths and areas for improvement and then establish goals for the student. Along with the goals, it is determined how the student might achieve these goals and what support is needed from the parents/guardians and the teacher. The teacher will take notes during the conference for any further follow up that is needed.

A few ways that you can prepare for and support your child(ren) before, during and after the conference are:

Teacher of the week continued>

From that point, I joined the Peace Corps and served for two years as a Teacher Trainer in Okalumbu, near Onyaanya in Owamboland. I worked with teachers in Engoyi, Olambo, Okalumbu, Onyaanya and many others. I also met my husband during this time.

After Peace Corps, I wasn't ready to leave Namibia, so I applied for a grant from the Ford Foundation. I was the Director of the Tudhaneni Dance Project with Omaleshe dance troupe. Finally, we moved back to the States and before teaching in Omaha, I worked for 8 years as a Corporate Trainer and managed human resources for various clients such as Sprint and Verizon cellular phone companies, American Express, HSBC and Bank of America. The corporate world taught me much but my calling was teaching. I earned my Master's Degree in Education from College of Saint Mary. I taught in a public school district with over 51,000 students in over 80 schools. My school was a Magnet school where I taught and ran the International Studies department.

Not only do I enjoy being an educator, I revel in learning. In efforts to continue my own professional development, I took classes with the Minnesota Humanities Center to help with reconstructing curriculum as well as attending the University of Nebraska's Service Learning Academy.

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Before the conference	During the conference	After the conference
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss the conference with your child • reflect on what you think your child is doing well and in what areas your child can improve (academically as well as socially) • make notes of concerns that may need to be discussed at a separate conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siblings should wait outside the classroom so that your attention can be given fully • Be relaxed • Allow your child to speak • Direct questions to your child and your child's work • Contribute your goals for your child • At the end, if needed, make another appointment with the teacher • Be sure to make time to visit the specialist teachers to get a full picture of your child's life and progress at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise your child for what your child is doing well • Discuss with your child the goals that were set and and monitor progress towards achieving these goals. • If needed, make an appointment with the teacher for a follow-up meeting to discuss concerns

Best wishes for a positive conference experience for both you and your child(ren).

Kind regards,
Beth Smith

PRIMARY ARTS DEPARTMENT

Year 1: Sharing the Planet: Discovering that water has no shape but takes the form it is contained in. Exploring patterns and textures in ICE.



Year 3: Inventing colours (using tints & shades to create swatches) and using these to paint our dreams.



Genie Albrecht

Teacher of the week continued>

I worked to earn a certification from the Anti-Defamation League and took courses offered for Geography Educators of Nebraska through Wayne State University.

I was awarded the Alice Buffett Outstanding Teacher Award, the National Council for Geographic Education Distinguished Teacher Award, the National Council for the Social Studies Award for Service Learning and the Gregg Young Teachers Extra Mile Award. I was invited to speak at the 24th Annual National Service-Learning Conference in Colorado, as well as to present my Master’s paper at the University of Nebraska’s Global Studies Conference and to teach how to incorporate art and MakerSpace at the National Council for the Social Studies annual workshop.

I am excited to watch both the flora and fauna blossom as well as my students!



Opposite Twins - The Golden Oldies
Tweedeldee and Tweedeldum
 From: *Alice in Wonderland*

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Orange River Trip



The coming week is a very exciting week for our Year 10s. They will be leaving on the annual Year 10 field trip to the Orange River. Teachers accompanying the students will be Ms. Heike Rubbert, Mr. Riegardt Smit and Mr. Tom Jackson-Reed. The start of the IGCSE course often is a big challenge for young people. WIS further normally admits quite a few new students in Year 10. For this reason, the Orange River trip is a great opportunity for the Year 10 classes to bond as a group. The goals for the trip are as follows:

- learn through the Wilderness experience.**
- promote teamwork and collective decision-making, team cooperation, problem solving skills, supportive group skills and interpersonal skills.**
- create a sense of ownership in the protection of our natural environment.**
- challenge themselves beyond their perceived physical limits.**
- gain experience and confidence camping and outdoor living.**
- find a deeper appreciation of nature and all it has to offer.**

Students will camp under the stars, travel in kayaks, and experience different outdoor activities that they will remember for the rest of their lives.

We look forward to hearing from them, once they are back and rested after this week-long adventure.

Staffing News

We welcome Mrs. Urte Dörgeloh as Middle School Science and Mathematics teacher. Mrs. Dörgeloh will be at WIS as of Monday 28th September and will officially start teaching on the 1st of October. We wish her a great start here at WIS and hope that she will be happy and enjoy her time here in our community.

Immunizing your child

When a student is enrolled at WIS, parents and guardians are asked to complete a Medical History Form in order for us to have important information relevant to your child's health and well-being. A section of the form asks parents to provide an immunization record. To date WIS has not made proof of immunization a condition of enrolment. We do however strongly urge parents to immunize their children in order to reduce the incidence of the spread of infectious diseases that can put those around us at risk. We appreciate it when parents attach a copy of proof of their child's immunization record to the Medical History Form and would again urge all parents to do so.

I am including the Namibian Ministry of Health & Social Services current schedule. Even if you're not from Namibia, your schedule is bound to look very similar. We accept that for some, controversy and fears for the safety of the child with some vaccines, surrounds the issue of vaccinations, especially since 1998 when a paper was published in The Lancet linking autism and vaccines. I have included an article which highlights events that followed in the wake of that article. Please note that in 2004 The Lancet released a statement refuting the original findings.

Namibian Immunization Schedule:

- **Newborn: Polio, BCG (TB)**
- **6 weeks: Hep B, Hib, Polio, DTP, PCV, RV**
- **10 weeks: Hep B, Hib, Polio, DTP, PCV**
- **14 weeks: Hib, Polio, DTP, PCV, RV**
- **9 months: Hep B, Measles**
- **12 months: Chicken pox, Hep A**
- **15 months: Polio, Hib, DTP, MMR, PCV**
- **18 months: Hep A**
- **5 years: Polio, DT, MMR**
- **10 years: Polio, DT**

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At the same time I would like to thank Mr. Augustinus Ngombe for being available in the Science classes until the end of September. He will be starting a music project with a choir, for which we wish him success.

Mr. Tom Jackson-Reed will be fully occupied in the PE department. He will be taking the KG classes for motoric development lessons. He further has already expressed fantastic ideas for the development of our sports programme and we look forward to seeing these realised.

As of 19th of October, we welcome an intern from Germany as well. Agnes van der Decken will be volunteering in History and German in Secondary School. She has completed her Masters in Education at the University of Hamburg in September 2015 and is looking forward to being part of our team for a term.

With the changes in staffing, the timetable for Secondary School will change slightly. Students will be informed about the changes on Friday and the timetable will be posted on the D6 on Friday. The new timetable will come into operation on Monday 28th September.

Kind regards,
Maggie Reiff

IGCSE: YEARS 10 - 11

The IGCSE course precedes the two-year IB (International Baccalaureate) Diploma Programme, widely accepted as an excellent qualification to gain access to leading international universities. Like the IBDP, IGCSE students take a number of academic courses concurrently over two years culminating in externally-assessed exams at the end of Year 11. Students need a C average for their IGCSE results in order to join the IB programme at WIS.

Although it sounds like a two-year programme, in reality it is only between 16 and 18 months. During that time students also need to complete the work experience, which is explained to them the beginning of year 10. It is therefore a rigorous and challenging programme that prepares students ideally for the IBDP. Students in Year 11 write their Mock examinations in December/January. Those grades are very important since they are used as predicted grades and sent to Cambridge. Therefore the students should use the December holiday to prepare thoroughly for the Mock examinations. During March the final orals are recorded and final Art and ICT practical examinations take place. Towards the end of April the students go on study leave to start the final examinations beginning May.

Over the past five years (2011-2015) 130 students at WIS have taken IGCSE examinations in 17 subjects.

Immunizing your child continued>

Every two years the MH&SS visits WIS and offers immunizations for 5 and 10 year olds who are not up to date. It must also be said that this offer is not always reliable as stocks can be in short supply.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns. Any infectious disease that comes to my attention I will, as always, share with the WIS community.

Further reading:

[Click Here](#)

Sharon Gorelick

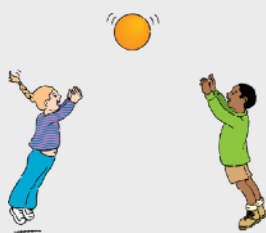
WIS Saturday Ball Club

Fun ball games involving throwing, catching and dodging to develop hand-eye coordination, teamwork, sportsmanship and enthusiasm for sports

Who: WIS Year 2 to Year 6 Students, led by Marc Deragon

Dates: Saturdays, October 17, 24, 31; November 7, 21, 28

Time: 10 am - 12 pm (just show up; no registration needed)



Location: WIS PE Hall

Fee: N\$100 per child, per day (due Saturdays upon arrival)

Contact: Please direct all questions to Marc mdragon@wis.edu.na

Results are graded on a scale from A to G with outstanding results being awarded an A*. Over five years 22.6% of our grades have been A or A* and 69.4% have been A* to C.

Please note that IGCSE letter grades such as A, B, C do not correspond in any way to the grading system familiar to parents from North America. In fact, there is a rough (but unofficial) correlation between IGCSE and IB grades with a C at IGCSE corresponding to a 4 at IB.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the IGCSE programme.

Sandra Keil

World Maths Day

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