

PARENT INFORMATION PORTAL Click here for more information

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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

Walt Whitman once wrote, "Now I know the secret of making the best persons; it is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth." I know of very few capital cities with such close proximity to nature, and this quote struck me anew when I took a few WIS students out to their horseback riding class at Hooves & Gardens this Thursday.

Whether presenting during assembly, performing on the stage, playing on a sports team, navigating rapids, caring for an animal, cleaning a beach, or leading a team in a challenge, an education at WIS is about more than mere academics. It is about finding an identity in the world which embraces change and challenge - and a willingness to make one's mark!

We are all looking forward to this evening's Middle School Play. As Ms Kate Matzopoulos shared earlier this week, our theatre productions will return to the WIS stage with Perstephanie Goes Underground. Tickets will be available at the door and the start time is 19:00, and the play runs 30 minutes. It will be great for the whole family.

It is also great to see that so many of our sports teams are experiencing such an increase in involvement and an increase in success (and also some heartbreakingly close losses!) in recent fixtures. The Liquifruit Football League is once again hosted at WIS this Friday, and our netball and basketball teams have been coming together in an excellent display of personal and team growth. If your child would be interested in joining a team either later this semester or at

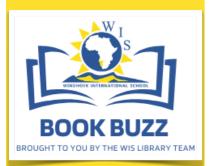


the start of next semester, then please feel free to contact our Head of Sports and Enrichment at <u>ifourie@wis.edu.na</u>

We presently have many Grade 10 and Grade 9 students away on field trips to the Orange River and to Team-Building Activities in and around Swakopmund. I look forward to hearing their stories!

Sincerely, Ethan Van Drunen

WIS BOOK BUZZ



Our library has gotten some really cool books this year! We want to share why we love these newer titles and why you should check them out! So first up, we have the "My Weird School Series."

My Weird School is a series of humorous chapter books written by Dan Gutman and illustrated by Jim Paillot. The series takes place in a school whose teachers display bizarre traits, with each title focusing on a specific teacher. The main character, A.J., is a boy who dislikes school. His rival is a girl named Andrea, who loves school.

Here are some of the book titles that you'll see from the series within our library:

- Mrs. Patty is Batty
- Dr. Carbles is Losing his Marbles
- Miss Holly is Too Jolly
- Mr. Docker is off His Rocker

Next we've added The #1 New York Best-Selling Series Who Was? to our collection. Who Was? is a series of non-fiction books that has over 250 entrants. These illustrated biographies feature significant historical figures, including artists, scientists, and world leaders. Some of our favourites include:

- Who Was Albert Einstein?
- Who Was Harriet Tubman?
- Who Was Walt Disney?
- Who Was Selena?

We can't wait until you check out our other favourite series like Hank Zipzer, the Fly Guy and the Zack Files. If you have some book series suggestions, please email us at <u>jwashington@wis.edu.na</u> and <u>mneftali@wis.edu.na</u>

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

A recent parent conversation has inspired me to start a 'you asked... we answer' feature in the Oryx. There are many initiatives happening at our school that feed into our policies. The Oryx article is a great opportunity to document the things that are happening and take a closer look at what we are doing. I would like to encourage parents if they have any questions about education in general or how we do things at WIS that you would like explored, please write directly to mvanleenen@wis.edu.na. Or even better, please drop in!

You asked ..

How does the WIS anti-bullying policy translate into practice?

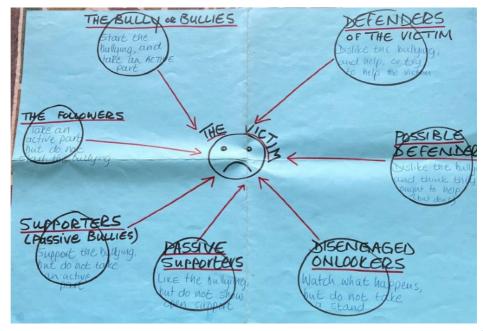
The definition we use for bullying at WIS is:

Bullying can be defined as persistent, intentional behaviour by an individual or group of individuals which unfairly and unjustly causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

As a school we work on preventative as well as intervention strategies.

Preventative strategies

- During circle time, teachers choose from a variety of community building activities, such as morning peace meetings in which highs and lows are discussed, encouraging learners to share what they are struggling with and how we can all help to make it better. Teachers read books, and watch videos on how to deal with conflict and big feelings.
- If the teacher is concerned about a negative dynamic developing in class, an activity is planned together with the counsellor. Some resources that are used are Make Kindness the Norm, One Kind Word, and The Bullying Circle exercise is used to help students understand the various roles learners may play in a bullying situation. The situation may be looked at as a whole school and brought to assembly. Another strategy we may use is for students to develop action themselves. Last year our Grade 5 students took action by creating the video 'Be an Usptander'.



21 October 2022

High Five







At the start of the year, all classes co-construct Essential Agreements. These
agreements are rules, norms and routines that are used to maintain an
atmosphere conducive to teaching and learning. These are revisited throughout
the year as situations arise and are the class compass for addressing and
holding each other accountable for behaviour.



My journey at WIS began back in September 2012, which was also the time when I first moved to Namibia with my family.

Moving to a new country is typically challenging in the beginning. I had to leave most of my family members and friends behind, adjust to a new culture, go to a new school, and make new friends.

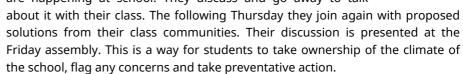
Attending WIS from the onset made this adjustment process go by quite easily as I got to meet many international people who were also going through a similar experience.

My four year journey at WIS was one of the most transformative periods of my life till date. I graduated at WIS with the International Baccalaureate Diploma in 2016. Thereafter, I moved to Johannesburg and did my bachelor studies majoring in Economics and Management at Monash South Africa.

The weekly IB essay assignments at WIS paid off during this period as I had to write many many essays in university.

Continues on the next page ...

- Persistent behaviour or social concerns are brought to our weekly child study meetings that take place with teachers, our counsellor, the principal and our learning enrichment team. When we discuss strategies for supporting children with challenging behaviour or those who have been affected, we also talk about the whole-school systems that support children in general and the culture of the school. We consider what we are already doing, whether it's working and what new things we could be doing that have the potential to be more effective. In the paragraph below you can read about new initiatives that have resulted from these meetings.
- All children at WIS are introduced to <u>High Five</u> Response to conflict resolution. This method is used on the playground when conflicts arise.
- Every Thursday, a selected group of children join the Knights of the Round Table (previously the Lunch Club) with the principal and the counsellor during lunch. Children bring a plate to share and explore social issues (conflict, kindness, relationships) that are happening at school. They discuss and go away to talk



Intervention strategies

Currently our anti-bullying policy is being updated. Any bullying that is reported is fully investigated and throughout the procedure the safety of all students is paramount. The type of bullying is established according to the definition of bullying. The counsellor, teacher and students involved meet to resolve the situation through restorative conversations. Parents are updated and involved as needed. Anti-bullying activities are planned for the class in general e.g. The High 5 Five Response, The Bullying Circle, One Kind Word, Make Kindness the Norm and

I graduated in 2020, around the same time the Covid pandemic hit. It proved quite challenging to find a full-time graduate role when the whole world was in lock-down.

I spent a lot of time reflecting and realised the next step for me would be to pursue further education. I applied and began my masters studies in the Netherlands in 2021. My field of interest was management and I undertook my masters at the Maastricht School of Management at the University of Maastricht.

I recently graduated with a masters degree and have now started my full time job in Amsterdam as a Junior Consultant at an IT consulting firm specialising in pricing for retailers and brands.

I am looking forward to visiting Namibia again in the near future to reconnect with old friends and teachers.

I have fond and hilarious memories of my time at WIS and can strongly testify that WIS lives up to its mission which is "to develop the full potential of each student in a stimulating environment of academic excellence, cultural diversity and active social responsibility to become internationally-minded independent thinkers."

I am a proud WIS-kid and my number one advice to any student right now would be to hang in there! It gets better! Anti Bullying Assemblies. The counsellor will establish whether the victim and/or the bully would benefit from further counselling, and in consultation with the parents, a referral might be made. The school will work with the outside counsellor to ensure we provide continued support for both student parties at school. Monitoring the relationship between bully and victim is on-going.

New initiatives

Student Playground monitors

Playground Monitors will be coached by a teacher to go out and support younger children. Playground monitors reinforce students for appropriate behaviour using the High Five response, and provide structure when needed by teaching students rules to games and organising activities.

Pink T-shirt Day

During our last assembly, the student council launched Pink T-shirt Day. The first Pink T-shirt Day will take place on the 3rd of November, coinciding with International Anti-bullying Day.

Pink Shirt Day

A few years ago there was an incident of bullying at WIS, that involved a young boy and a pink shirt.

Sadly he was teased and taunted all day for his choice of shirt colour.

This prompted an idea from the other students. It was decided that every term we will have one day that the whole school will wear a pink shirt. We have decided to reimplement this tradition. This will be a symbol of how united we are against bullying, all standing together to care for eachother.

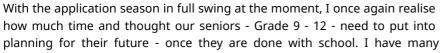


Warm regards, Marcelle van Leenen

Grade 5 recess area upgrade Save the date! Saturday Grade 5 students helping with the October 29 fundraising by selling drinks and waffles 10 am to 1 pm Parents who own a chainsaw! What we need: We need your help! climb & chill • Tree trunks area Wooden poles What we want to do: • Wooden slats for teepee covering • Colors to paint stones • build wooden teepees Wood sealer • build a huge hammock • Flat stones for stone garden · design a rock garden Succulents and bigger spekbooms • create a tree trunk mikado Your help on the 29th of October!

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Planning and preparing for post-secondary education - it's a long and intense process and needs early and dedicated time invested and conversations about it ...





conversations each day with students and parents and see how difficult and intense the process is. There are, however, many avenues and opportunities to utilise in the process of finding "your best fit".

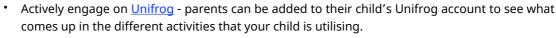
The key here is that students need to start the process early. In Grade 9 already, students should have conversations with their parents, their teachers, their peers as well as me (I am the university guidance counsellor at WIS) about their thoughts for the future. In Grade 10, students need to decide what happens after Grade 10. They need to decide whether they want to do the IB Diploma or possibly IB Courses and work towards a High School Diploma. They need to know that, in order to be able to manage in the IB Diploma, they need to have the right mindset, the right support and the right academic progress that will enable them to work optimally in the IB Diploma. Currently we require a C-average for students to enter the IB Diploma and we recommend that students have a B or higher in IGCSE for the subjects that they want to take on Higher Level in the IB Diploma. This needs to be clear early in high school already and together - student/parents/school - we need to find the best way to support and achieve.

In Namibia, we are quite isolated when it comes to visits from universities and opportunities to visit universities abroad. We have therefore benefited greatly from opportunities of virtual university fairs and visits. It is critical that students make use of these opportunities to get familiar with different university environments and entry requirements and how this fits their profile as a learner and as a person with their aspirations and plans for the future. I am adding a list of events at the bottom for parent and student consideration.

The most important step to take with regard to planning for further education is to do the research. Conversations with parents and teachers and the university counsellor are one aspect that cannot be underestimated. Talking about your thoughts and plans with others can help direct your planning and make your plans more concrete. Having conversations at home is essential. Parents need to be part of this process. They will need to support their child financially during their studies. They should, however, also encourage intensive research and planning at home or during holidays - for example through Unifrog and university fairs.

Here are the current resources available for students and parents with regard to our approach to post-secondary support:

- Meet with Ms. Reiff as often as needed to discuss plans and questions that come up in the process (my email address is mreiff@wis.edu.na).
 - Use the different options available to indicate your interest in different places and for different fields of study: University information sheet, Alumni sheet.



- In Grade 12: Get onto <u>Concourse</u> for universities to be made aware of your profile. Universities will get in touch with you and offer you a place at their institution, often with scholarships connected to that offer.
- We are currently also in conversation with <u>Youth For Understanding</u> South Africa for possible language exchanges to Germany, France and South America or other exchange programmes.
 If you would like further information about this, please also feel free to get in touch with me.







Upcoming Events

- University of Waterloo presentation (only if there is interest, please indicate to Ms. Reiff) 25 or 26 October please refer to Ms. Reiff's email in this regard and let Ms. Reiff know if you are interested in joining.
- Virtually Orange Dutch university fair 30 October 13:00 17:00
- * The Student World International University Fair 10 November 15:00 18:30
- Study in France (English courses offered at universities in France) Parent coffee morning, 17 November & for interested High School students during homeroom on 18 November.

Please be in touch with any questions or suggestions to help improve our university guidance efforts at WIS.

Regards, Maggie Reiff

Gr. 7 Columbus Stories

The day the world changeD - Suhaimi Jantjies Gr. 7RS

In 1492, the Columbian exchange happened, and in 1526 was when the world changed for the worse. I, a crew member of Christopher Columbus, witnessed it from up close. In my own eyes, it was the most tragic in human history.

The most tragic part was in 1526, when the Atlantic slave trade started, just a few years after we had found the Americas. At first, I thought this would be a pleasant experience, making alliances with the population in the Americas, but Columbus had a different idea.

We had brought goods like horses, sugar, and plants but we had brought the disease with us too. I had tried to distance myself from the population but Columbus made me get close, he made all of his crew get close. That's when the population occupying the space started dying of the diseases we had given them. I tried to tell Columbus but he said if I don't follow his orders, I would end up like them.

Columbus had soon taken their stuff and taken them back to Europe (the Old World). Later, he didn't just take plants, he started taking people and made them slaves in their own land. Columbus would do unspeakable things that the natives would not like. I was shocked beyond my mind, but I knew I could not do much. After that, he thought it was a good idea to enslave the Africans since we had more strength and power over them.



So my crew and I, including Columbus, had set sail on our way to Africa and when we got there, the Africans had been traded with some of the natives on our ship, and it was not a good idea. There was barely any air space for the Africans to breathe on the ship, and some of them started to die on their way back to America. I felt so ashamed that I and my crew did nothing to help.

When we got back, the Africans were forced to grow crops for the Old World, and those who resisted were either beaten severely or killed on the spot. While this was all happening, I wondered, what if we had just become allies and we had cooperated with each other to get what we both wanted, nobody had to die, food would have basically unlimited and everyone would have been connected through trade routes without fighting.

That was a terrifying experience, but at least I have gotten to see what life was like outside of Europe, something others in Europe can never get a chance to experience, but not under the wing of Christopher Columbus.

It's been 10 years since I retired from Columbus's crew, after that horrific experience I could not let myself be a part of that anymore. May God bless me and forgive me for partaking, and doing nothing to help those people. May They Rest In Peace.

Travel To History: The Columbian Exchange - Tatana Verchusa Gr. 7RS

On the twelfth of October, it was raining which meant I could not play outside. So I decided to explore my attic, and after a while, I found an old thick book. When I opened it, my world suddenly turned upside down. I found myself on a wet wooden floor. I stood up and looked around to find out why everything was swimming. I realised I was on a ship surrounded by men, women, and children all dressed in dirty wet rags. At the deck stood a man commanding the crew, whom I assumed would be the captain.



Suddenly, everyone started pointing and shouting "Captain! Captain Columbus, there is land ahead of us!". I turned my head in the direction

that everyone was looking. In the distance, I saw green mountains. Our ship headed straight toward the island. Then it hit me. I am on the boat, Santa Maria of the explorer Christopher Columbus!

We anchored at the bay and were ordered to explore the island. Two girls and I followed the river, the path leading us through a tropical rainforest, deeper in the jungle. Soon we were hungry. While my friends started to panic about what we would eat, I realised that we could just pick up delicious guavas, tomatoes, avocados, and papayas growing next to the path. Refreshed by the healthy snack, we continued walking. After half an hour we entered a small village surrounded by fields of potatoes, corn, beans, cocoa beans, cotton, pumpkins, and even tobacco plants. Natives were afraid of us at first, but soon became very friendly when they learned that we would not do any harm to them. We offered to show the village to Captain Columbus the next day. He agreed and ordered to saddle horses and to fill the bags with seeds of sugarcane, coffee, rice, and bananas to exchange them for the exotic plants we have seen in the village. The horses caused a big excitement among the native Americans. After the first hesitation, they finally agreed to exchange their food, plants, and animals for seeds of European plants and mainly for the horses. At that moment, I realised that this is where the chain of trade and exchange between the Old and New World started.

After our return to the ship, we were commanded to take the baskets, filled to the top with exotic seeds and plants, back to our ship. We were told that they would be brought to Europe for the Spanish Queen, Isabella to try. The news about fertile land and friendly natives spread among the passengers of the ship and a few families decided to settle on the newly discovered island. While they moved their belongings, as well as a few goats and pigs from the ship, Captain Columbus rolled out a Spanish flag and poked it into the ground in the bay saying, "This magic land is now claimed to belong to the Spanish Queen and King". With this said, everybody bowed and my world turned upside down once again.

To my surprise, this time I appeared to be one of many servants standing in a long fancy old fashioned hall. Everybody around me spoke Spanish. Queen Isabella I. was sitting on a golden throne and in front of her stood an old man who looked familiar to me. Only after a while, I realised that the hunched man with white hair was Christopher Columbus! He seemed a lot older. He stood in front of the Queen reading a letter aloud.

The letter said: "Your Majesty, Queen Isabella, let me humbly inform you about news from your new land. We established fifty new Catholic missions since the beginning of the year. Your subjects colonised new territories and settled there with their families. Native Americans attacked some of our settlements, but thousands of them die every month anyway. They die most often from smallpox, measles, and influenza. Natives probably caught diseases from us and their bodies are too weak to fight these illnesses. According to my calculations, maybe only one-tenth of natives might survive."

After Captain Columbus finished reading the letter, the Queen said: "It is not only us who brought them diseases, but they have spread dangerous little bugs, called sand fleas, that were found on all our ships which sailed to the New World."

Columbus agreed with her statement but still asked a question: "Does your majesty still think that it was a good idea to start a trade between our Old World and the New World? We have infected and killed many native Americans that did not deserve to die".

The Queen stood up and started marching around the hall. After a couple of minutes she stated," After all, I think it was a good move. We brought native Americans new food and animal supplies, as well as they, gave us food and animals that we did not know of. Yes. I understand that we may have accidentally killed a lot of native Americans but maybe they'll be able to build a resistance to diseases that may come back in the future. After all, it was God's will for us to conquer and rule the Americas. If we had not discovered the New World then it would be the English, Chinese or Dutch who would have the fame of discovering a new land."

Suddenly, my feet left the ground for the last time and I landed back in the attic with the book in my hand as before. I was really happy that I learned that much about the Columbian exchange. Now that I think about it, I believe the statement of the Spanish Queen that the interchange with the Americas is a good thing, because of the new trade. I disagree with one thing the Queen has said, which is that it was God's will for the Americans to die even though it was all because of the disease spread. I do understand that almost 90% of the Americans died because of the Spanish but if you think about it, there were more good things traded, found, and discovered than bad things.

The Social Studies Exchange - By Jane Amaambo Gr. 7ME

Dear Diary: Today is April 1st, and in Social Studies class, our teacher dared us to share whether or not we thought the Columbian exchange was beneficial or terrible. I was just enjoying my day when he pulled the worst practical joke he had ever pulled on us.

What the heck is the Columbian Exchange, I wondered as I typed on my document. Is it a rollercoaster or a particular style of French cuisine, but why would we study a rollercoaster in Social Studies? Regardless, the enormous brain, The Columbian Exchange, according to Wikipedia, is the method by which animals were transported from Europe, Asia, and Africa to the Americas and vice versa. "It all started when sea shipping brought the Western and Eastern hemispheres into contact in the 15th century," as if I even understand what that statement means.



OooOo, who is this hot chunk in a sailing hat, Christopher Columbus, he even has a cool name too! I'm guessing this is the dude who introduced riches to the Old World, unlike the diseases and Tobacco. I don't really agree with that, but good job Christo. You encouraged the entry of New World goods. The only thing I can do for this world exists and people get to count me as a part of their population.

Now, let's get to the real point of this "dare" right away. This dialogue provides many valuable insights into modern-day life, including details on resources in Africa and possible treatments for those hideous diseases, if they actually exist.

The New World was infected by illnesses, horses, and sugarcane thanks to Christopher Columbus. I agree that the that the doubt of the spread of disease where the local population had no resistance, but without this massive interchange of people, Europe would be much poorer in food crops, Europe and Africa would not exist, and corn and maize wouldn't be available to Europe and Africa. I can't believe that Africa wouldn't exist!

"The African population has skyrocketed by millions but without a strong government and only tribes." This evidence shows how the exchange affected the African people.

Basically, what I'm trying to say is I think this "trade" was a positive thing that affected our lives now because of most of the reasons I stated. This is Quandale signing off from his dairy, see y'all on the next page.

Perstephanie goes underground

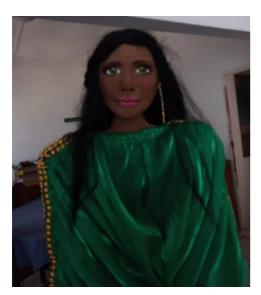
Behind the scenes

WIS's personal philosophy is making sure every kid can express themselves in a range of different forms, including the art of theatre. That being said, we are ecstatic to announce that the middle school production 'Perstephanie goes underground' will be showcased this Friday at the WIS auditorium.

'Perstephanie Goes Underground' is a re-telling of the famous Greek mythology of Persephanie with a modern teen vibe twist to it. The story illustrates a young daughter, Perstephanie, who does not really listen to her mother, and gets tricked to work in the underworld. However, people in the underworld aren't too happy with this sudden change so they attempt to send her back. But when Perstephanies own mother won't take her back, she soon realises that she might be stuck in the underworld forever.

Perstephanie Goes Underground is a royalty-free play written by Elizabeth Rapoza. It is part of a fantastic collection of plays for children and teens on Drama Notebook https://www.dramanotebook.com/plays-for-kids/ (link to website with script)

When asked about the preparation and progression of the production, WIS drama teacher and director of the play, Ms. Kate Matzopoulos glowing with pride stated how, "The process was so much fun. It definitely stretched our creative thinking skills as we did not have enough cast members to fill all the required roles. We ended up with one of our characters being played by a life-sized puppet!"



(life-sized puppet for the play)

Rehearsals consisted of many costume ideas, stage directions and changing of the set. Actor Bilal (Grade eight) mentioned that it was interesting to try the different costumes on and see which works best for each character. He also included that the costumes had to fit well with the set and story line. Learning about the different characters and ideas from everyone was truly fascinating, he added.

Several actors from the actual play have reported that it was a glamorous experience to be a part of such a wonderful production, although many have stated that they felt challenged to memorise their lines, but they prospered through it and are more prepared than ever to showcase it. The cast is enthusiastic to present their talents, Carolyn, an enthusiastic grade seven drama student, stated that when she first heard about the play she jumped at the idea of being on stage. Meanwhile, Zac said that he was inspired by actor Ryan Reynolds, the idea of being able to express emotion through an act made Zac want to be the next Ryan Reynolds.

"My initial thought was that the play would be challenging due to memorising the lines but it turns out that the rehearsals were the highlight of my day," says Zoe another budding artiste. Endi concurs, "It takes time to learn lines. Sometimes if people were absent they couldn't know their scenes, but it just allowed us to work harder towards the opening show." Laith cannot wait for Friday evening - "I'm so excited and ready to perform."

'Persephenie Goes Underground' is a Middle School production filled with laughter and joy. The cast worked long and hard to bring this script to life, so come and watch the play this Friday!!!

Maedot Abeje, Grade 10









WE REED YOUR

Trash

IN ART LESSONS WE LOVE TO CREATE ART PIECES FROM RECYCLED MATERIALS.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR CARDBOARD BOXES, YOGHURT CUPS, PLASTIC BOTTLES, SHOE BOXES, KITCHEN ROLLS, NEWS PAPERS, MAGAZINES, OLD SOCKS, PLASTIC TOYS AND MORE.

PLEASE BRING THESE ITEMS TO THE PYP ART ROOM.



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