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# THE ORYX

*The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School*

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

### Development developments

Yesterday we formally handed over the new car park security project to the contractors. Work can now start and we have a proposed completion date in August.

When work is complete, we will have much improved security at the Main Gate (the entrance) and the West Gate (exit).

New car windscreen numbers for 2020-2021 will be available in June. It will be a requirement that all cars allowed onto school premises must have a valid number in their windscreen. And with the new security arrangements we will now be able to enforce this without exception.

With luck, the most disruptive phase of the work will take place in July when the school is more or less closed. In any case, we will give everyone as much notice as we can when normal access to the school is compromised.

### Grade 11

On Wednesday of next week, we will welcome back to school our Grade 11 students. Careful and appropriate measures will be in place to ensure the safety of everyone involved. In fact, the coming two weeks will be a very useful opportunity to try out our precautions ahead of the much larger number of learners that we expect (and hope!) to have on campus from August.

### Yearbook

Ordinarily, we would finish the Yearbook in late April / early May and have it printed in June. But with the lockdown disrupting everything, we have decided to publish an electronic yearbook for 2019-2020. It will be made available to all families at the end of the school year.

... which is just three (3) weeks away!

**Peter MacKenzie**

## PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

One of the wonderful aspects about an international school such as WIS, is the diversity and the variety of nationalities represented in the school. The flip side of this is that many students are only part of the school community for a short time. With the end of the school year just three weeks away, many Primary students are aware that they or their friends will be leaving WIS to either go to another school in Windhoek (or elsewhere in Namibia), or to move to a new school in a new country (or return to their home country). Transition is important to acknowledge, particularly in this time of remote learning, not only for those who are leaving, but also for those

who are staying.

Even though the children are not physically at school now, we are supporting leaving students in the following ways:

- The homeroom teacher and class making a goodbye book of messages, including messages from the children's various teachers during their time at WIS
- Ms. Sharon scheduling a Zoom or Google Meet meeting with the children to talk about their thoughts and feelings about leaving, what they are looking forward to in their new school, as well as to suggest some strategies they have for making new friends
- During a remote learning assembly, recognising the children who are leaving and "whooshing" them well.

The following are just a few ways that parents might help children with this transition:

- Have your child make a special memory book of photos of friends and the things they like to do together.
- If possible, plan some special playdates or get-togethers with friends and be sure to take photos to be added to the memory book. If you are moving to a new country, include in the book special places in Namibia that your child has enjoyed.
- Encourage your child that with email, Skype, FaceTime, Facebook, etc. it will be possible to keep in touch with his/her friends. The various addresses of the friends can be added to the special book.

Discuss the upcoming transition with your child by asking questions such as:

- ◆ What are you going to miss about your friends?
- ◆ What have you enjoyed about your friendship?
- ◆ What have you enjoyed about WIS? What are you looking forward to about your next school?
- Have a worry/question box or jar where your child can write, or draw a picture of what's on his/her mind. Take out one question each day and talk about it as a family.
- Keep in mind that it takes six months to a year to settle into a new place.

It is important to acknowledge your child's feelings of excitement, concern, fear, anxiety and sadness, as well as for your child to understand that these feelings are normal. It is also important to be positive and encourage your child that new friendships will be made and new schools bring new opportunities.

While these are just a few of the many ideas to help children cope with transition, I think these are some of the key ideas which I hope you find useful.

If your child will be leaving WIS, (and you haven't already done so) please be sure to complete the withdrawal form, and inform Ms. Catherine (Reception), Ms. Carol (Admissions) and the Homeroom teacher as soon as possible so that we can be sure to support your child in the transition process.

Here's the link to this week's assembly: [Primary School Assembly 29 May](#).

Regards,  
Beth Smith

**[Grade 5 2020 PYP Exhibition Launched!](#)**

**Zero Waste Store**

Wednesday, 20 May 2020



Today Neil and I had the opportunity to volunteer at the Zero Waste Store. We are exploring the environment and the impact that humans have on the environment as part of our exhibition. By volunteering at the Zero Waste store we learned how we can lessen our impact on the environment by using less plastic and by reusing items such as cloth bags and glass jars. We learned that our addiction to plastic not only impacts the environment negatively but our health too, because we eat and drink as much as one credit card worth of plastic in a week. The plastic decomposes and turns into micro plastics that we can't see and that ends up in all our food. It is up to our generation to make a change. I will be trying to make a change by volunteering more often at the Zero Waste store, by using fewer plastics and up-cycling materials to make new products. I'd like to thank Ms. Debbie for helping us with this action part of our exhibition. It wouldn't have been so successful, fun and such a great learning opportunity without her. See our Action video [here](#).

**Bilal Beyhum, Grade 5K.**

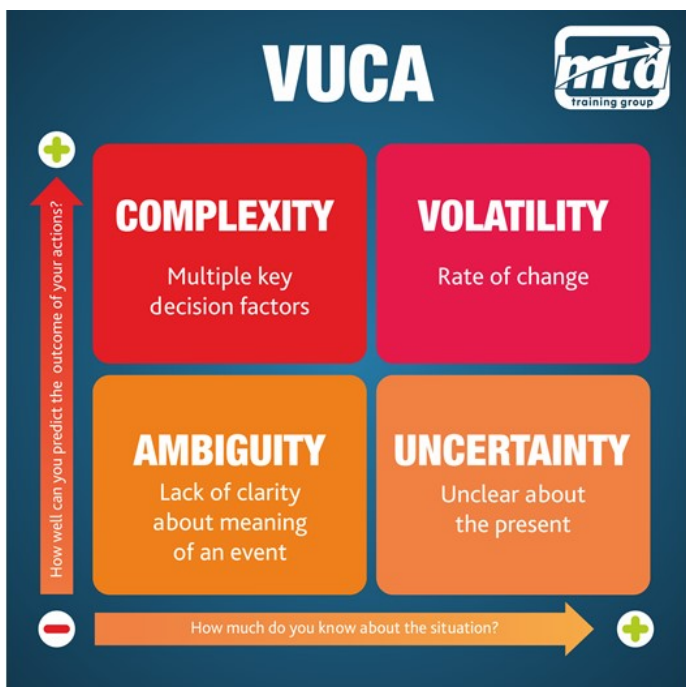


## SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

### **Perseverance and determination - motivational factors that are priceless**

In the past three months we have been thrown into the deep end with our approach to teaching and learning. And we are nearing the end of this academic year still without a clear idea what will come and what will be when we return to school.

At this point, I want to commend our community - students, parents, teachers and administration staff for their perseverance and determination to succeed in continuing to grow and develop without having a clear "recipe"



for this. We have been able to move ahead and make progress in areas we would have not imagined we have to endeavour into some months ago. This situation shows that we at WIS have the right approach towards times of uncertainty and unknown situations. The VUCA term I wrote about some months ago, is so well fitted to this current situation. Times are **volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous**, and we have managed to steer our WIS ship through these last few months of VUCA times.

Now there are only two and a half weeks of school left in this academic year. All of us are exhausted and have been challenged to more than the fair share of what we normally would regard as the right amount of challenge.

I wish us all a little more determination, perseverance and patience to get through these last days and then enjoy a well deserved rest.

Our Grade 11 learners will return to school on Wednesday and we will use the last two weeks to consolidate and reflect, to review and prepare so that we can support them to move into their final year of high school confidently and with the right mindset - a growth mindset - that will enable them to embrace the challenges and take this on as an opportunity to learn and grow.

*“Keep on going and the chances are you will stumble on something, perhaps when you are least expecting it. I have never heard of anyone stumbling on something sitting down.”* (Charles Kettering)

Regards,  
Maggie Reiff

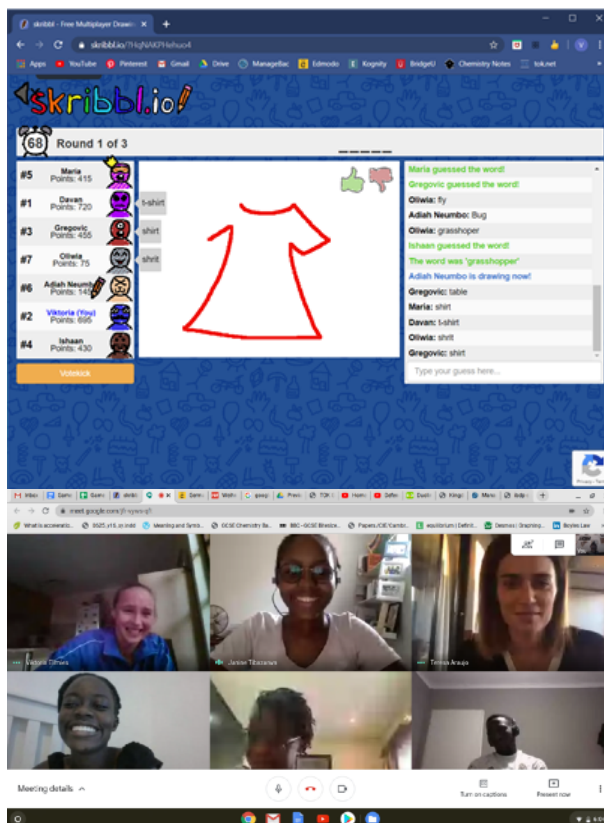
## Secondary Game Night

On Wednesday, 20 May the Student Council hosted an online game called *Skribbl.io* for Secondary students. It is essentially an online version of Pictionary. Our goal was to create an opportunity for students to interact with one another in an environment other than Remote Learning Meets.

In the end, twenty students joined in. The first and second place winners of each game will be competing today for the title of Ultimate Skribbl.io Champion!

We want to thank Ms. Rimmington, Ms. Reiff, Mrs. Araújo and Mrs. Vieira who made this night possible by volunteering to supervise in order to ensure online safety for all students.

**The Senior Student Council**





# WIS Birthday Gala Dinner

# 30

5 December 2020

19:30 for 20:00

RSVP by 27 November 2020

Business Casual

ADULTS ONLY - N\$500.00PP

Buffet Dinner

Cash Bar

All proceeds will go to the development of the new sports courts.

