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Dates to Remember

January 2017

- **16:** Secondary - Week A
- **23:** Secondary Week B
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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Why WIS?

Children came back to school on Monday but on Friday all teachers came in to prepare and to reflect a little on what we do and why.

We thought we would start with a question. "If someone asked why they should send their children to WIS, what would you say?"

I wanted to go beyond the obvious. "We're an international school." (So what?) "We're an IB School." (So what?) What followed was a lively and rather uplifting conversation.

One teacher, himself a parent of a child in the school, said, "My child values and looks at everybody the same. WIS teaches and helps children develop for where the world is heading: teamwork, respect, thinking processes, working together as a team, having conversations - the "soft skills". WIS kids can relate to different cultures."

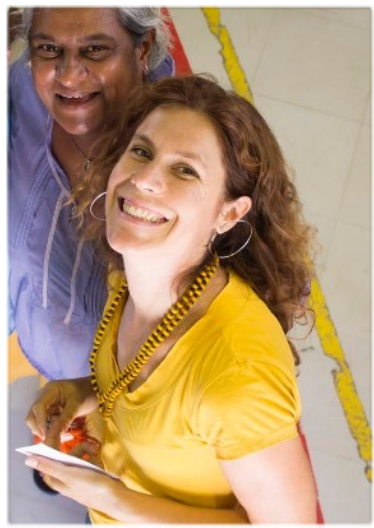
Similar thoughts were expressed by several teachers. "We teach students how to think, not what to think." "We are a school where everyone is welcome." "At WIS discipline is intrinsic, not extrinsic."

The word "unique" was used more than once and there is definitely a feeling among the staff that what we do here and who we are is a bit different, a bit special. But what was unmistakable was the pride these teachers feel in the school.

What a good way to start the New Year!

With best wishes

Peter MacKenzie



Teacher Feature

Catherine Mousseau Foreign Language French

I was born in a small village in the North-West of France, in the countryside, not far from Nantes. I spent my childhood outdoor: running, cycling, swimming exploring...

Back then, my passion for reading also started. When I was not busy outside, you could find me in a quiet place with a book or in the village's library. At university, I naturally chose to study library and information science. I graduated from the Paris X University of Nanterre with a Master in book professions.

For my last internship, I worked in the library of the Alliance Française in Guatemala City. This was an incredible experience and an eye opener: I had to travel more! Back in Paris I then applied for a job through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They offered me the position of librarian at the Franco Namibian Cultural Centre (FNCC) in Windhoek.

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PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Welcome back to school and to the new semester and a special welcome to our new families who have joined WIS this week. It's been great to see the children rested, refreshed and enthusiastic about being back at school.

This is the time of year that children seem to blossom in their confidence and many children seem to make significant growth in their progress. I've noticed that many of the children have had a growth spurt during the holidays.

I always use the new calendar year as a time to reflect on what's working, what can be done differently and to set new goals. Many of the children have been doing just that in their classes - reflecting on what they are doing well and what goals they have for the second semester. This would be a good opportunity to talk with your children about their goals and what they'd like to improve or achieve this semester.

These goals could include such things as being responsible for ensuring the book bag is packed and ready for school, taking ownership for homework and not being reminded to do it, being committed to participation in any after school activities for which your children have signed up, being a better friend or classmate, etc.

With many new students joining WIS this term, the new semester is also a good time to give a few friendly reminders:

- The Primary School day begins at 7:20 and ends at 13:30. If your child is arriving at school after 7:20, please sign him/her in at Reception. If you need to collect your child prior to the 13:30 dismissal, please sign them out at Reception and collect an exit slip from Ms Catherine, which then needs to be given to the classroom teacher. If your child is absent, please send an email to your child's teacher, as well as reception@wis.edu.na.
- Park only in the designated areas and not on the zebra crossings or outside of the outlined parking spaces.
- Be sure to read the classroom blog, the D-6 and of of course The Oryx. This will ensure that you keep up and are aware of what is happening at school.

I look forward to a successful second semester. I wish you all a positive, healthy, and happy 2017.

Regards,
Beth Smith

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Welcome back to a new year: 2017

We wish you all a happy New Year and hope that this year will be a good and prosperous one with a lot of joy, health and good fortune.

We have started the second semester with the Mock Examination in Years 11 and 13. This examination is a trial run and serves as preparation for the final examination that will take place in May/June. We wish our Year 11 and 13 students all the best for these exams.

Teacher Feature continued

The contract was originally for 1 year but 15 years later I am still in Namibia!

15 years filled with happiness! I met my partner, David, and gave birth to my two treasures: Salomé and Candice. After the FNCC library, I worked in the tourism industry for a few years and had the privilege to travel extensively around this amazing country.

In parallel, I started to study online to become a French teacher. For a while, I worked in the tourism during the day, giving French classes in the evening at the FNCC, until I was offered a full time position there. Few months later, I was appointed as a French teacher at WIS. I started teaching Primary and Secondary students but I am now only teaching in Secondary school (from year 7 to year 12).

I love teaching at WIS. I am surrounded with great colleagues (see picture attached) and amazing students. I love teaching because I love making connections with students. Teaching can be a really rewarding profession.

One needs to give a lot but we get so much in return. I love teaching because I love learning. Every day at school is an opportunity to learn more. And every day at school is a complete different experience.

You never know how your day will begin or end . . . which makes life so much more interesting!



This second semester is mainly focussing on external assessments done in Secondary School - there are the Cambridge Secondary 1

exams in April for Year 9 and the IGCSE and IBDP exams in May/June and then our internal exams for Years 7,8, 10 and 12 in June at the end of the semester. Although not all our efforts are dedicated to preparing our students for the examination, it is an important and crucial time of the year.

Our appeal to our parents is that you devote considerable time to supporting your child at home. Children should be sure to have a quiet place to work, they should follow a balanced diet and they should have the assurance that there are caregivers that “care” and help them out when needed; not only regarding their school work, but especially with the basic needs young people have: ***If these needs are fulfilled, our children should be able to maneuver their way through the challenges posed to them personally, physically, emotionally and socially.***



We trust that we can work together as a team in the best interest of the children in our care.

Regards,
Maggie Reiff

Digital Parenting



[Common Sense Media's](#) parenting editor Caroline Knorr wrote an interesting article with tips on how parents can start the new year with modeling good digital citizenship. While this is something we teach, promote and try to model at school, children look at their parents and learn from them everyday. The article is

titled [7 Media Resolutions Every Family Should Make in 2017](#) and is a must read! -

Danai Maramba

A letter from the PTA

Welcome back to School from the PTA.

Dear Parents, Teachers and Guardians.

It's wonderful that the children were looking forward to come back to school, and we as parents could not wait too. 😊

Thank you for taking the time to fill up the PTA survey.

For those who did not have the time to do so, please let us know how best can the PTA play an important role to the WIS community as large, by filling in the survey.



PTA Meeting

PTA Community Meeting on the Friday, 20 January at 5.30pm in the Auditorium.

The graphic features the text 'PTA Meeting' in white on a blue speech bubble, with other colorful speech bubbles in purple, green, and orange. Below the text is a row of colorful silhouettes of diverse people's heads.

We are looking forward to hearing from you.

The PTA Chair
Sandra Camilo -Giroud

