



THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Surveys

Thank you again to those who have completed the survey. We are up to about eighty replies. These will now be analysed and the results shared with parents at a meeting on **2nd October**. Please note the date.

Almost a hundred of our older students also completed a similar survey and a third has gone to all WIS staff.

Finally, we are asking embassies, NGOs, companies, and so on what they value about the school.

Some 200-300 voices will give us plenty to chew on as we look to the future.

Road Trips / Road Safety

This week Carol Heimstädt and I met with two representatives of Sunshine Tours of whom one was the General Manager. We reviewed the arrangements for the imminent Orange River trip and, indeed, all subsequent school outings by road.

We discussed in detail the policies and practices employed by Sunshine (of which you will see a summary elsewhere in The Oryx) and compared them with our own. You will be relieved (but, I hope, not surprised) to hear that they aligned very closely.

No-one is being complacent after the recent tragedy but if I did not have confidence in all parties, I would not be allowing the Orange River trip (or any other) to go ahead.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Peter MacKenzie

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Why do we have homework? Is homework worth it? Does homework really make a difference in a child's academic success? Is the homework model as we know it outdated? These are some questions that I believe are worth considering.

I recently read an article written by Alfie Kohn in which he questions why we should force kids to work what amounts to a second shift after getting home from a full day of school, particularly when there's no evidence that any kind of homework is beneficial for younger students. He also suggests that homework may be the greatest extinguisher of curiosity ever invented. (Education Week, September 3, 2019). I don't know that I've ever heard homework referred to as a positive experience. More often than not it creates tension or conflict especially when

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Dates to Remember

September 2019

- **16 - 18:** [School Photo Days](#)
- **19:** Inter schools Athletics
- **20:** Secondary Inter-house
- **21:** World Peace Day
- **21:** World Clean-up Day
- **22:** Gr. 9 Trip Depart
- **25:** Gr. 6 Trip Depart



VISIT US ON:



Facebook



Instagram

Sunshine SERVICE STATEMENT

THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ALL OUR
VEHICLES



PRE-DEPARTURE

- Vehicle Inspection
- Driver briefing
- Workshop service check
- Test Drive
- Aircon and PA test
- Tyre inspection
- Seat and safety belt inspection
- Driver performed vehicle inspection
- Alcohol Test

ON-ROUTE

- Speed limit 80km/hr
- Incident monitoring camera mounted on vehicle
- Preferred time to travel 07:30-18:30
- Daily vehicle checks performed by driver
- Oil and water checked when re-fuelling
- Dedicated stand-by contact for assistance from head office
- Dedicated 24hr breakdown support facilities
- Random and/or daily breathalyzer tests

POST-DEPARTURE

- Checking in of vehicle
- Defect reporting
- Vehicle equipment check
- Vehicle Inspection
- Fuel consumption report
- Trip history report
- Trip documentation processing

GOING THAT EXTRA MILE SINCE 2003



children remember just before bedtime that they have something due the next day, or they've forgotten the information they need at school. How many times do parents remind, nag, prod children to get their homework done?

Further to Mr Kohn's suggestion that children already put in a full day at school, many children then participate in a variety of after school activities, either at school or outside of school. They get home in time for dinner and then are expected to do homework when they are tired and haven't had any downtime. One of the Learner Profile attributes is *balanced*. So many adults don't have a

balance between work and play. Shouldn't we be encouraging our children at a young age to develop this attribute? This certainly would be a valuable skill to have in life.

Many might argue that the purpose of homework is to reinforce, practise or rehearse concepts and skills. How much are children focusing and taking in when they are tired at the end of the day? Are they just going through the motions? Would it not be better to encourage our children to explore their passions? It has also been said that homework encourages time management, organisation and responsibility. If children are constantly being reminded about doing homework, how is that helping children to develop these skills? I wonder if these same skills aren't acquired in other ways throughout the day.

It is important for children to have balance in their lives, to have time to pursue their passions, socialise and play, all of which are an equally important part of their learning. It's time to revisit the value of homework and have discussions to answer the questions asked at the beginning of this article.

**Regards,
Beth Smith**

Balanced Literacy @WIS

With so much happening and so much discussion going on around the adaption of ACARA I wanted to take a moment to discuss something PYP teachers have been doing at WIS for quite some time and that is applying the model of Balanced Literacy. Perhaps an easily identifiable name has never been given to it, but that is our Language instruction.

Balanced Literacy is a methodology that delivers English Language Arts instruction using a variety of modes. The name is somewhat self-explanatory. There is a balance in the way Reading, Writing, Word Study and Oral Language skills are structured, organised and taught throughout the week. This instruction is centred on the three elements of Assessment (As, Of and For Learning). The methodology loosely incorporates the idea of "I do" (teacher models), "we do" (students and teacher work together) and "you do" (students work independently of the teacher).

Interactive Read Aloud/Writing and Modelled Thinking/Writing are the methods used while the teacher models what the learner should be practising. These are the "I do's". During Shared Reading/Writing, Guided Reading/Writing, and small-group strategy lessons students and teachers work together to navigate or write a piece of text. These are the "we do's" of Balanced Literacy. Finally, Independent Reading/Writing are the "you do's" and during this time students will be working independently, with a partner or in small groups to practice the skills taught.

Throughout the day or week, your child is likely to encounter any or all of these methods of instruction. To visitors of a classroom, it may not seem like "reading" is taking place because students are on the carpet discussing the book their teacher is reading. This, however, is part of an interactive read aloud. Students are interacting with the text, not just passively receiving it. The same may be true during a shared writing activity. While the teacher typically does the writing, it is based on contributions from the students.

Students are developing their word skills (spelling and grammar) and oral speaking skills (speaking, listening, viewing and presenting) naturally throughout the day and even at targeted times of instruction. For instance, during writing periods, students will be expected to edit and revise their own writing. In this stage of the writing process, they are applying what they have learned in Word Study and through explicit grammar instruction.

Literacy is an integral part of the day. We use these skills all day, every day. Becoming literate does not occur in a vacuum and therefore instruction should not be isolated to "reading" or "writing" or "spelling periods" during the day. Lessons are integrated within the Unit of Inquiry or even maths lesson (when applicable). The next time you are in your child's room, see if you can identify what elements of balanced literacy you spot your child experiencing.

Lyndsay Bain - PYP Language Subject Leader

Atelier

Dear Parents and Caregivers of students that are learning French at WIS.

This is a message from the FNCC, we highly encourage our students to attend these workshops in order to have extra exposure to the French Language:

Dear Parents,

The next creative workshop in French will take place this Saturday, 14 September 2019 with "**Purple Rain: Make your own Jacaranda!**"

It will take place at the Franco Namibian Cultural Centre (FNCC), from 10:00 till 12:00 under the supervision of Ms Isabelle De Joannis De Verclos, french teacher.

Cost: N\$ 75/ child per workshop, payment on arrival.

In order to adapt the workshop to the age and number of participating children, thank you for letting us know in advance if your child will be participating. It is still possible to enrol last minute as well!

Please, feel free to contact us me directly should you have any questions, requests or suggestions: Madame Laetitia : lborryni@wis.edu.na Tel: 081 834 76 55

W.O.R.D.

Guess who is also reading during our scheduled reading lessons...



Ahoy there landlubbers!

Rehearsals have begun for the Upper Primary Production: Pirates versus Mermaids. We'll be making a splash at an auditorium near you!



SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

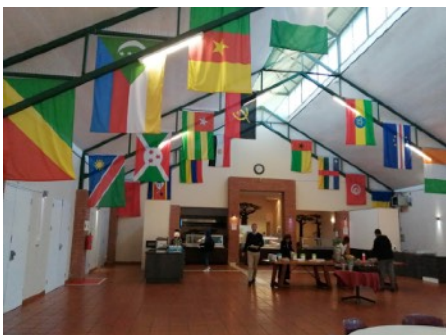
International Accreditation - the purpose and value

ACE Learning Principles

1. Learning Goals
2. Dimensions of Learning
3. Assessment for, of, and as Learning
4. Learning Perspectives
5. Learner Engagement and Autonomy
6. Research and Reflection on Learning
7. Inclusiveness of Learning
8. Governance and Leadership for Learning
9. Learning Space and Time
10. Learning Community



For the past week, I have been visiting the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg as a member of a team to conduct the External Accreditation visit for NEASC's ACE Protocol. Since WIS is at almost the same stage in our accreditation cycle, this is a very valuable experience and has given me a much better insight into the process and in the overall value of the accreditation.



ALA has students from across the African continent



African Leadership Academy campus

The ACE Accreditation protocol focuses on Teaching and Learning mostly and helps schools to review their practices and move forward to give students more voice, choice and autonomy in their learning. It focuses on the students and how we can make sure that we are aware of current pedagogical thinking and best practices in teaching and learning. In the end, it will result in the school being better in what they do and celebrating their learning.

Around 40 members of WIS staff participated in training conducted by Diane Ullmann from NEASC last year when she came to WIS to do the Foundation Visit. At the end of last year, a team of two, led by Diane came to WIS to do the Learning Principles visit, after the school had submitted a report in this regard. At that stage, the school indicated, where we felt we were with regard to the Learning Principles. There are 10 Learning Principles and they all look at a dimension of learning. At the moment, WIS is conducting our Internal Reflection and we have to submit the Internal Reflection Report at the end of November. This will be reviewed by a team of three or four members from NEASC who will visit WIS at the end of January 2020 to see how far we have come in developing our processes around teaching and learning.

And this is what I am doing at ALA this week. We are spending the week in the school, visiting classes, speaking to all stakeholders in the school and, at the end of the week, writing a report for NEASC outlining

our findings. This report is intended to give recommendations to the school on what to focus on in their teaching and learning.

This visit has been helpful for me and I think for my contribution to the accreditation that WIS is going through at the moment. The conversations, observations of lessons and discussions we as a team are having, have shown that this process is worth "living through". It makes us reflect on best practices and gets many insights in possible ways to improve. It also enables pedagogical discourse in a way that can only be beneficial to the school and eventually to the students' learning.

Although the week is very intense with a lot of meetings, discussions, conversations and now writing the report, I am finding it to be an invaluable experience of learning and seeing different angles and initiatives to teaching and learning. I will bring back to WIS a lot of impressions and ideas and understandings of the process. But I am also confident that the efforts made at our school to move teaching and learning forward and to move into a direction of much more consultative and independent teaching and learning practices is the right way to go.

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**



The NEASC Team with the Leadership Team from the African Leadership Academy - meeting people from around the globe - Kenya, Sudan, Swaziland, Lebanon, Switzerland.

Breathalyser Training

On Monday six members of staff underwent training for the two new breathalysers the school has bought. It was very thorough and took some ninety minutes. We learned about the operation of the instrument (obviously) but also about the legal and practical aspects of requiring drivers to take the test.

Further members of staff will be trained in the near future.

As well as testing drivers prior to departure, we will take breathalysers with us on trips and conduct further tests at random and prior to any return journey.

The machines will be recalibrated every six months.



Bottle top path

During our **My Campus, My Planet** SDL sessions we aim to combat soil erosion by planting plants and creating purposeful spaces. Through this we are teaching our students the importance of taking care of our earth and using their power to make the changes they wish to see around them.

We hope to build a path like the one pictured on the right, from Ms. Urte’s class to our Drama room.

We propose to build the path using cement and plastic bottle tops. The reasons why we choose to do this are:

1. It is cost effective
2. It creates a beautiful path leading to the magic of drama
3. It is strong and durable
4. It is relatively simple to do



The bottle top path needs YOU!

We have already collected tow big black bags of bottle tops but we need plenty more. Please collect bottle tops and bring them to school. Mr. Parsons has promised a (sur)prize for the person who brings in the most!

Progress made so far

“We don’t have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world” Howard Zinn.



As can be seen from the picture above, we have outlined the path with plants that will go on either side.



At work, making a difference.

Take small steps with us, collect bottle tops, help to create change.

Secondary English

In English classes, Grade 9 students are doing a number of exercises as a build up to the Peace Day initiative. And this week, the Grade 10s worked on similes and poetry as part of their discussion on Peace.



Sports News

LFL Friday Football Fun

The U7, U10 and U11 Football teams were in action on Friday in the LFL games hosted at DTS.



Our U7 teams played really well in both of their matches against SKW and Gymnasium. Our U10 team won against DTS and the U11s narrowly missed out on taking all three points in their encounter with ACFC, eventually losing 3-2.

We continue to be really encouraged by the standard of progression and improvement that we've seen over the season and all the children deserve recognition for their hard work and commitment.

Senior Basketball

A semi-final to remember.

The U19 team played their long-awaited semi-final against DBHS on Saturday afternoon. Occasionally, when writing about sport, one can run the risk of reverting to hyperbole.

However...

In a frantic and intensely fought battle, the lead between WIS and DBHS changed no less than 11 times throughout the 4 quarters.



WIS was 28-18 down at the half time but fought back superbly to retake the lead entering the 4th quarter. With 90 seconds to play, we were 5 points up and holding up to a barrage of pressure from the opposition. With the game being played at lightning speed it was an all-out attack from last year's winners and WIS conceded a stunning reverse lay-up. Our margin now reduced to just 3.

With the last play of the game and as the buzzer already sounded to signal the end of the match a 3 point shot was put up by DBHS. The shot dropped clean which took the game to OT.

Overtime had a few more twists and turns but the moment went to DBHS as we fell short at the final hurdle. We play for 3rd place next week as DHPS and DBHS contest the final.

Thomas Jackson-Read

Taxidermy

In the Grade 7 Science class, we are learning about endangered and dangerous animals. How they gained their status as dangerous or endangered animals. The trip to the taxidermy was a wonderful experience. It was very helpful as we learned a lot of useful information and got answers to topics we were curious about. During our trip, we learned why animals are killed and the process of how they made the sculptures. Overall this was an amazing trip and a wonderful experience.

Deacan, Gerhard and Shamiso



Cutest of the Pack

Pet Calendar 2020 Photo Contest

Has your pet got what it takes to be crowned a winner?
Do you have the purrfect pet?

Enter for your pet's chance to be the **Animal of the Year 2020**.
The top **12 winners** will be featured on a full spread in the calendar.
The top **120** will be featured in the calendar.

Enter and vote between 1 September until 1 October 2019.

Tara Mette
PHOTOGRAPHER

The winner gets a pet photo shoot with professional photographer **Tara Mette** and the calendar cover photo. Photography session can be scheduled in Windhoek and in Swakopmund!

Cannot wait to enter your pet? Follow these simple steps:

- STEP 1:** Email a photo of your pet (no humans) sized 1-3MB and include a blurb about your pet (max 100 words) to photocontest@spcawindhoek.org.na
- STEP 2:** Pay **NS100** at the SPCA, online, or make an EFT. Now wait!
- STEP 3:** The SPCA will review and upload your pet's photo to our Facebook page within 24 hours.
- STEP 4:** Once the photo is uploaded, it is now up to you to share the photo wide and far with friends and family and get them to vote on YOUR pet!

MOST VOTES ON FACEBOOK WINS!

Would you or your company like to sponsor a page in the calendar?
Contact us for more information!



WORLD PEACE STARTS WITH INNER
PEACE ~ DALAI LAMA

**INTERNATIONAL
PEACE DAY
WIS**

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 20TH @ 7:30AM

**JOIN THE PTA FOR A GENTLE
BREATHWORK AND STRETCH SESSION
FOLLOWED BY COFFEE & SNACKS**



BRING A WATER BOTTLE & A TOWEL OR SOFT MAT

Annual WIS International Day Festival

Saturday, 9th November 2019

Calling all WIS families to get involved

Please save the date! On Saturday 9th November, the WIS community will celebrate our Annual WIS International Day Festival! This event is a true highlight on the school calendar as it showcases and celebrates the incredible diversity of this very special school community. You can look forward to dancing to beautiful live world music, playing traditional games from around the world, tasting delicious international cuisine, sampling traditional sweets and desserts from various countries, learning about different cultures and engaging with representatives of various embassies located in Namibia. We always look forward to the annual flag parade that highlights the many countries and cultures represented at Windhoek International School. This day is not to be missed. Mark your calendars.

How can you get involved?

- *Sign up to volunteer on the day for set-up duty, show off your bartending skills on bar duty, surround yourself with wonderful aromas while working a shift at the world food tent, sell food and drink tickets, facilitate a traditional game or activity from your home country, help us transport heavy items, stick around at the end of the event and help us close down the festival etc. We will have an electronic sign-up sheet soon, but please come talk to us to see how you can help make this day a great success and sign up for a shift or two from Monday 16th September 2019.*
- *Volunteer to cook a favourite traditional cultural dish for the PTA to sell at the **World Food Tent** on the day. We will need loads of food to satisfy the crowds! We are looking for all sorts of food from around the world to sell on the day.*
- *Bake a traditional dessert for us to raffle on the day as a fundraiser. We are looking for 10-20 yummy cultural desserts that we can raffle on the day of the event. **Any bakers out there?** Please come talk to us and tell us about your secret dessert recipe that you are willing to share with the WIS crowd.*
- *Coordinate with friends and family within or outside of WIS to organise a **Cultural Stall** on the day. These cultural stalls are always a hit with WIS students and families. Use this special day to showcase the unique beauty of your culture. Stalls can include things such as food, non-alcoholic drinks for sampling, traditional music, cultural clothing, trivia, interactive games or activities etc. We would love to have at least 10-15 different cultural stalls on the day. Please come talk to us. We know there are already some community groups beginning to organise! There is a prize for the most interactive and engaging cultural stall!! Come and sign up with the PTA at the PTA Community Centre.*

That's all from us for now. Look out for more updates about International Day in your weekly ORYX newsletter. To get in touch, please email us at pta@wis.edu.na or drop by the PTA Centre to sign-up.

We are excited! Looking forward to celebrating with all of you.

Warmly,

Your PTA

A celebration of the diversity of
cultures from around the world

**ANNUAL
INTERNATIONAL
DAY
FESTIVAL**

@ Windhoek International School

TIME TBC | NOV 9TH, 2019

yummy food - great music -
fun games



INTERNATIONAL FOOD & CRAFT BAZAAR

Saturday
28 Sept
2019



10:00 - 14:00

FNCC Terrace | Free entry

ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS YEAR'S EVENT WILL GO TO CHARITIES SUPPORTING YOUNG WOMEN AND FEMALE EMPOWERMENT IN NAMIBIA.



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