



PARENT INFORMATION PORTAL
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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

It's December! This will be the final Oryx of 2022. School semesters always end in a flurry of activity and next week will be no different. Then when school ends at 11:40 on Friday 2nd December, we can all land in a heap. Between now and then please follow the WIS Calendar. Here are just three upcoming events happening this weekend:

Perstephanie Goes Underground: Windhoek International School's very own and most recent production is performing this evening, **Friday the 2nd of December at 18:40 - 19:10.**

Mantis and the Bee Performance: The [Jungle Theatre Company](#), travelling all the way from South Africa, will once again perform on Saturday the **3rd of December at 11:00am in the WIS auditorium.**

WIS Community Fun Walk and Family Wellness Day: We have partnered with Virgin Active to offer some fitness classes on Saturday. Ms. Seodhna will lead pilates and movement, and we will have parent volleyball and a large community walk. Bring 'n Braai with drinks and snacks for sale. (Saturday, December 3rd from 8:00 to 11:00am).

WIS Principles

We will start a series of Oryx Articles which look carefully at the principles which will guide our school. Though still a document that is in draft form, the community conversations and educational research and research has begun crystallising and these various principles will serve as a summary of our values and as guide for our policies, practices, and daily decisions. In my next six Oryx articles, I will go over one Principle per day. The first will be a discussion of excellence.

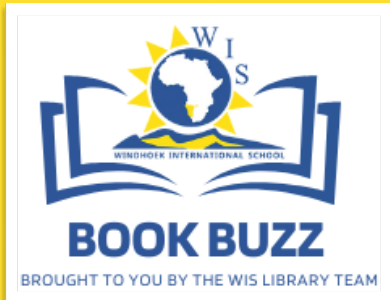
1.The EXCELLENCE Principle:

We believe that learners develop the dispositions of excellence when they are surrounded by a community which models, sets, and keeps high expectations. We believe that all people already possess within themselves all the ability and compassion that is necessary to make a positive difference in our world. Excellence is a way of being that is won by training, revision, and habituation. It is our collective and individual responsibility to model these characteristics for others.

In Practice:

We expect one another to produce timely and accomplished work. We know that excellence takes lots of practice and will always require multiple drafts. We set high expectations for ourselves. In a partnership between the school and the home, we help learners try again whenever an effort falls short of the mark. We place student

WIS BOOK BUZZ



We missed you last week! Don't worry, we're back with updates! Our library team has been working hard to assess progress this term and we have tons to share! Thanks in part to your support and generous donations, we've added 100 new books to our library database this term. These weren't just any old books, but ones that reflect the diversity of our students and the communities they will inhabit. As we strive to add more relevant books, help us by making [SUGGESTIONS](#). We're eager to curate more content for you right here in our Book Buzz section each week and can't wait to explore new topics in this brave space. Here's what else we've been up to:

- Helping Primary + Secondary teachers build their classroom libraries.
- Training parents on the reading platform EPIC.
- Planning School Book Fairs with Exclusive Books.
- Collaborating with teachers to address Unit of Inquiry lessons.
- Launching book posters around the school to increase reading awareness and highlight reading feats.

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO COME!

We encourage you to make arrangements to return any overdue books – if you're unsure we can check our system.

For questions or concerns please email the library team jwashington@wis.edu.na and mneftali@wis.edu.na.

work within authentic and meaningful contexts, and we organise learning celebrations for the good work that students produce. We inspire others to be the best they can be.

Questions:

Am I putting in my best effort towards excellence?

Am I setting clear and measurable goals for myself?

Do I approach everything I do with a growth mindset?

Do I continuously revise and refine my work to be the very best I can be?

Do I lead by example?

Is my feedback timely, specific, actionable, and respectful?

The WIS Book of Excellence

We should acknowledge and celebrate exceptional displays of excellence whenever it occurs. We are pleased to announce the creation of a new and very special award to be given at our school. This award is designed to recognise individual acts of exceptional personal example or community contribution of a nature that is so impressive that it deserves a very special and permanent recognition.

Taylen Harris is the inaugural recipient of the Windhoek International School Book of Excellence Award. On 26 November, Taylen Harris, a Grade 5 student, had returned home from soccer practice to join a group of friends and family who were playing in the pool. While swimming across the pool, Taylen noticed that his three year old cousin had taken off her lifejacket and was lying still and underwater. Without hesitation or delay, Taylen swam to the bottom of the pool and brought his cousin to the surface. He then called for help, and through CPR his cousin's life was saved. Taylen is a reflective and observant learner who is attentive to the needs of others around him, and on that day these qualities along with the courage to act quickly in the face of fear, combined to save a child's life. My congratulations to Taylen for this deserving award.



Congratulations also to all students for their continued pursuit of excellence in all our academics and interactions. WIS has a long tradition of achieving good marks on academic excellence in external examinations such as IGCSE and IBDP, and excellence includes a holistic element as well. To quote a letter of support from the Chair of the Board, Dr. Belinda Bruwer, to WIS Teachers, "We are a school that aims high ... with values that prioritise how we treat one another." I encourage you (all of us!) to make the most of this holiday by reading daily, eating well, exercising regularly, revising for your work (especially the Grades 10 and 12), and most importantly relaxing and enjoying the company of your family and friends during this special time and festive season.

Sincerely,
Ethan Van Drunen

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

As an educator there is not a day that goes by that I am grateful for my career and the learning community I work in. I know I am working in an exciting time of unprecedented transformation in education, prompted by revolutions in knowledge and information technology.

This transformation has made the role of the teacher an **educational guide, facilitator, co-learner and counsellor**. Teaching no longer consists primarily of lecturing students who sit in rows at desks, but offers every child a rich, rewarding, and unique learning experience. The educational environment isn't confined to the classroom but, instead, extends into the home and the community and around the world. Information isn't bound primarily in books; it's available everywhere. Students are not consumers of facts. They are active creators of knowledge and schools are centres of lifelong learning.

Leading the way in this transformation are our TEACHERS. Teachers who ...

- Think about their relationship with students, colleagues, and the community and understand that the essence of education is a close relationship between a knowledgeable, caring adult and a secure, motivated child. They grasp that their most important role is to get to know each student as an individual in order to comprehend his or her unique needs, learning style, social and cultural background, interests, and abilities.
- Consider the tools and techniques they employ; the form and content of curriculum; what standards to set and how to assess whether they are being met- because they know that in order to get students to truly take responsibility for their own education, the curriculum must relate to their lives, learning activities must engage their natural curiosity, and assessments must measure real accomplishments and be an integral part of learning.
- Work on their ongoing development as teachers and spend time researching various questions of educational effectiveness that expand the understanding of the dynamics of learning. They are continually learning themselves, inquiring into what works and what impacts learning.
- Participate in a school's day-to-day decision making and creation of the structure and systems of the school, they work side-by-side to plan for learning, and deal with organisational problems that affect students' learning.
- Counsel students as they grow and mature -- helping them integrate their social, emotional, and intellectual growth -- to understand, and use knowledge; to make better decisions in their personal lives; and to value contributing to society.

Inspired by: Lanier, J. Redefining the Role of the Teacher: It's a Multifaceted Profession: A closer look at what being an educator really means in Edutopia.

Teaching in this context is one of the most complex and challenging professions, vital to the social, cultural, and economic health of humanity. A profession that deserves our support.



For all of these reasons, I want to dedicate the last Oryx article of the year to our teachers at WIS. I am inspired and grateful to work in this learning community which thrives because of your daily efforts to impact student learning. Thank you for your care for our students, your insights, and amazing dedication.

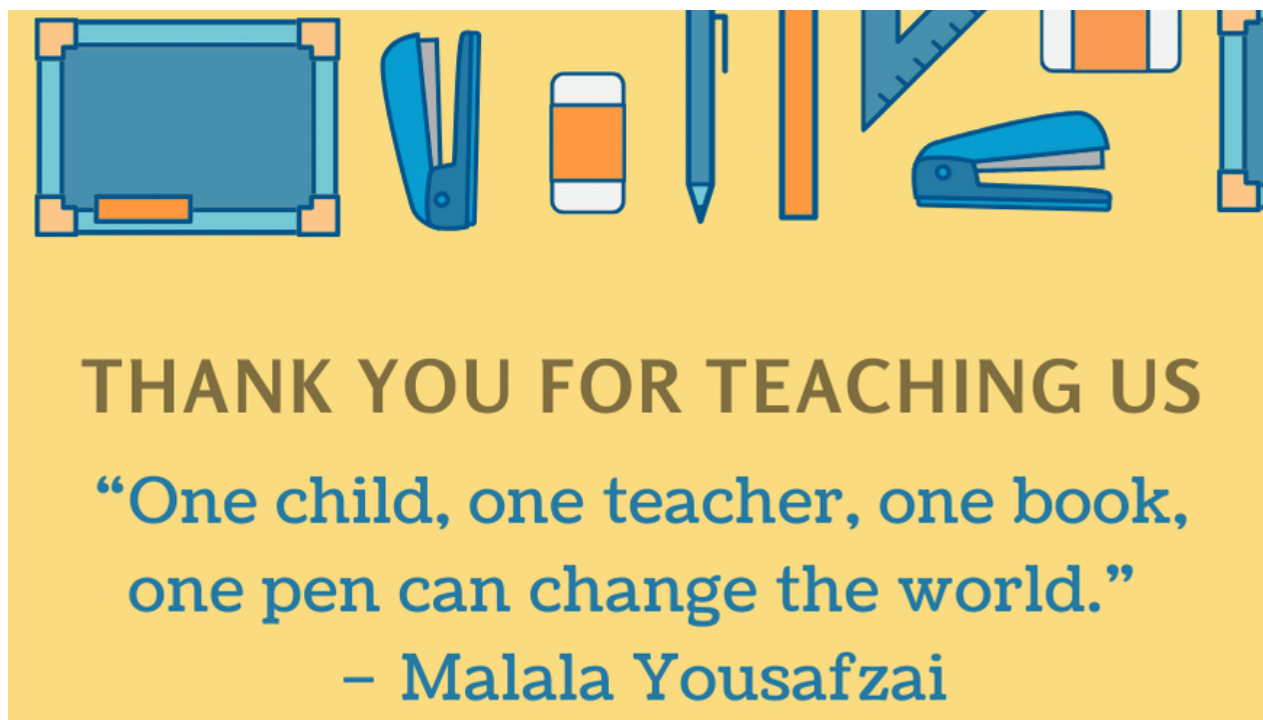
THANK YOU for all you do!

With appreciation,
Marcelle van Leenen



SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

A word of appreciation and gratitude



In this last issue of the Oryx, I want to say thank you to our teachers and students who have persevered through this semester. It was not an easy semester, but the dedication and commitment that you put into your work is commendable.

Teachers - mostly quietly - spend more than 08:00AM - 05:00PM planning, marking, assessing, reporting and often thinking of how they can make sure every child in their class can be successful. This requires full dedication and thoughtfulness that is evident when the teacher is in class. In class, the teacher engages with their students and makes sure the lesson runs as smoothly as possible.

I also want to commend our students who take their academic work seriously, who commit to do their best and engage in lessons every day of the week, despite challenges that might go on around them. So many students

show us how they learn and grow, and that makes our jobs rewarding and helps us continue with the passion that we have - education.

Education is a complex process and needs the commitment first and foremost of a home that is supportive and understanding - a lot goes on in young people's lives that has to be guided and supported with understanding and empathy - thank you parents for that.

In German we distinguish "Erziehung" from "Bildung" - "Erziehung" is what you get from home - your values, your beliefs, respectfulness, considerateness and attributes that guide you through your life. "Bildung" is your academic education that you receive in school and later at university. The foundation for "Erziehung" has to be laid at home. A strong sense of values, respect, integrity and morality, ensures that young people have a strong foundation to build on. That will enable them to enjoy and appreciate a high quality education at school.

Together, a caring, compassionate "Erziehung" and a solid "Bildung" that goes further than pure knowledge and grades, will ensure that young people can become responsible, respectful citizens of the world that give back to their communities and make a difference.

The triangle will be complete if the three parties:

- Student
- Parent
- School



⇒ ⇒⇒ work in harmony and support each other to ensure that young people can learn and grow optimally.

If only one of the three parties does not fully commit, the triangle is incomplete.

**Regards,
Maggie Reiff**

Middle School Art Exhibition

Gr. 6B, 7B & 8B!

5 – 9 December 2022

At the Secondary Art Rooms during School Hours!

Come and have a look.

Grade 7 Poetry

After comparing I hear America singing by Walt Whitman and I, too, Sing America by Langston Hughes the students realised that often poets write about what influences them. I asked the students to write a poem about what influences them and this is what some of our students created:

The boy who couldn't read his life - Alex smith - 7RS

Nothing drives my heart, nothing drives my soul.

Nothing drives my mind nor decisions.

Everyone else is a boat on their own path to paradise across the sea of troubles while I just float along the waves.

When I was born I was given my personnel map to a externally happy life but I couldn't read it.

I switch from interest to interest, friend to friend and speech to speech.

The only thing thats stayed the same in my heart from the beginning to my life right now, was the need to be loved, be healthy and have a home.

My heart will always change, my ship will always turn another direction until I, find my path of dream.

Ink And Pen - Carolyn Stein - 7RS

Ink and pen

Dance across the page

Words flowing off the paper

"e"s and "a"s waltz off the pen

Flowing and smudging

Ink and pen

Do not stop

"q"s and "l"s slide onto the page

But each day

that Ink and pen write

a light sparks inside of me

to do more

You left me here standing alone! - Candice Rey - 7RS

Do you still remember the time you spent with me?

Can you see what I can see?

Will you ever come back to me?

I still remember all the memories,



My best friend I used to call you,
But today you have left me speechless. All I have to show you are the silent broken tears from my heart!

I used to love you and tell you everything and now I sit in silence and think where are you and why did you leave me standing alone in this dark dark room?
Did you know I was afraid of the dark or did you just not care?

I wonder if you will come back for one last hug but I know you won't because you aren't that type of person!

And now you are gone but you used to be my Best Friend! I hate to say this but you broke me in a million different ways!

When you left I had to change everything about me for others to love me, I had to wear new things and change the things I liked just so I would have a real friend and then everything was ruined all over again and I was left to stand here all alone and beg for help, I had no one and in that time I had never known how strong I was until being strong was the only thing I could do to forget you!

I bet you didn't even know that I went home every day wondering if I had anyone to love who I truly was! I cried every day because of you leaving!

And what I hate the most is that I miss you so so so so much!

I'll be beside you - Mea van Zyl - 7RS

You are too hard on yourself!
You are broken and won't ask for help!
Sometimes you are kind!
You're lonely most of the time!

I see you like a mirror's reflection!
I understand you and your reactions!
I feel the pressure you feel!
I promise it is real!

Be strong like a lion!
Trust me, I am wishing on a field of dandelions!
Strong you shall be!
Sad, we will see!

Don't be afraid!
All of this will fade!
Hold my hand!
You will understand!

I'll be beside you!

CAS Projects

My CAS Journey - Peya Shimuafeni, Grade 11

As we started the IBDP, I had a bit of knowledge on what we would be doing in CAS. I knew it would be an opportunity for me to explore what is important to me and grow as a student and person. I also knew that it was a requirement for my IB Diploma so I had to come up with experiences for me to do. However, I didn't expect to learn so many new skills and experiences that will help me during the rest of the IB Program. So far in the first semester I took on an experience in each of the strands; for Creativity, I am learning to play the guitar, Activity I

began to help coach Junior Netball and for Service I took on the role as one of Student Council Presidents. All of these experiences have taught me a lot about myself and others.

Specifically during Junior Netball, I was able to learn about the effort and planning it takes to make a session fun and engaging. Working with young netball players from Grades 1 to 5 was a challenge at first but seeing each player get better and better each session was gratifying. I was able to see applications from both me and the netball players with the skills we learned. Thank you to Ms. Sonandre, Ms. Christeline and Ms. Elsie for the support and opportunities during our time coaching. Spending time with the young netball players and learning ways to adapt and grasp different ways to guide each player was an experience I will love to continue next semester.

Overall my CAS experience has been filled with mastering skills like organisation, planning and thinking as well as taking initiative and working with others. I look forward to what next semester will bring regarding my CAS experiences and the rest of my IB diploma.

Learning Support department Project - Kim Von-Luttichau

For one of our numerous CAS experiences within the Service component of the course, Fiona and I decided to assist the Learning Support Department of our school. We have been using our non-contact classes to walk around the Secondary School to film videos of our WIS community saying 'Happy Holidays' in different languages. The class heard languages like German, Portuguese, Italian and so much more! Fiona and I also learned how to say 'Happy Holidays' in Polish. Ms. Beata put together a video of all these different languages and will be showing it in the Primary School Assembly.

Our CAS experiences are designed to help us improve aspects of ourselves that we want to work on and also to be a force for good around the community.

wesołych świąt!

Season Review 2022

The Role Of The Coach - Daniel

Our main priority as coaches is to develop and nurture our kids to realise their sports dreams and to take up right decisions in future. When one sees us in the field it is not all about how to kick a ball and score goals but we teach discipline, give psychological support and leadership skills.

Just like any other sports, we are responsible for our kids physical and mental fitness.

Which Role Models Should We Aspire To? - Forrest

This season, the U13 football team has developed both as individuals and as a team. Players improved their technique and knowledge of the sport while also having a ton of fun! The experience not only facilitated social and emotional growth, but also a deeper appreciation of football. As a coach I commend the effort of all the U13 players this season, and I look forward to continuing the journey next year. Well done team!

The Importance Of Team Sports in Youth Development - Tom

The advantages of regular Physical Activity have been resoundingly articulated across multiple platforms for years. Growth in the industry of health and fitness have seen exponential rises as people around the world partake in regular health routines. The importance of participating in regular team sports has arguably never been more crucial for young people's development.

At WIS we have aspired to put participation and inclusion at the centre of our sports program. The rights and opportunity of all players who have an aspiration to be part of a sports team are robustly defended and advocated to provide an opportunity for our learners to be part of a team, to understand that the roles and contribution of our collective efforts are an essential aspect of youth development.

As part of a team we learn that commitment and hard work is the foundation to success and that success is measured in a range of different ways.

Well done to each and everyone who has made a contribution to one of the many flourishing school teams.

Equal Opportunities In Sport In Namibia - Seodhna

This year, 2022, was a big development year for our U11 football team. We are so proud of our mixed boys and girls team that worked very hard to strengthen their field awareness, defensive and attacking strategies, agility and ball skills.

This team is largely composed of Grade 4 - 6 girls and we were often matched up against more skilled and experienced boys club teams. Our U11 team didn't back down, didn't lose hope and never lost their love of the game despite what often felt like very unbalanced matchups in league games. I witnessed this team mature over the course of the last semester - learning to confidently use their body, more aggressively attack the ball and quite remarkably build an increasingly strong and impressive defensive line.

Girls football is still very young in Namibia and has a long way to go! We are proud that WIS has a strong representation of upper primary and middle school girls being drawn to the sport of football. We are excited to build this team and to support the growth and skills development of these passionate players in the 2023 season.

Grade 9 Global Perspectives

Team Projects-Thinking, Communication, Collaboration Skills

This term [Grade 9 Global Perspectives](#) students grew intellectually & socially by undertaking a '**cultural perspectives'-oriented team project** on:

**Are cultures going to be as prominent as people develop their own identities without their traditional values?*

**To what extent does tradition and culture affect people's identities and future choices?*

**To share the perspectives of both sides of the Palestine-Israeli conflict, and the important details of the issue in an engaging, yet educational manner.*

**To share the perspectives of both the rebels and the government on the civil war in Yemen.*

**To share about the daily life for those living in informal versus formal settlements.*

The student feedback brought out how vital it is to:

2. Listen to each other;
3. Trust your teammates;
4. Balance out the work between everyone;
5. Use time efficiently.
6. Push one another as it leads to greater motivation for each member and the team.

Rick Fitzpatrick - Grade 9 Global Perspectives Teacher

Humans of WIS project

WIS is embarking upon a new project. We want to celebrate our community and make sure we all know about each other and in doing so, appreciate each other.

Some Grade 9 ATL students will be interviewing members of the school community about their work, lives, and experiences at WIS. These interviews will be published on different school platforms. With your consent, a picture of you will also be taken.

This project will celebrate our school community, it is about seeing and acknowledging each person's role in the community. The school community is composed of staff, students, parents and other collaborators. This project

wants to celebrate each member with dignity and respect. We should all feel proud when these interviews are published. This project is inspired by Brandon Stanton's [Humans of New York project](#).

Next week we will send out a name poll/vote for this new project. You will choose from a list of names already suggested, but you will also have a chance to suggest your own. Looking forward to your participation next week. Thank you for your cooperation.

Grade 9 ATL class/Edward Ntonda

Decolonised learning framework

Some members in our WIS community have expressed an interest in the research I carried out for my Masters. If you are one of these people, please feel free to attend a seminar (zoom) where I will be discussing the findings from my research on creating a decolonised learning framework with my co-researchers in Nhoma. Please read the abstract on the poster attached to find out more!

Thanks, Kate

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://bath-ac-uk.zoom.us/j/96531760884?pwd=emxUK2cwaUZWUTBTT0pDV1ZwTE9vUT09>

Abstract:

Efforts to decolonise education in mainstream settings has involved little more than diversifying the content of curricula. Practices are needed that move significantly beyond this and that challenge existing/old teaching and learning frameworks. Radical structural changes are required that are informed directly by the epistemologies and ontologies of Indigenous people. In this seminar, I discuss how educational practices can be decolonised drawing on findings from a research study that involved collaborating with and learning from one of the most marginalised Indigenous people in Namibia - the San Ju/'hoansi community in Nhoma. I highlight the importance of grounding decolonial research within a postcolonial Indigenous research paradigm, noting how I researched *with* the San as co-researchers to develop an appropriate new framework for learning.

Kate Matzopoulos is a Drama teacher in Windhoek, Namibia. She is interested in creating new frameworks and structures from which to learn, teach, create and perform and seeks to embed this work in Indigenous Knowledge. She has applied this approach to creating theatre for the National Theatre of Namibia and has explored these decolonising techniques in her own drama classes. For the past year and half, Kate has been learning from the Ju/'haansi San in Village Nhoma as part of her MA Education dissertation completed under the supervision of Dr. Nicola Savvides at the University of Bath. Her dissertation was awarded a high distinction grade as well as the 'Austwick Prize' for the best MA Education dissertation submitted of the cohort.

Keep up to date by subscribing to the

[WIS Events Calendar 2022 - 2023!](#)



WIS FUN WALK

Fundraising: WIS Sports Community

SO MANY FUN
ACTIVITIES
TO LOOK OUT
FOR!

- VOLLEYBALL
- BUCKET BALL
- TUG OF WAR

FITNESS CLASSES:

- STEP CLASS
- GRID CLASS
- PILATES

RELAY FAMILY TEAMS!

TEAMS SHOULD WEAR
COSTUMES OR COLOUR
COORDINATE

JOIN US FOR A WIS FUN WALK/RUN!

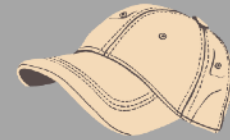
Date: Saturday, 3 December 2022

Time: 8:00 - 11:00 | Bring & Braai from 10:00

Cash bar (snacks & drinks)

The WIS Sports community would like to promote healthy active students, families, schools, and community.

SECONDARY HOMEROOM WARS!!



Spirit Week

December 5-9

Monday- impersonation day (memes, characters, celebrities)



Tuesday- Pj day



Wednesday- no school

Thursday- Dress like your type



Friday- Nerds vs Jocks



Best homeroom gets a prize!!

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