

ICSA TODAY



Director's Message



@ICSAbidjan

Finding and retaining the very best teachers for ICSA is probably the most important work the leadership team undertakes. Without exceptional teachers, the school will never completely fulfill its Mission.

This newsletter comes to you from Atlanta where I am attending a recruiting fair. Unlike the business world generally, a school operates on an annual recruitment cycle. I must now look for teachers for the coming academic year. Each year the school receives many applications, some speculative and others in response to advertisements. In this day and age, interviewing by other means is not unusual and yet there is something special about meeting people in person. A number of organizations arrange recruitment fairs during the period January to May at which representatives from schools are brought together with selected candidates from around the globe. At this fair about 150 schools are here to interview candidates from the 400 or so who have been invited. While the fairs do not always satisfy the needs of all schools every year, they do provide a unique opportunity to meet many candidates in one place at one time.

It goes without saying that a knowledgeable, understanding and supportive faculty and staff are critical for the well-being and success of our students. For this reason, I will be working hard with my team, over the next few months, to find excellent teachers to replace those who will be leaving. Our aim is to find those teachers who will not only bring experience and particular skills to the school but also contribute positively to the lives of our students and to the school in general.

I am confident that the teachers we hire will bring a wealth of knowledge to ICSA but will also learn from us at the same time. No doubt, they will have a wonderful time in Cote d'Ivoire and ICSA. recognizing and acting on the above.

Enjoy your weekends,

Peter

Upcoming Dates

February

- 1: **2nd Quarter Reports card to Parents**
- 4-5: **IB Parents Info Session**
- 19: **No school Teacher In-Service Day**
- 23-24: **IB visitation Visit**
- 25: **African History Cultural Month Assembly**
- 26: **No School- Long Weekend**

Parent Information Session for IB Program

Parents of high school students who are interested in learning more about the IB program are encouraged to attend our upcoming session:

*****Thursday, February 4th from 6:00pm -7:00pm*****

*****Friday, February 5th from 8:00am - 9:00am*****

*****Venue: Multipurpose room, building M*****

We look forward to seeing you at our IB Information Sessions!

Lower School News

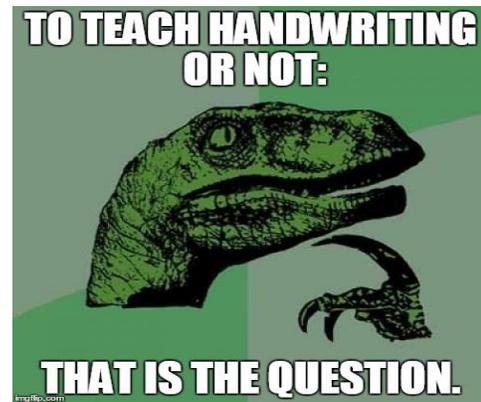
Lower
School
News
January
29, 2016

Report cards for the 2nd Quarter will be distributed via RenWeb on February 1st. Parents are invited to contact their child's teachers to arrange a conference if they wish.

We've been practicing even more. This week students participated in both a Lockdown Drill and a Safe Haven Drill. ICSA is committed to ensuring all our students and staff know how to stay safe in the event of an emergency.

It really is one of those enduring debates in educational circles. Should we teach handwriting in schools? If so, in what grades? Do we teach cursive too?

Well, the jury is still out. However, top researchers in the field have come up with some guidelines. Most believe that learning handwriting, whether it be print or cursive, is beneficial to children. Starting early helps young children develop their fine motor skills and even can be helpful with increasing their concentration and focus. There has been no clear evidence that either print or cursive is more beneficial for children. In fact, research shows that as they get older and write faster,



students able to write the fastest tend to use a combination of cursive and print. In addition to handwriting, we now know the importance of our children having keyboarding skills as they move through school. We are more and more a device society. So, what should our students learn?

After much debate and research, the Lower School is going with a multi-pronged approach. Next year, our students in Pre-K and K-2nd grades will have daily handwriting instruction to learn print. In third grade, students will have a year of instruction in cursive. The curriculum we will use is Handwriting Without Tears.

Handwriting Without Tears is developmentally appropriate for students as young as Pre-K age. It was developed by an Occupational Therapist because her own son was struggling with handwriting in school. Students find it engaging and fun. Teachers like it because it only requires 10 to 15 minutes of class time per day.

As for our fourth and fifth graders, well HWT now also has a Keyboarding Without Tears curriculum. I'm in communication with the company at the moment about whether or not we will include this for our older students.

Whether the problem is pencil grip or hunting and pecking, we will be there to support our students and

move them forward towards their goals.



- February 1; After School Activities
- February 1; 2nd Quarter Report Cards
- February 1-5; LS MAP Testing
- February 19; NO SCHOOL for Students - Teacher in-service
- February 26; NO SCHOOL-Long Weekend
- March 21-24; La Semaine de la Francophonie
- March 25; NOON DISMISSAL-Good Friday
- March 28-April 1 Spring Break
- May 6; LS Science Fair

Upper School News

Second Semester Begins

It is hard to believe that we are already halfway through the school year. It has been a whirlwind of a start and full of great experiences. I feel our students have been challenged academically and have also had the opportunity to experience some valuable projects and events. The family pot luck lunch at the beginning of the year was a great way to integrate our more than one hundred and twenty new students and their families. We followed that up with an incredibly successful UN Day. That is always a very proud and exciting moment. It is fun to watch all of our students display the different cultures that make up our community. We also can't forget the concert night. It is always a highlight to see our students outside of the classroom displaying amazing talent. As we head into the second semester it is nice to look back at the memories from the first semester. I would like to thank all of the parents for their support. We have such a great school community at ICSA.

-Jim O'Malley

Report Cards

Report cards will be posted to Renweb February 1st. If you are having trouble finding or viewing your child's report card please contact Mrs. Remziya Rehman in the office. rrehman@icsabidjan.org

Common Ground Collaborative

The CGC team will be on campus in February to provide some quality professional development for our teachers and help mold our academic plan moving forward. With the adoption of the IB Diploma Program, the CGC goes hand in hand with IB. It is an inquiry based framework that will help drive our academic decisions moving forward. This will be a great benefit for our students moving forward. World renowned Kevin Bartlett and his team will be here to work with us. Our dedicated teaching staff will work with the team on Friday and Saturday February 19th and 20th and the Administrative team will also work with them on Sunday the 21st. Dr. Bartlett was the designer of the IB PYP program.

IB Final Authorization Visit

Representatives from The International Baccalaureate (IB) will be on campus for our final authorization visit on February 23rd and 24th. This is a very exciting time as this is our last step towards gaining full IB authorization. I am very confident that we will receive authorization. Our IB team has put a tremendous amount of work into the process. Lead by Fatou Amany, the team has put us in great shape to become an IB World School. This is more than a year long effort and it will be very gratifying to complete the implementation next fall. Our teachers have spent many hours training and taking certification courses

and we have more training ahead of us in reparation of implementation next fall. These are truly exciting times to be at ICSA.

Aladdin Comes to ICSA in May



One of the exciting events we have in store for the spring is the musical Aladdin. This May, Aladdin will be coming to ICSA. Students from elementary to high school will be participating. There are many ways for your students to contribute if they are interested. There will be several options to be part of the production in the after school activities. The following activities are geared for the show; Upper School Dance, Ensemble, Set Design, Drama (by audition only), and Lower School Ensemble, Choir and Dance. This will be a great event for our community. We will also be looking for parent volunteers. Please contact Beth McDaniel at emcdaniel@icsabidjan.org with any questions or if you would like to help.



Counselor's Corner

Social media isn't simply a way of life for kids -- it's life itself. To help them keep their online interactions safe, productive, and positive, Common Sense Media offers the most up-to-date research and guidance on social media basics. Learn about the latest apps and websites, and get tips on talking to your kids about sharing, posting, and avoiding digital drama. Please click the link below to read more and explore [Common Sense Media's](#) website that rates, educates, and advocates for kids, families, and schools.

[Facebook, Instagram and Social Media- Key Questions and Answers for Parents PK-12](#)

New Faces at ICSA



A special AKWABA to new students joining us during the second semester.

Joining the Lower School, we have Ayma Usman (Pre-K) from Pakistan, Derrick Kargbo (grade 1) from Sierra Leone and Caroline Mukukumira (grade 1) from Zimbabwe.

Joining the Upper School, we welcome Nicole Bolger (grade 6) from the US, Naomi Rose (grade 6) from Seychelles, Jady Africa (grade 7) from the Netherlands, Sean

Mukukumira (grade 8) from Zimbabwe, Adama Barro (grade 8) from Burkina Faso, Lauren Mian (grade 10) from Cote D'Ivoire and Timothe Declive (grade 10) from Belgium.

Their time at ICSA should be exciting and rewarding; one that will be both a learning experience and an adventure.

Once again, we welcome these new faces to ICSA and definately will enjoy getting to know them!

Gloria Freeman-Fromayan
Admissions Coordinator