Our mission is to be the leading, culturally diverse and family-oriented international school with English as the principal language of instruction. We inspire individuals to develop their intellect, creativity and character to become independent, adaptable, socially responsible and internationally minded citizens, by ensuring a dynamic, inquiry-driven education of the highest standard.
Reach for the Stars

As I travelled home this summer, I watched a bit of news at the airport and saw a space shuttle being flown on the back of a 747 to a museum somewhere up the Hudson River. Throngs of people watched as this impressive spacecraft made its way to its final resting place. While I was fascinated by the event, I found myself also saddened at what seemed to be the end of an era of space exploration. I couldn’t help but wonder if our race had reached its limits in space, and we would no longer be awed with news such as the landing of a man on the moon or the launch of an international space station.

A couple of months passed with not much space news, and then to my surprise, a craft named Curiosity was sending images back from Mars! My fears of space-age-stagnation were unfounded. Behind the scenes scientists were at work creating another great leap, even though that leap was likely only possibly after years of incremental inching forward towards their goal. Before you begin to ask “What planet is he on?,” let me explain how I found space exploration and education to be in the same orbit.

Often we choose not to pursue momentous goals because they seem simply unattainable. Rather than “reaching for the moon,” we stay in our comfort zones rather than risk failure. At our first all-faculty meeting I shared a TED Video by Matt Cutts – “Try Something New For 30 Days”
http://www.ted.com/talks/matt_cutts_try_something_new_for_30_days.html
The essence of his message was to escape our comfort zones and try something new for thirty days. It was a challenge I’ve accepted and I challenged our faculty to do the same. The new daily habit can be anything from a new exercise routine to intentional acts of compassion.

Since this meeting I have heard from a number of faculty who are trying the 30-day challenge and I would encourage you and your family to consider it as well. Consider watching the Ted Talk video and attempting something that you may have previously thought to be too difficult. The short time frame of 30 days ensures that the end is not far off, but the incremental gains you make each day may add up to a surprising outcome.

Education and space travel both require a vision to go beyond the status quo, to break through the gravitational pull that keeps us firmly planted where we’ve always been. Maybe the only difference is that space travel requires people to look up and dream of great feats, while education calls us all to look within to fulfill our dreams. It is the start of a new school year, the slate is clean and the possibilities are endless. I hope you and your children are finding everything you could possibly need to “reach for the stars” at FIS.

Paul Fochtman, Head of School
Building Strong Bonds at FIS

There are many high aspirations embedded in the FIS Mission Statement. We are committed to inspire individuals to be “independent,” “adaptable,” and “internationally minded,” all while pursuing an education of the “highest standard.” And while much of our Mission Statement is concerned with what happens within the school, it also calls us beyond our campus as we strive to be a “family oriented” institution.

Regardless of our own cultural background, most of us would agree that it is the strength of our family bonds that has the greatest influence on our quality of life. Although our personal and professional daily routines will undoubtedly offer us both highs and lows, it is our family bonds that keep us secure. Family support is the safety net that allows students to take the appropriate risks as they need to grow and develop emotionally and intellectually, and it is the hand that reaches out to us when we need to be picked up, brushed off, and sent forth again after a fall.

The best schools understand that their role extends beyond what happens to students after they leave the campus. That is why FIS makes every effort to help families adjust when they move to Germany, encourages ongoing parent involvement in the life of our school, offers adult classes through our REAL program, and encourages parents to utilize our school counselors when challenges arise. By the time this FIS World issue is published, I expect we will also have Facebook groups established to support parents social networking as well.

As we start a new school year, please be assured that your Board of Trustees is aware of the needs of the school as well. FIS opens its facilities to community sports teams, has worked hard to gain Eco School status, sends students and resources to projects in the Kalahari and Poland, and our faculty and students regularly participate, when invited, to join or co-sponsor events to support fellow non-profit organizations.

Mike McKay,
Chair Board of Trustees

Chicago Reunion

More than 100 FIS alumni of the ’60s, ’70s and ’80s from all over the globe braved the Chicago heat (40° C/104° F) in July to share a weekend of great times and fond memories of their good ol’ days at FIS. The event was brilliantly organized by Sharon Arnold (’79), Chris Cataldo (’76), Jan Cetan Neisler (’72), Denise Davis (’77), Elizabeth Bettina Herr (’76), Nicole Hetzel Cassidy (’78), Lisa Pantolin Martinez (’86), and Susan Tuerff Wasmund (’72). - thanks to their time, effort, and creativity, the reunion was a great success and memorable occasion for all. FIS alumnus and Board of Trustees member, James Dilworth (’74) and Tina Shealy, FIS Manager of Development and Alumni Relations also took part in the activities which included a kick-off party at the Chicago Brauhaus (for a taste of the past), an architectural boat tour of downtown Chicago, and a festive dinner at the famous Harry Caray’s restaurant. Among the alumni were the five Naegli siblings who all attended FIS in the ’70s as well as the first FIS alumni married couple! The events were abuzz with laughter and chatter as alumni shared FIS yearbooks, photos, sport uniforms and other memorabilia and told their favorite stories of their special years at FIS. Despite the decades passed, the FIS spirit is as strong as ever in the hearts of our alumni community.

Tina Shealy,
Manager of Development and Alumni Relations

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Tina Shealy,
Manager of Development and Alumni Relations
On the second day of the new school year, the FIS Upper School Library revealed the fruits of its summer-long renovation to many excited students.

The immediate reaction was such that it suggested the new look was a huge success. A few days on, encouraging comments by students who had actually used the redesigned library confirmed that was truly the case.

The most frequently used word has been "awesome." The best quote has to be "I am actually coming here to study!" from a senior. It has also been good to see students thinking critically – a few thought the place needed more color as well as other constructed comments that were shared.

We are delighted to offer our students this comfortable, modern and peaceful learning space, in addition to the much-adored atrium. Both areas are busy with students.

The library’s main floor space was maximised, with a 30% increase in seating. We achieved this by reducing the size of the storage room and no longer having a separate librarian’s office.

The new layout opens up the space and creates scattered “nooks” at the same time. We hope every student can find a seat here to suit his or her purpose and mood.

As well as desks with table-top lamps and fully-upholstered chairs, we have created space-saving “study bar” seating with stools along the two rows of windows – great spots for independent study in natural light.

Another new feature is the Collaboration Room, equipped with a SMART Board. Here, students can study in groups or practice oral presentations.

There are also two comfortable areas for reading, each with a rug. The semi-circle centerpiece has display shelving on the outside and bench-style seating on the inside, creating a cocoon where students can read together. The other is the reading corner at the back, with six “cool” armchairs, surrounded by magazines, newspapers and graphic novels.

Our computer lab – relocated to one side – and viewing room, big enough for a whole class, continue to fulfill our instructional needs.

We must not forget the books! The new shelves are configured to maximise book space with room for growth. Our keen readers are always looking for new material!

Some of the students who graduated last year helped us pack up the library before the Summer Break and unpack it afterwards. They rightly thought it was extremely unfair that they were not to benefit from this fabulous new space. We are convinced that the current students will do so on their behalf!

Manatsu McCluskey, Upper School Librarian
Most people view springtime as the time to get back in shape. For me, it’s the start of the school year. After a summer of a bit too much indulgence, I am happy to get in gear once again. My sport of choice is running, and the day my children returned to school, I indulged in a wonderful long run (at moments, it was more like a shuffle I must admit) in the Taunus forest.

At FIS as well as at other nearby organizations, there is no dearth of exercise choices - literally from A to Z (Aerobics to Zumba®). Through the FIS REAL Program, you can choose from a wide variety of adult exercise classes during the daytime and in the evening. The PTG is bringing together parents interested in tennis, hiking, biking, golf and basketball. Monday nights are the time to whack the birdie over the net during the free evening Badminton sessions at FIS.

Additionally, through the American Women’s Club and/or The British Club, you can take part in active tennis groups, Nordic walking groups, family hikes, yoga and much more. The VHS-Volkshochschule allows you to work on your German while engaging in diverse activities such as Marathon Training to Tai Chi to Pilates.

Like most of you, over the years I’ve tried a variety of exercise options. While the type of exercise I choose may not always be to my liking, it’s great to move beyond my comfort zone and meet some new friends along the way. While I gear up to relay the Frankfurt Marathon with my “Team Zensational” partners, I encourage everyone to try a new activity, meet some new people and move beyond their comfort zone. In the meantime, I will heed the motto on my running partner’s t-shirt and “Run Like a Mother” for as long as I can!

Moms on the Run

USA College Admissions

Admission to the most selective universities and colleges in the United States has become highly competitive. The number of applications to these schools has increased dramatically over the past ten years and has resulted in a corresponding surge in the industries that prepare college-bound students. In order to best understand recent changes, as well as to understand how FIS can best support its students applying to these highly selective schools, we also want schools in the Ivy League and other leading schools in the USA to be equally accessible.

Jessica Angelidis, who counsels students applying to the USA added, “College placement is a process of finding the best fit between our students and their school of choice. While these selective schools may select only the top few graduates of each class, the principles we learned during this training can be applied to better support student admission to a wide variety of great American Schools.”

Last year, Harvard had over 30,000 student applications from around the world for only 2,000 openings. Robin Worth, Harvard Director of International Admissions, shared that it is an incredibly difficult process to determine which students are admitted given that most applicants have very similar high test scores and school grades. Ultimately, she said the students that are admitted are those whose histories suggest they will best support the challenging learning dynamic found within the school. In other words, admission to selective schools is not simply a reward for a student’s past achievement but an investment in what the student is expected to bring to a college in the future.

FIS students should meet early in the year with their FIS counselor to discuss how to best prepare themselves for college admission. Through early planning and establishing realistic expectations, parents and students alike can reduce the stress involved in finding the right college or university for a FIS graduate.
Throughout the school year, FIS athletes participate in sporting competitions throughout Europe and beyond, whilst competing in twelve different sports across three seasons. The highest level of competition is among the high school teams at the end of each season at the International School Sports Tournament (ISST). With FIS as one of the founding schools in 1967, the ISST league now consists of 24 international schools that reach from London to Cairo.

FIS has made great strides in the ISST competitions over the past several years. As recently as 2008, FIS ranked 10th in the ISST standings. However, under the leadership of Kenny Macaulay, FIS Athletic Director, his staff and the support of the Athletic Booster Club, FIS has risen to second in the most recent ISST standings.

Well done to all of the FIS athletes, coaches and parents! Should you wish to see our athletes in action, please visit http://www.fis.edu/ under Athletics for all of the team schedules.

GO WARRIORS!

Martha Boston-Majetic, FIS Parent
A Lesson in Community

There are lessons in life that are too important to delay teaching and too critical not to ensure their thorough understanding. At FIS, the teaching of the IB Learner Profile definitely falls into that category. “The IB Learner Profile guides and touches all that we do at FIS,” said Dr. Paul Fochman, Head of School.

The IB Learner Profile consists of the following ten words: Caring, Balanced, Principled, Communicators, Thinkers, Risk-Takers, Knowledgeable, Inquirers, Open-minded and Reflective. These words, sometimes referred to as “attributes”, are more than just highly inspirational descriptors. These are the words that students at FIS learn and live by.

Dr. John Weaver, Principal of the Primary School, took on the challenge of how to better ensure students learn this critical lesson. Accepting that many of the students are not “formal readers” of any language, he looked elsewhere than the printed word and eventually looked through a camera lens to find the perfect solution.

Dr. Weaver realized that through photos, specifically photos of Primary School students doing what they do every day at school, he could begin the IB Learner Profile lesson with the young students. “Children don’t have to read to understand,” said Dr. Weaver. “I want a clear message about what we are about…the attributes of the IB Learner Profile. I want photos about learning, laughing, painting…a reflection of self, culture, personality, and friendships.”

Grade 1 teacher Natalie Taylor joined Dr. Weaver and together they took hundreds of photos and chose approximately 30 to hang in the entrance hall of the Primary School. “I love taking photos,” said Ms. Taylor. “Children should look around for signs that they are welcome. Children should see themselves, their cultures in photos,” shared Dr. Weaver. A new Pre-Primary student to FIS posed in front of the photo of another Korean girl wearing a "hanbok", the traditional Korean dress. Cheung Jin Baik, her mother, translated her daughter’s comments from Korean into English. “She really likes the photo. She said she now wants to wear a hanbok to school.” This desire to honor and celebrate one's culture at FIS is definitely recognized.

Dr. Weaver spoke with pride and purpose about his shared efforts with Ms. Taylor to teach the IB Learner Profile. He condensed the list of ten “attributes” down to one word, “community.” He said “Learning to be a community member does not happen by chance. It is taught by teachers taking the time to teach in very purposeful ways throughout the days, weeks, months and years of each child’s school experience.”

Emmett Kelly, FIS Parent

While Ms. Taylor and Dr. Weaver were busy snapping photos, another team at the Primary school came-up with an equally creative and artistic idea—they wanted to paint the colours of nature and using it creatively and aesthetically.

The Pre-Primary team returned to FIS with a vivid understanding of the influence of colors in nature, and in our lives in particular. “Color can affect a student’s attention span and perception of time. It can also affect mood and morale,” said Ms. McArthur-Weber who added, “red and orange are stimulating, yellow is cheerful and blues and greens are calming.”

Dr. Weaver agreed enthusiastically to adding more color to the Primary School. Dr. Weaver agreed enthusiastically to adding more color to the Primary School. The new Primary school colors are resulting in positive feedback from parents for their aesthetic appeal. What is likely not noticed by every parent and student is that the Primary School has transformed the walls of the entry hall & stairs into a “third teacher” to teach the IB Learner Profile as well as encourage positive feelings.

Emmett Kelly, FIS Parent

Primary Colors

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Emmett Kelly, FIS Parent
The Trailing Spouse

Kids at school, furniture in place, new bank accounts squared…and now what?

Every year, FIS welcomes over 250 new families. The vast majority result from professional expatriation assignments, most of which are awarded to one spouse. The other spouse trails along.

Trailing spouses, a moniker first printed by the Wall Street Journal in 1981 to describe a person following his or her spouse on a foreign assignment, are left to grapple with the everyday necessities of life in unfamiliar and oftentimes incomprehensible territory.

Anne Molyneux, mother of two girls in Elementary School, shares her experience and insights as a long term expatriate that arrived as a trailing spouse at FIS in Germany one year ago:

“Our family moved to Germany in mid-July 2011 to accompany my husband, who had accepted a new posting. I had moved town, country and job several times in the past, but this was my first time with children, a dog, and no job for me outside the home.

My first priority, when I was told we were moving, was to research the schools in Hessen, because if the children failed to settle, family life would be dire. Our first school-of-choice visit was FIS - where the ES/US cafeteria was bigger than the entire all-girl school they had gone to since they were three years old! We applied and fortunately got spaces for both girls."

This difficulty is compounded when the trailing spouse, as in Anne’s case, has a professional background in a high strung sector where working full time easily spills into your every pore and waking minute: “But it is possible”, she says. “When we got here, I noticed that there was a vacancy for a Vice-President on the PTG. I had met Maria Cantarero, the PTG President, the previous weekend at a barbecue; so I approached her after the meeting, and asked to be put forward for the position. Working in the PTG was a great way to get involved with school life - in fact, I liked it so much that I was re-cycled as PTG Secretary for this year.”

Anne reflects that the easiest place to start speaking to new people is your own community, and that if speaking to a complete stranger in your new town seems “a bit scary”, the parent community at FIS is a great place to start approaching people, including local residents.

In addition to her PTG and FIS substitute teaching work, Anne helps students learning math at Kumon Oberursel two afternoons a week. Everyday, she walks the family Beagle, shops for groceries, and cooks. She helps her girls with playdates, sleepovers, homework, troubles, dreams and all that it takes to raise two happy children; and now that her German has gotten up to what she regards as a decent conversational level, she plans to switch from studying German to learning Italian.

Does she have time to have coffee with friends? Yes, she does – I’m one to prove it. I ask Anne to offer four golden first year survival hints to the new trailing spouses just arrived at FIS. She tells me:

1. Use your connections to find people you enjoy spending time with. You’ll be surprised how positively people respond when you reach out to them.
2. Walk around your neighborhood and get to know it. You may run into other expats or FIS parents living in your area. Keep an ear out for your native language.
3. Learn a bit of the local language. It will increase your confidence and you’ll be more at ease once you understand some of what is going on around you.
4. Find something that gives you pleasure, and do it! You are the same person you’ve always been but simply need to find a way to nourish yourself in your new home.

Maria Monteiro, FIS Parent

“There are many opportunities for parents to engage at the school. For instance, you can get involved with the other parents in your children’s classes by volunteering to be a Homeroom Mom. If you really like sports, you can volunteer for the Booster Club, as they support all of the school’s athletes. There is the PTG for those who wish to be involved with the community. And from a long-term governance point of view, every year there are places to be filled on the school’s Board”, says Anne Molyneux.
FIS is proud to have two "ambassadors in residence", two Grade 11 students who have earned their laurels in the rainforest on Vancouver Island in Canada this past summer. For Jamie and Christina, the adventure actually began last year when members of the Cowichan First Nation came to address students about the work of Wilderness International to conserve their homeland in the ancient rainforest of Western Canada. One way the non-profit organization does this is by holding sponsored runs, like the one held at FIS in April, the funds from which are used to purchase land for a nature preserve.

Wilderness International also partners with the Cowichan People to offer an international student exchange program, inviting selected students to experience the wilderness for three weeks, learn more about conservation issues and to spread the word to their peers and interest groups in their homeland upon return. Jamie and Christina recognized this as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and submitted applications. Each was awarded a €4000 scholarship to cover all trip expenses. In return they had to collect or earn €500 as their own personal donation to the preservation fund. As a team, which was made up of two students from FIS, two from Leipzig and six from Dresden, they had to develop and implement a summer project. The outcome was a Rainforest Recipe Book that exemplified the unique biodiversity of the temperate rainforest by showing recipes with local ingredients and explained their cultural significance and medicinal effect.

In Canada, one awe-inspiring experience followed the next. They took part in two major canoe trips and an extended hiking trip. They gathered plants and berries and caught fish for their meals. Their labors were rewarded with sightings of black bears, sea lions, and whales and the thrill of swimming amidst the bioluminescence of the nighttime Pacific. Very special, was the inclusion in some traditional Cowichan ceremonies, like the "sweat lodge", a sauna type-room in which a spiritual ceremony is held. The students also learned about Cowichan beliefs and to master some of their crafts like carving red cedar or gently stripping cedar bark from the trees for use in weaving.

Both students felt that experiencing cultural differences on a daily basis at FIS prepared them well for their Canadian adventure. They have come back with a good understanding of and deep commitment to the preservation of the rainforest on Vancouver Island and look forward to raising awareness within the school and the outside community.

Canadian Rainforest Experience

Wilderness International Ambassadors at FIS

Christina gathering plants and berries
…this is the mantra by which, our Grade 1 teacher, Annegret Romberg lives and breathes! She is always prodding her students with the interrogatories “why, when and how” as the children walk, observe and get physical with their environment.

Last May, as part of their unit of inquiry, Living Together, Ms. Romberg’s Grade 1 students went in search of tadpoles. The source for the tadpoles has always been the pond in the Primary School’s backyard. To the children’s dismay, the pond was full of slimy green stuff, or “pond scum”. The students were concerned and started asking, “Why was the scum on the pond?”, “How does the scum get here?”, “How can we clean it?”, “What exactly is the green scum?”. They wrote a letter to PS Principal, Dr. Weaver, imploring his help.

Ms. Romberg and her students read, researched, talked to Biology teachers, invited speakers into their classroom, walked the edge of the pond and investigated the lower stream. They learned that the scum was actually duckweed and discovered its growth process as well as it’s need of a constant flow of water to prevent over-accumulation.

Once they learned the “what”, they worked on the “how” - how to remove the duckweed and to increase the flow of water into the pond? They consulted the Earth Rescue Team and the campus gardeners and suggested getting in a boat and using a fishing net to skim the pond. After approval, the campus gardeners, witnessed by the students, used a boat and skimmed the pond. They learned that the pipes that once fed the pond were blocked. Class hypothesizing suggested taking down the dam and letting the water run downstream. But, after further thought, the opening of the dam was rejected because the children feared it would pollute other areas with the duckweed. On their next nature walk, the class donned their Wellies and began re-shifting some of the natural barriers upstream without removing any flora.

In June, the class sent a proposal (currently under review) to the Board of Trustees Building and Grounds Committee, Environmental Committee and the FIS PTG requesting the pond to be an outdoor classroom and to build an observation deck so all grades may learn about mini-beasts and observe pond life. The children drew pictures to reflect their plan. In order to preserve the lives of the mini-beasts while observing them, they also included an observation picnic table in their drawings.

The enthusiasm and citizenry wasn’t halted by a summer holiday. In August, the ES Earth Rescue team experienced an influx of Grade 2 students very keen on monitoring the pond and keeping it clean!

The learning described in the duckweed dilemma exemplifies PYP learning - who we are, where we are, how we express ourselves, how the world works, how we organize ourselves and about sharing the planet. Most importantly, saving the pond contains elements of learning such as play, motivating students through natural curiosity and applying what they learn. Well done Ms. Romberg and the Grade 1 class of 2011/2012!

Maria Notare Cantarero, FIS PTG President
Margaret Poulgrain, Elementary School ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher, passed away peacefully at her home on 18 August after a long illness. She came to FIS in 2002 and taught as an ESL teacher until June 2012.

Margaret was born in Brisbane, Australia and having won a scholarship she went on to study modern languages and history at the University of Queensland. As a young teacher, she sought adventure and went to Europe where she taught in France and Germany. A courageous traveller, her wanderlust at that time took her to places as diverse as Morocco and Russia. While working as an au pair in Göttingen, she met her future husband Wolfgang and went on an even greater adventure when she joined him in Lagos in Nigeria, where he had taken up a new post. Margaret and Wolfgang spent the next twenty years in Africa, Nigeria, Mauritania and Namibia, where they brought up their four children. During her time in Africa, Margaret studied for a Master’s Degree in German and taught at the American International School of Nouakchott in Mauritania and Windhoek International School in Namibia. They returned to Germany from Namibia in 2002, settling in Friedrachtsdorf, and Margaret took up a position as an ESL teacher at FIS.

With a background in teaching foreign languages, Margaret took a special interest in children’s literacy and language development. She read extensively on the subject and her authoritative knowledge was well respected by her colleagues. Her constant dedication to finding new and better ideas to improve her teaching continued right to the end and she often worked on long after the school day was over, browsing through educational resources in search of suitable materials for her lessons. She was a committed member of the ESL Department and her expertise developed in Australia and now used worldwide, both in international and state schools in the English-speaking world.

Margaret’s passion for children’s literacy extended beyond school, not least when she attended the annual Frankfurt Book Fair and various educational conferences. Her easygoing manner in chatting to various publishers often convinced them to part with a large quantity of books for free or at bargain prices! Today, the ESL department is the lucky beneficiary of a range of wonderful children’s books for which Margaret successfully haggled.

Having lived and worked on three continents, Margaret was always open to new experiences and enjoyed life to the fullest with interests ranging from books to films, travel and music. She especially liked to go to the Mal Seh’n Kino in Frankfurt to watch films in the original version, being equally conversant in French and German. She enjoyed many of the finer things in life such as afternoon tea at the Steigenberger Frankfurter Hof, a concert of Anne-Sophie Mutter at the Alte Oper, her sleek MacBook Air Notebook. During her time at FIS she made many friends and was a regular at coffee breaks every morning where ‘news and views’ are discussed. She and Wolfgang, a wonderful cook, were very hospitable hosts and often entertained friends and colleagues at their home in Friedrachtsdorf. Despite her illness, she continued to travel, regularly going to Zürich and Austria to visit her family and last year undertaking an extended trip to Laos, Cambodia and Thailand. She had a busy family life with four grown-up children and the advent of grandchildren in recent years brought her much joy – Isabel and Angus in Tasmania and Jayden in Zürich.

Even when her strength was failing, Margaret’s keen interest in her work with the children never waned and it continued to bring her great joy and fulfillment. A quote by Hans Christian Andersen that embodies Margaret’s work is “A human life is a story told by God.”

She will be very much missed by her ESL colleagues as she was the quiet voice of knowledge and wisdom in the department and her expertise leaves a gap that will be difficult to fill. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her husband Wolfgang, daughters Annika and Célestine, sons Gerard and Nicolas, and her brother Paul.

Margaret Poulgrain, Elementary School ESL Department, Elementary School

FISW Students in Barcelona

Dreams come true for young FIS Wiesbaden soccer players during a Fall Break trip to Barcelona: training with official coaches, visiting Nou Camp Stadium and playing on the same field as their heroes from FC Barcelona!
Online social networking sites are one of the greatest innovations of the last decade. They allow users to share information faster and more efficiently than ever before. One of the most popular tools, used by over one billion people around the world, is Facebook. (There are more people on Facebook than were on the planet 200 years ago.) Recognizing the importance of this new communication tool, FIS now has four Facebook sites for our community to share and explore.

FIS has a public Facebook page that can be viewed by anyone with a Facebook account. The primary purpose of this page is to share information with those outside of our community, including new families who have not arrived to FIS or friends of our community who want to familiarize themselves with our school.

We also have a public Facebook page for alumni. This allows our students and parents who have left the school to stay in touch with FIS and learn of reunion gatherings, new school initiatives and other key news occurring on campus.

Last year, FIS Wiesbaden parents piloted a closed group Facebook page to support communication amongst our parent community. This group is only open to current parents who can ask questions or share information related not only to school but also to other aspects of living in Germany. In part due to the success experienced at FISW, at the start of the current school year the Oberursel campus parents followed suit and launched their own closed Facebook page.

While the first two public pages are operated by the school and the latter two groups are operated by our parents, all of these new Facebook options will allow our current, past and future community members to form closer ties to FIS and one another.
New FISW Playground

Ode to the FISW Playground

The playground at school it's fun and it's cool. The children have fun all around. They're walking and drawing and reading and chatting and hopping and running and jumping and playing chasing and sliding and laughing and talking climbing and scratching and crying and kicking and pulling and pushing and hugging and hiding and spinning and hopping and cutting and picking and lining up and going to the class and stopping.

The new playground at FIS Wiesbaden has received rave reviews from students, teachers and parents alike. It has expanded the play opportunities for students while adding a landscape design that is pleasing to the eye. One student was so inspired by the new area that she decided to write a poem to honor the opening of the new playground. This inspiration is yet another example of the way in which a student's joyful engagement in one area often spills over in positive ways to other aspects of his or her learning.

by Michelle, FISW Grade 2