

FIS WORLD

School Year 2014/2015

Volume 1 / October 2014

The Big Dig Begins



Inside:

- Currywurst and the IB Learner
- Wine Not?
- Tomorrow's Leaders



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.



CONTENT

What Everyone is Really is Talking About	2
New Beginnings, New Opportunities	3
A New Age of Space	4
An Inspiring Educator	6
No Need to Go Nuts	8
A Hidden Treasure	9
A Host of Memories	10
Currywurst and the IB Learner Profile	12
New Faces, New Places	14
Welcome BBQ	16
Sensing Student Needs	18
“Wee”kend Warriors	20
Parent Survey 2014	21
Tomorrow’s Leaders	22
Grade 6 at FISW	24
Well Worth the Journey	26
Nick Christy - Class of 1989	28
Breaking Another Ceiling	30
PTG Oktoberfest	31
Wine Not?	32

FIS World is made possible through the efforts of our volunteer team of writers, photographers and editors. If you are an FIS parent and would like to join our team and contribute to this magazine, contact Alec Aspinwall at alec_aspinwall@fis.edu. The only experience required is a passion for our students and their education.

What Everyone is Really Talking About

Suppose it's human nature for us to focus our attention on what's new and noteworthy. After all, the word "news" is simply the plural form of the word "new." It is no surprise that the big *news* at our school has been the construction of the *new* Sport and Learning Center and its current and future impact on FIS. However, while this is clearly one of the most important projects in our school's history, I want to use this article to remind our community that behind the bulldozers and diggers is a school that continues to thrive. When alumni and families talk about FIS around the world, they are not referring to our buildings but to the learning that takes place within these buildings.

Although bricks and mortar are important, they pale in comparison to the quality of a school's teaching staff. While I was excited by the highly successful recruiting season we completed in February, I am even more enthused now that I have been able to see our new teachers and administrators interact with our students. Nothing I do in a given year is more important than hiring the best educators possible to work with your children and, if I do say so, our new teaching colleagues are exceeding my already high expectations. Part of my daily routine is to visit classes in session, allowing me to witness first hand how our new and returning teachers continue to make learning both challenging and engaging.

This year we will continue to move forward with our goals to differentiate instruction to match individual student learning needs and abilities. We have introduced new classes in the upper school and continue to give particular attention to our science and math programs at the elementary school. I am



Dr. Fochtman accepts a student's icebucket challenge.

particularly pleased with the added curricular choices at the FISW campus as it expands new offerings in Grade 6 as well as new offerings in its lower grade levels, such as the swimming program introduced this year.

However, it's not enough to have the best teachers and most updated curriculum, we also need to accurately measure student progress and give helpful feedback to both students and parents. Through our annual spring survey you have let us know that this is an area where we can improve, and this year's results show that we are heading in the right direction. I think in the coming year you will continue to see the school use a mixture of assessment tools to track student progress and to use and share this information in person and online to help students reach higher levels of success.

I could continue for pages regarding the good work that is taking place within the school, but my intent is to assure you that the construction taking place outside the school is not interfering with our focus on what must take place inside our classrooms. We pride ourselves on being a school that welcomes parent input and participation, and I hope you have found a way to get involved on our campus. Our teachers also welcome your emailed questions at any time and will get back to you promptly to address any concerns you may have throughout the school year.

*Paul Fochtman,
Head of School*

New Beginnings, New Opportunities

Let me begin by offering a warm welcome, on behalf of the FIS Board of Trustees, to our new FIS Families. I had the opportunity to meet many of you at the Welcome Barbecue, and I look forward to getting to know more of you at events in both of our campuses this year.

The 2014-2015 school year will be a particularly poignant one for my family because our youngest child will graduate from FIS. My wife, Lotten, and I will then transition to our new roles as “alumni” parents of the school. The past 15 years at the school, beginning with our three children’s early years at FISW, have been simply remarkable. I envy those of you who are just beginning your FIS tenure because I know that your time at our school will be filled with many memorable experiences. As I look back on our many years with the school, let me offer a few suggestions to our families who have newly arrived, although returning families might find the tips helpful as well.

First and foremost, get involved! We have three wonderful parents’ associations at FIS: Parent Teacher Group (PTG), Supporters of the Performing Arts (SPA), and the Athletic Booster Club (ABC). Each organization supports countless activities throughout the year and this makes FIS a vibrant place for both students and families. Consider volunteering to join a school trip, acting as a mentor for the Grade 5 Exhibition or creating an internship opportunity at your company for an FIS student. (A highlight of my year is to have FIS elementary students visit me at the European Space Agency.)

Second, let your voice be heard. We are fortunate to be a part of a community where our teachers and

We are fortunate to be a part of a community where our teachers and divisional leaders want to hear your input.

divisional leaders want to hear your input. Whether you have specific ideas on how to better support your own child or grand ideas on how we can improve our school, you will find eager ears from our teachers, administrators and Board of Trustees. When I look back upon many of the successful initiatives that have occurred at our school during my tenure, many of the ideas began with a helpful question or suggestion from a parent.

Finally, be a model of international-mindedness for your children. In a community of over fifty nationalities, there are bound to be times when cultural differences may offer a stark contrast to your family’s view of the world. Our children have a rare



opportunity to learn in an educational setting that strives to build intercultural awareness and social responsibility. If our schools and homes can both model these values, our world has a better chance to overcome many of the challenges it faces today.

Here’s to another great year at FIS!

Michael H. McKay

*Michael McKay,
Chair Board of Trustees*

Facility Highlights:

11,200 m² of total space

15 classrooms

Collaborative study areas

Three (3) sports courts

Three (3) multi-purpose studios

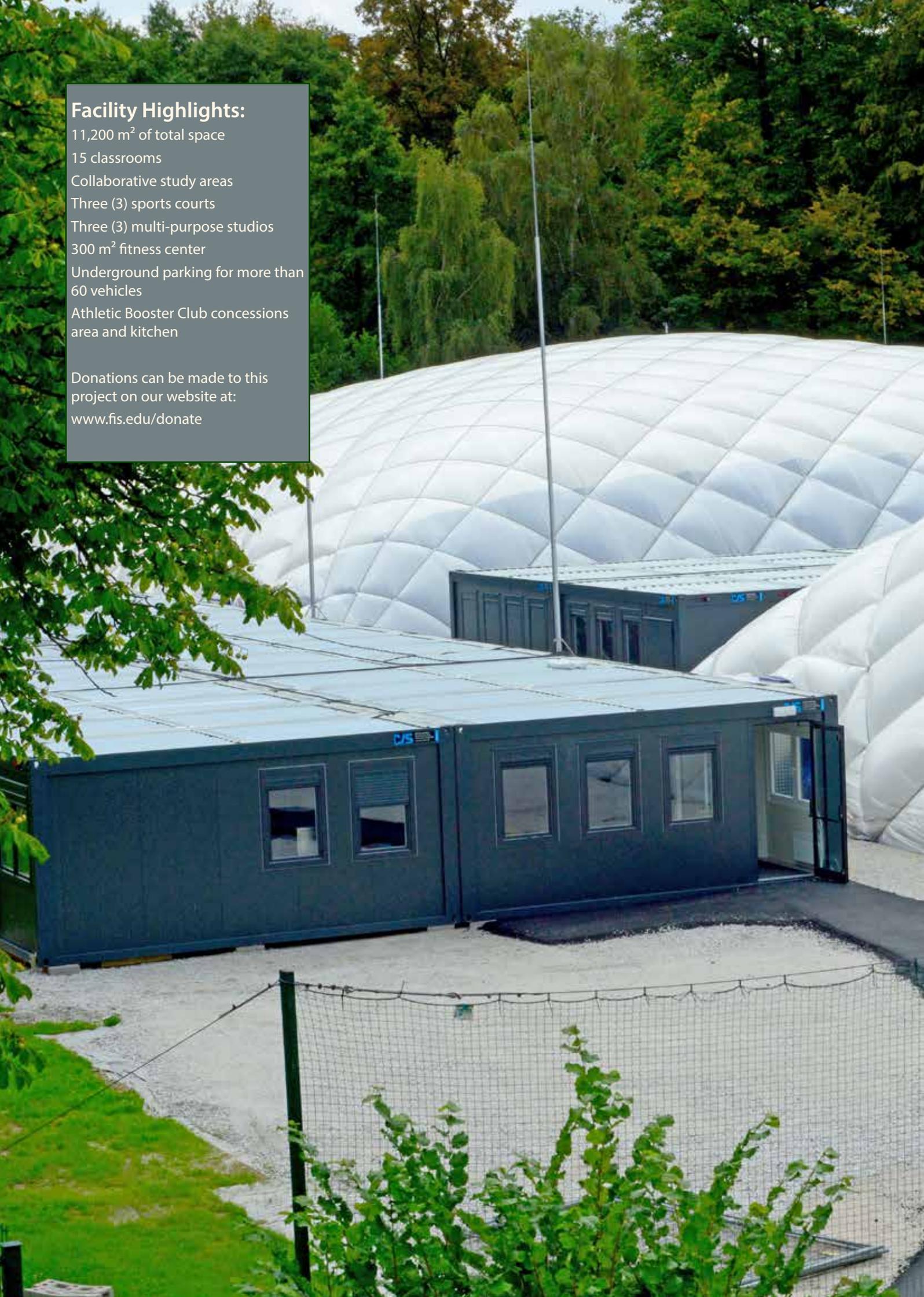
300 m² fitness center

Underground parking for more than
60 vehicles

Athletic Booster Club concessions
area and kitchen

Donations can be made to this
project on our website at:

www.fis.edu/donate





A New Age of Space

FIS Embarks on its Grand Design

Since FIS began in 1961, it has expanded from the yellow villa now known as Old Main to one of the largest international schools in Europe. Buildings on the Oberursel site were added in the 1970's, 1980's, 2000's with the most recent addition being that of the Arts and Science wing which was completed in 2006. However, nothing is likely to change the look and feel of the school as much as the addition of the new Sports and Learning Center scheduled for completion in the spring of 2016.

"It's impact on our school cannot be overstated. Our campus is entering a whole new era of excellence with the creation of our new Sports and Learning Center." These words from Dr. Fochtman underline the importance of the 11,200 square meter facility that will add underground parking, 15 classrooms, multi-purpose rooms, fitness center, study and collaborative spaces, a concession food court, and a fabulous new gymnasium with built-in seating for spectators.

Board of Trustee member and Chairman of the Buildings and Grounds Committee, Jonathan Clenshaw, confirmed this view. "The new facility will define the first impression a visitor will have when entering the Oberursel campus. It is a striking building from an architectural viewpoint, but more importantly, the combination of athletics and academics woven together within the same area will speak volumes about our commitment to a balanced life for students and families."

In addition to enhancing the experience of students during the school day with state-of-the-art

"The new facility will define the first impression a visitor will have when entering the Oberursel campus."

*Jonathan Clenshaw,
Board of Trustees*

classrooms and learning spaces, the new facility will also be a great asset to the REAL program's after-school offerings to both students and adults. Both groups will have after-school access to the expanded fitness facilities and large rooms that can be used for a variety of classes from Yoga to Zumba and to a new line of TRX fitness machines that promise to motivate both students and adults. The Athletic Booster Club is excited to open its new concession stand and offer a welcoming eating environment for spectators and visiting athletes.

Dr. Fochtman reminds our families: "I know there will be sacrifices made during our construction period, but I make this promise to all of our FIS students and families: It will be worth the wait!"





An Inspiring Educator

Away from Class but not from Learning

There is an old saying that if you want something done, ask a busy person. In the case of FIS teacher, Petra Götzen, this task was self-imposed! Despite giving birth to twins last fall, to say nothing of the never-ending care they require, Ms. Götzen published a fairy tale book in February 2014 and an educational book (German/English Version) on Teaching and Learning Methods for International Students in April 2014.

Ms. Götzen's story is unique and inspiring, and also a fine example of the dedication found among FIS faculty toward their teaching profession.

Ms. Götzen has a history of overcoming obstacles. In the late 1990's she was diagnosed with a rare cancer which had very bleak prospects for recovery. Ms Götzen refused to accept that "Nomen est

omen" (*it's all in the name*) and gathered strength to fight the disease by renewing her own personal and professional goals. Just six months after an operation which left her with a physical impediment, she ran a marathon. A year later she finished her Master's Degree in Teaching at the University of Washington, followed shortly thereafter by specialized diplomas in bilingualism, and English as a Second Language (ESL), her new vocation. She also has a Bachelor Degree in Management Information Systems. Like many fine FIS teachers, her career has become her passion.

Teaching ESL and working with colleagues at the FIS Wiesbaden Campus provided Ms. Götzen with the practical classroom experience and professional environment needed to further develop her knowledge and skills. Peer feedback and interaction while working with FIS Language Coordinator, Ian Gulliford, and the FIS Language Council helped her understand that cultural and language background determine how young students in international schools, learning a foreign language, need to be taught.

All this was meant to be the basis of her doctorate studies at the University of Mainz. But when the twins arrived on the scene, Ms. Götzen, instead, incorporated it all into her book so that others could benefit from her experience. .

Ms. Götzen's story is unique and inspiring, and also a fine example of the dedication found among FIS faculty toward their teaching profession.



No Need to Go Nuts

Managing Nut Allergies at FIS

Perhaps you have heard the following message on a recent flight to Frankfurt: "The family sitting in seats 22 E-G has requested that those sitting in adjacent rows, refrain from eating any food containing nuts." The reaction among the other passengers often varies from sympathetic compliance, to bold disregard, which not surprisingly correlates with that person's knowledge of peanut allergies. The one fact that every parent with a child with peanut allergies knows, and dreads, is that accidental exposure to peanuts, tree nuts, or both can be life-threatening.

Although only a very small percentage of children may be affected (<1%), studies in the USA have shown a threefold increase in peanut allergies between 1997 and 2010, and the numbers continue to rise. Allergies are a strong reaction by the body's immune system to things in the environment that are detected as foreign. In the case of viruses and bacteria, this is a welcome response, but the body can also have strong reactions to other substances in the environment, such as pollen, or nuts, which are not threatening, but nonetheless are detected by the body as unwanted. Although children with a family history of asthma or peanut allergies can be at higher risk for peanut allergies themselves, it is thought that adverse changes in our environment may also play an important role in who actually develops an allergy. Avoiding consumption of nuts entirely is not the answer, either. Studies show that children who have been exposed to nut products early in childhood, or have had mothers who consumed nut products during pregnancy, have lower incidences of nut allergies.

There has been a heightened awareness at FIS for this issue, and procedures have been developed to ensure that risk exposure is minimized. The smaller FIS Primary School community does not allow nut products. This is easier to manage as staff and parents supervise the environment of young children. However, in the larger Elementary School community, where children move around more freely, and exercise more independence in decision-making, the challenges are greater. Not only do teachers and parents need to be aware of the

problem, but also classmates, who in the past might not have thought twice about throwing a nut-laden snack into their backpack.

This year nine students with nut related allergies have been identified in the FIS Oberursel Elementary School. Various steps have been taken to ensure the safety of these students, including yellow signs posted outside of classrooms announcing nut free zones. The parents of classmates have been advised about the nature of nut allergies, and in which foods nut products may be hidden.

Each child with a nut allergy also has an emergency plan, should symptoms develop by accidental exposure. The school nurse, and also the Elementary School faculty and staff, are all aware of the presenting symptoms of an allergic reaction, and have been trained on how to administer an injection that helps to counteract the symptoms.

On the horizon, research on food allergies is leading towards a better understanding of the causes and mechanisms of allergies. Desensitization protocols for nut allergens are being developed that help to mitigate or eliminate the strong allergic reaction altogether. In the meantime, FIS parents of children with food allergies can count on the support of the school community to ensure that worries about health do not get in the way of a great learning adventure!

*Patty Lubbe,
FIS Parent*

A Hidden Treasure

Returning from Retirement to Serve Students

If you happen to visit the FIS Elementary School Library on any given Wednesday, you might have the good fortune to encounter an FIS volunteer extraordinaire who also happens to be a former faculty member and FIS parent.

However, prior to making Germany her home, Ms. Siegel was whisked away to Iraq, South America, Denmark and the United Kingdom, all in the name of expatriate assignments. Along the way, she raised three children, supervised a nursery for many years in the United Kingdom and maintained her love of the piano and teaching music. Upon moving to the Taunus, Ms. Siegel enrolled her youngest son in FIS and to the good fortune of children, parents, faculty and staff, Ms. Siegel secured a position at FIS as a Teaching Assistant primarily in the ESL (English as a Second Language) department. Ms. Siegel spent almost two decades on the official payroll of FIS where she exclaims, "I was so

"Marie's gift is the way she relates to the children and people in general."

*Mary Beth Steidl,
FIS Librarian*

happy in my job and was fortunate to work with a wonderful team of people." After her retirement from FIS, Ms. Siegel desired to give back to FIS because of all of the years of happiness she experienced, and

immediately returned as a substitute and volunteer, and all that in addition to being a loving grandparent of three.

She currently volunteers in the library, which she thoroughly enjoys as she has the opportunity to meet many children and serves as a resource for several of the Elementary School teachers given her wealth of experience in

the ESL department. Mary Beth Steidl, Elementary School Librarian, feels very fortunate to have Ms. Siegel on her team. (Interestingly, the two women have been FIS colleagues for almost 30 years). Ms. Steidl states, "Marie's gift is the way she relates to the children and people in general. While reading aloud, she truly brings stories to life and engages the children. Additionally, for many of our children who are far away from their grandparents, she provides a lovely substitute." Gillian Königer, an FIS 3rd Grade Teacher, adds, "Marie is always enthusiastic about reading with my students. With her many years of experience in working with young people, I can always rely on her to assess the students' needs and choose the correct material to help them develop and grow as readers. She always manages to engage the children with her friendly, positive and "can do" attitude."

The children adore their time with Ms. Siegel. Last year, when she told one of the children that his reading had significantly improved and he no longer needed to spend time with her, he asked her not to tell his teacher in order to continue his sessions in the library. In fact, Ms. Siegel still maintains contact with several of the children and their families she helped with reading many years ago, which is a testament to her skill and passion in her work.

FIS is lucky to have this Emerald gem who has graciously dedicated so many years to aiding the education of children. On a final note, if you happen into the library to see this hidden treasure, be sure to check if she has any sweets left, as she is a fantastic baker and never without a chocolate goodie or two.

*Martha Boston-Majetic,
FIS Parent*



A Host of Memories

Volunteering to Host a Visiting Athlete Pays Big Dividends.

There are more goals than just the opponent's net at the other end of the field when FIS Middle School and High School players compete. In addition to our athletes playing to the best of their abilities (and hopefully winning), our students are expected to grow as global-citizens. They travel to new locations, make new friends and lasting memories.

Key participants who are not in uniform are Frances Dielmann and Shannon Philipp. Dr. Dielmann is a 22 year veteran of FIS, mother of a 1998 graduate-athlete of FIS, and currently the Athletic Department Administrative Assistant. On her team is Ms. Philipp, an eight year veteran of FIS who is currently on her family's 2nd assignment in Germany. Ms. Philipp, who "plays" several positions, is the proud mother of an FIS athlete, the Vice President of the Booster Club (ABC), the Tournament Housing Coordinator and the Administrative Assistant to the Athletic and Activities Directors.

According to Will Moncrief, the Director of Athletics at FIS, "Without the team of Dielmann and Philipp, athletic competitions at FIS would not be possible. They help to provide a positive experience for athletes, making it possible to often win on the field and always off the field."

Dr. Dielmann shared a secret from her playbook. "Getting kids to make new friends from different cultures...and experiencing new places are part of the international athletic and academic experience."

Dr. Dielmann explained in detail, as only a doctor of law could, the conditions for team membership. She said ISST (International Schools Sports Tournament) and SCIS (Sports Conference of International Schools) participation in sport competitions

require the entire family to support the school and athlete. Dr. Dielmann said the families' housing of athletes

and working the concession stand are the backbone of the program off the field.



The author's children with visiting athletes from London.

Off the field, FIS athlete families are required to periodically provide a parent to work the concession stand and regularly open their homes to visiting athletes during home games. While not every parent dreamed of flipping burgers or running a hotel when they arrived at FIS, the experience for many is rewarding.



Martha Boston-Majetic, a mother of two FIS athletes, said, "It's fun to meet children from all over the globe and see how quickly they develop friendships with FIS students. Earlier this season, I had four high school girls spend over three hours at the dinner table, sharing stories, without even a single yearning for their electronic devices."

Ms. Phillip, who has spent countless hours at the ABC concession stand, is responsible for coordinating the housing of approximately 120 visiting athletes for the four major tournaments held each year at FIS. Tournaments are run separately from the typical weekend sports competition. Ms. Philipp said "Hosting competing athletes is such a fantastic experience to share with our kids. It is only possible at an international school." Ms.

Philipp shared a story of when her family hosted four rugby players from an opposing team that beat FIS on the field during Friday competition. "My son Killian was clearly frustrated immediately after the match. During dinner that night at my house, Killian and our guests shared pointers on how to be better players... I believe that the display of sportsmanship and bonding over sports were the best part of the tournament."

While Dr. Dielmann is able to house 60 to 120 students most every weekend with athlete families during the regular season, Ms. Philipp typically has to reach-out to the larger FIS community for tournaments. "Three days before a tournament, I usually need to find 30 beds." Ms. Philipp said even FIS administrators and faculty, as well as parents without kids in the Upper School Athletic program open their homes. Shelly Kelly, a mother of two girls in the Elementary School, housed four girls from the American School of London (ASL) for the ISST Softball Tournament last spring. Ms. Kelly said, "It's the case where everyone wins. The girls from London had a comfortable and safe place to stay, and my daughters had a fun time with ideal role models."

Frankie, an ideal role model and Grade 11 student playing infield for the American School of London (ASL), said, "Our team works well together and I hope the Kelly girls will one day have the same, fun experience." Teammate Isobel, a Grade 11 student playing outfield for ASL, jumped in and added, "We are all great friends and great teammates."

Nicolette, a friend and teammate to all and twin sister to Isobel, said, "We get an experience that is safe and welcoming so we can concentrate on our homework and softball." But it's more than just homework and softball. Cammie, playing outfield, spoke of the cultural experience. "The schnitzel was so good. Going to an old German town and restaurant was so much fun, and we couldn't have done that without our host family."

"These experiences both tighten and broaden us. They make us even closer as an international community."

Visiting athlete's parent

Isobel and Nicolette's parents attended the weekend matches and offered their own thoughts on the housing program. Their father said, "Seeing how different people live helps them choose how they live." Their mother added, "It's nice for them to have this cultural experience. Our children take these great experiences and that is what makes them who they are." Frankie's father, displaying his fatherly concern for his child, said, "It is good to know there is a responsible adult looking after the girls." Her mother added, "These experiences both tighten and broaden us. They make us even closer as an international community."

The FIS Warriors athletes have many trophies to display in the new FIS Sports and Learning Center. The entire FIS community has priceless friendships and memories from participating in the athletic program. Mary Lou Retton, American athlete and winner of five medals in the 1984 Summer Olympics, is quoted as saying, "A trophy carries dust. Memories last forever."

*Emmett Kelly,
FIS Parent*



Currywurst and the IB Learner Profile

Students Both Learn and Lead in Berlin

As an English teacher, I am always trying to create authentic learning experiences. To help my students develop as writers and thinkers, I know the most useful exercises are rooted in the real world, tasks that require students to produce for audiences beyond our classroom walls. As a year head, I look for similar opportunities. On our recent Grade 10 class

“I really appreciated having the chance to decide, with my friends, what we would do. It felt like it was OUR trip...not just something that happened to us”.

Grade 10 Student

trip to Berlin, my team and I created just such an experience with the addition of a “Free Wednesday” afternoon.

The midpoint of our trip started at Sachsenhausen Memorial Park. Visiting the site of a former death camp is a key part of understanding Berlin’s past. The experience was somber, memorable, and haunting... as it should be.

I wanted, however, to offer a counterpoint to this visit, and as I started to think about where we could go or what we could do in Germany’s vibrant and complex capital city, a moment of inspiration struck. We could give students a way to celebrate and explore their own freedom, while developing IB learner attributes.

On Wednesday afternoon, students decided where they would go and what they would do. Every pre-arranged group had adult chaperones, of course, but the adults were there as guides-on-the-sides. Students figured out how to get from point A to point B, researched and reserved their chosen activities, and worked together to explore everyone’s interests.

Prior to our trip we used a common Google Doc to coordinate plans. Teachers were able to give students feedback and push for necessary details. Students and chaperones chose the itinerary that interested them the most. In this way, everyone was doing something they enjoyed and had an active part in planning.

The experiment was a grand success. The chosen activities ranged from go-karts, laser tag,

and shopping to museum visits, trivia quests, and walking tours. Regardless of the itinerary, all students gravitated toward a mixture of culture and fun.

They also learned to work together and solve problems. The IB Programme seeks to create learners who are inquirers, communicators, and risk-takers, and putting part of the trip planning in students’ hands is one tangible way FIS seeks to develop these traits.

Most students cited the Free Wednesday activity as their favorite part of the trip. One student told me, “We liked being treated like adults, so everyone took the chance seriously.” Another said, “I really appreciated having the chance to decide, with my friends, what we would do. It felt like it was OUR trip...not just something that happened to us.”

Isn’t that what learning should feel like for all students? Not something that simply happens to them, but a series of experiences where their direct decisions shape the outcome for everyone?

*Robin Neal,
FIS Teacher*



New Faces, New Places

The beginning of the 2014 – 2015 school year has seen the arrival of a new administrator for each division at the Oberursel Campus. They bring lots of enthusiasm, dedication and years of educational experience to FIS.

Dawn Darling wasn't sure what she wanted to do for a living when she graduated college, but she did know where she wanted to go. Ms. Darling, the new Assistant Principal of the Elementary School, said "I wanted to go overseas." That passion has not changed.

Ms. Darling graduated from the University of North Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and went to work for Canon Copiers. Explaining her first job, she said "I felt there was something missing, a human connection... making a difference." In an effort to fill that void, Ms. Darling started

volunteering at night teaching English to adults. Ms. Darling summed up the experience, "I learned I have a real desire to help people improve their lives through education."

She packed up her small apartment and moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico where she taught Elementary School and earned her Master

of Science in Elementary Education from the University of New Mexico. While there, she still couldn't ignore her original passion. She attended a job fair with the goal to "move somewhere I had never been before."

Shortly after this, she did just that moving to Tegucigalpa, Honduras to teach Grade 5. After two years in South America, she attended another job fair and accepted a position as Assistant Principal and Grade 6-7 teacher at Munich International School. While in Munich for four years, she rigorously studied German, and met and married her husband.

In 2004, they moved to Washington, D.C., where her husband was transferred, and joined Washington International School

as the Primary Years Programme (PYP) Coordinator. Nine years and two sons later, the travel-lust again took center stage, and the family moved to Oberursel to join the FIS community.



"I learned I have a real desire to help people improve their lives through education."

The FIS Primary School did not have to look far to find its new Principal.

Caroline Joslin-Callahan was just across the bridge in the FIS Elementary School. And although an internal candidate, she brought with her all the pre-requisites for the highly demanding job: an international background, significant experience with International Primary and Elementary education and an understanding of the educational objectives at FIS.

Ms. Joslin-Callahan, born in the UK, has lived in Germany since 1968, and actually graduated from FIS in 1977. She has a Bachelor of Arts in International Education from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, USA, and a Master of Arts in Education from Plymouth State University in New Hampshire, USA. She is currently writing her doctoral thesis on Children's Development of International

Mindedness in PYP Schools for Durham University in the UK.

She started her teaching career at FIS as a volunteer during her undergraduate studies, and became a full-time FIS teacher in 1982. She has taught English as a Second Language (ESL) to students from Kindergarten up to Grade 5 and spent many years as a Grade 2 homeroom teacher before becoming the Elementary School Assistant Principal and IB PYP coordinator. She has also experienced FIS as a parent, having accompanied her daughters, Caitlin and Haley, from the Primary School all the way through graduation.

Ms. Joslin-Callahan agreed that she can bring great empathy to the position of Primary School Principal. She emphasized, "I can look at the whole continuum of learning from age 3 to 12 and bring perspectives from both sides of the bridge."



Daniel Cowan, the new Assistant Principal of the Upper School, is a man of many talents and interests!

Growing up in a big family in Canada and never constrained by the backyard fence, he was always encouraged to learn and do more. The entire family travelled frequently to places around the world to be with

As a college student, he played 2nd base for the Kelowna Jays, but couldn't resist playing basketball as well.

their father who was a professional musician. Music was also one of Mr. Cowan's early interests manifesting itself in guitar lessons given at age 12 to a Rock Band class he taught while working in Syria.

Mr. Cowan received a Bachelor of Arts degree in History at the University of

British Columbia. As a college student, he played 2nd base for the Kelowna Jays, but couldn't resist playing basketball as well. And he is very glad he did. One day while playing with his friends, a young woman joined their game. Mr. Cowan was definitely not sitting on the bench during that game. He later married this young woman, Feraille, our new IB Biology Teacher.

During the long summers breaks during university, Mr Cowan built houses. However his experience in coaching baseball, and teaching guitar lessons led him into the teaching profession. After 10 years of teaching in Canada and abroad, he decided to take on new responsibilities and became interested in leadership, so he enrolled at the University of Bath in England to get a Master's degree in Education Leadership & Management and started his journey as an administrator. This journey has taken him to Kuwait, Syria, Japan, Egypt and now Germany. Mr. Cowan and his wife, Feraille, are joined by their son and daughter who are enrolled in the Upper School.

Welcome BBQ





Sensing Student Needs

Integrating the Senses into Primary School Learning



When you walk through the hallways of the FIS Primary School, evidence of learning and creativity is everywhere, from the large canvas photos on the wall capturing children engaged in various classroom activities, to the colorful artwork hanging on the hallway bulletin boards. The FIS Primary School, which uses the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (IB PYP) curriculum framework, has always been dedicated to promoting the development of the whole child, addressing not only the cognitive aspects of learning, but also the social, emotional, and physical growth of each child within our unique multicultural community.

Beyond the typical classrooms in the Primary School is an inviting room covered with mats on the floor, a large brightly colored target on one wall, boxes of balls and other toys, and a swing suspended from the ceiling. This room represents an FIS educational initiative to provide early intervention to children who need additional support to mature the developmental skills that are so important to learning in the classroom. The primary school students often refer to it as “the upstairs gym.”

All children have different rates of development, and different strengths and weaknesses that impact their ability to learn. Some children learn to read early, while other children may not be able to ride a bike until much later than their older sibling did.

An initial and vital step in learning is taking in information through the senses. We use not only the common five senses such as sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell, but also senses like proprioception (deep pressure and body part awareness), and the vestibular system (sensing our movement and position in three dimensional space, which involves both our lower cerebellar brain, and the inner ear). Once the brain receives information through the senses, it must process that jumble of information, and make important

decisions regarding a productive response.

Although everyone has strengths and weaknesses, some children have a slower trajectory of development in how they process sensory input, which can be due to genetic, environmental, or even cultural differences that promote the development of different skills. One sensory area, or several can be involved.

Developmental delays in sensory integration can take on different forms, which may be disruptive to the child’s ability to learn. Sensory processing issues can be due to

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weaknesses in the motor system, such as not being able to hold muscles in a fixed position due to low motor tone and/or flexors and extensors not working in conjunction with each other. This can present itself as poor posture, or articulation difficulties. Exercises aimed at strengthening muscle tone can also be an important component of the

“upstairs gym” work to strengthen the development of sensory processing and learning.

The FIS teaching staff has been receiving consultation, education and supervision from Melanne Randall, a certified pediatric physiotherapist specializing in Sensory Integration. She praised the FIS Primary School staff for their early recognition and action to address the needs of this often overlooked group of children, who in many educational settings are still identified as having only behavioral issues and concerns.

Once a need has been recognized, Lisa Hargreaves, an FIS faculty member and certified physiotherapist, leads sensory integration sessions at the FIS Primary School on the Oberursel campus. Ms. Hargreaves is able to provide initial assessments of children and recommends specific courses of therapy, in consultation with Ms. Randall.

The bottom line is that children with untreated sensory integration issues continually face challenges in performing countless every day tasks, never mind the three “R” skills (reading, writing and arithmetic) and application of inquiry, which are the basis of lifelong learning. By seeking advice on these often hidden and misunderstood difficulties, and offering interventions that are effective in helping to mature developing brain functions, the FIS Primary School staff realizes that early intervention in children with sensory integration challenges is essential to their success, now and in the future.

Patty Lubbe
FIS Parent

“Wee”kend Warriors

Sports Fun for our Littlest Warrior Athletes

FIS has a robust and diverse athletic program for its Middle and High School students, but did you know that a sampling of sports activities is also available to our younger students throughout the school year? The ABC Saturday Sports program, administered through the FIS Athletic Booster Club (ABC), offers children from age 4 through Grade 5 an opportunity to enjoy three different sports throughout the year. With soccer in the fall, basketball in winter, and baseball in the spring, there are many options for our youngest athletes to newly learn or improve their skills and, most importantly, have fun!

Each sport is offered in a six week program, run on Saturday afternoons, with teams organized and grouped by age. The sessions are open to children of all skill levels - previous familiarity with the sport is not needed! The dates of play are set according to the FIS school calendar. Each weekly session typically starts out with warm up drills and skill introduction and practice, followed by a short game versus another team. The program is entirely volunteer run, from organization of the teams and set up each weekend to most importantly, coaching.

There is a fee for participating with each player receiving a team t-shirt. The remaining amount is contributing to ABC Saturday Sports equipment, and to the Athletic Booster Club's overall programs supporting FIS student athletes.

I still recall, when I began at FIS, reading the FIS mission statement posted in the sports hall (while having our children play in the ABC program) – and fully appreciating the emphasis on being a family-oriented school. This is what makes me very happy about contributing to the FIS community.

Just a few points, from the FIS Mission and Beliefs, that touch on what I believe the Saturday Sports program helps to bring to our community:

- Developing head, heart and hand is necessary to realize one's potential.
- Leading a healthy and active lifestyle improves the quality of life
- Commitment, enthusiasm and perseverance lead to success

If your child is interested in checking out some new sports, or if they have experience already, come join us on Saturday afternoons for some sports fun! It is a great way for both children and parents to meet new friends, and catch up with returning ones, too! The program is also open to children from outside of FIS; as the sessions are run in English, we do ask that participating students (from outside of FIS) be reasonably confident in English.

As the program is volunteer run, do please also consider lending a hand (or whistle) as a coach, we can always use the help of either head or assistant coaches. We can't run the program without coaches to guide our teams. You don't need to be an expert at the sport, to coach! We always try to place multiple assistants with a head coach to help out. Note, in recognition of effort required to be a head coach, the participation fee for child(ren) of the head coach (on the team coached) is waived.

Of course, feel free to get in touch if you have any questions, at abcsaturdaysports@gmail.com.

Karen Claire-Zimmer, FIS Parent



If your child is interested in checking out some new sports, or if they have experience already, come join us on Saturday afternoons for some sports fun!

2014 Parent Survey Results

Annual Survey Gives Parents a Communal Voice

While all schools provide families with feedback on student academic progress, not all schools invite parents to give the institution their personal feedback through a formalized school survey. Building open lines of communication between home and school is a hallmark of an FIS education, and the results of the 2014 Parent Survey offered an appropriate balance of commendations and constructive criticism for the school leadership to review.

A total of 642 anonymous surveys were returned by FIS parents. Demographic questions show that those responding were a suitable mix of new and returning families and also represented a variety of different cultural backgrounds.

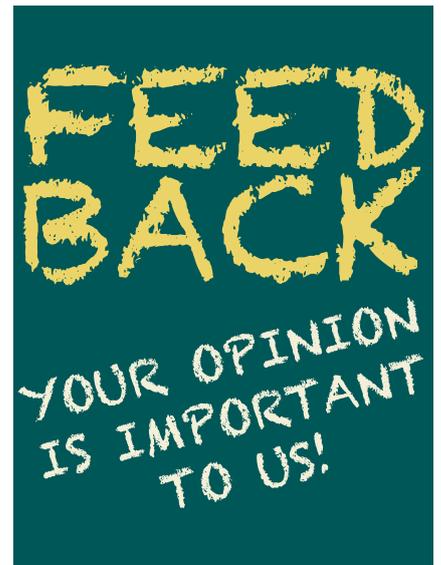
On the whole, as in past years, the survey found that the large majority of parents are pleased with key areas of the school. Roughly three-quarters of the questions saw a rise in parent satisfaction, which was measured by those responding with "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" to a stated goal of the school. Some of the highest levels of satisfaction were noted for helping students be better problem-solvers (92%), developing creativity (92%), employing a caring and respectful faculty (93%) and preparing students for life-long learning (94%). The final question on the survey asked for overall satisfaction with the FIS program and this had the support of a strong 95% of the parents.

Parents were also not shy about pointing out areas where the school could continue to improve. Four academic areas were identified as possible points for the FIS leadership to reflect upon. These areas still received strong parent support, with

"Given the diverse backgrounds of our students and families, it is a tribute to our faculty to see such a high degree of satisfaction in so many areas."

*Paul Fochtman,
Head of School*

more than 80% of respondents offering a positive outlook; while those disagreeing ranged between 12-17%. These areas, which were also identified in a similar survey administered to students, are as follows: appropriately challenging work, clear expectations for learning, helpful feedback for students, and after school offerings through the REAL program. One additional area,



Food Services, received only 56% positive responses. This data will be reviewed by the Food Service Task Force comprised of parents and FIS administration.

"I am very pleased with the results," shared Head of School, Paul Fochtman. "Given the diverse backgrounds of our students and families, it is a tribute to our faculty to see such a high degree of satisfaction in so many areas. I also agree with our parents that we can continue to better differentiate instruction to challenge students and also better communicate expectations and results. All of these points have been included in our Strategic Planning."

Although individual comments will remain confidential, all parents are welcome to review the results of all 31 questions on the school's website using the following link:
<http://www.fis.edu/survey2014>

Tomorrow's Leaders

Leadership Building at FIS

Here's a light bulb joke that you haven't heard yet:

Question: How many leaders does it take to change a light bulb?

A 1: Like Aristotle said, He who cannot be a good follower cannot be a good leader.

A 2: One to hold the light bulb and another to text someone to bring a new one.

A 3: One to help a team discover that a light bulb needs changing, another to bring down the old light bulb, and a third to empower a team member with a new light bulb.

There is at present no consensual understanding on what leadership is or is not, what is or makes a leader (or not.) Each answer above reflects a different take on leadership in our present day: the personal angle, the traditional hierarchical approach, and modern democratic concepts that empower followers and leverage the shared decisional capacity of teams.

In our world today, it often feels that every individual and organization wants or must be a leader. FIS wants it. We parents want it: for our children and ourselves. In *The Corporate Learning Factbook 2014* by Karen O'Leonard, consultants at Deloitte disclosed the sustained rapid growth of the leadership industry: the multi-billion dollar segment of the training market that updates workers on leadership skills needed to keep up with global enterprising tomorrow.

But what is leadership? And which leadership skills do children need to develop today to sail in tomorrow's world? To answer these questions, I interviewed Pete Sinclair, FIS Upper School Assistant Principal in charge of FIS Student Leadership

Development (<http://www.fisstudentleadership.org/>).

A Personal Leadership Framework

Mr. Sinclair candidly explains the school's framework for its leadership building initiatives:

"It's our Care Program, our beliefs: all values we consider key to support personal leadership." He says, pointing to a laminated card on the table, and clarifies further: "When I talk of leadership, I am talking of personal leadership – leadership from a personal perspective. A leader is someone who has people to support him, who has qualities that make people gravitate towards and stay close to them." He defines a few of these qualities - integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, friendship, up-lifting personality – traits that make people believe in and follow a leader, "otherwise we go look somewhere else", he says, adding:

"Our responsibility is to provide a school environment free from gender bias so that everyone can flourish."

"Leadership isn't something you get. It's something that will come to you when you have followers."

Based on its core beliefs, FIS offers an age appropriate leadership continuum, from learning to be a good citizen and not having to be told to pick up a dropped pencil when you are very young, to the care and guidance program in the Upper School, which Mr. Sinclair calls the "pastoral program":

"Pastoral means looking at a young person and figuring out how to support him or her before issues arise – not fixing problems after they occur. It's about being in front of things and being proactive."

Leadership Building Initiatives in the Upper School

In accordance with the Upper School Pastoral Program, every grade has a pastoral leader – a year head – responsible for the social, emotional and academic support of each person in that grade. Teachers that wish to be year heads volunteer for the role, and FIS administrators interview them. Counselors, Learning Support teachers, principals and assistant principals support pastoral leaders to help students develop good relationships.

"Having convictions and people who back us will allow us to have the courage to be leaders", says Mr. Sinclair.

Students from Grade 9 and upwards are offered an "Everyday Leadership" for-credit course with Mr. Sinclair, focusing on personal and professional leadership, and based on the works of youth leadership expert, author and consultant Mariam G. MacGregor, as well as *"The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People"* by American educa-



Pete Sinclair on FIS Leadership Building Initiatives: "There are plenty more leadership building activities at FIS than the courses I teach on the subject. For instance, the Trips Program from Grades 5 through 12, develop independence, problem solving, and communication skills. There are also the Sports programs, the Arts and Performing Arts programs, the Model United Nations, the CAS program, and even the Media Production Club that I coach for students from Gr 5-12: the students have to come, be on time and show responsibility."



Sweden practices modern leadership, says Stefan Syrén, FIS Board Member:

"For me, the uniqueness of the Swedish leadership model – if one is to call it a model – is that everyone has a voice. You don't need to be a formal manager or leader to contribute with ideas and make decisions. Working for an American company and after ten years in Germany, I have noticed that Swedish "bosses" tend to listen more to what their people know and ask more for their input. This can be misinterpreted in other cultures as being uncertain about what to do. But that is incorrect, it's rather that Swedish managers are not so bound by prestige. Asking for input from teams and employees is about a genuine desire to learn more, to get necessary input to arrive at a good decision."

tor and businessperson Stephen R. Covey.

"I start by showing them a tombstone: here lies person such and such, born this date, deceased this date, with a dash in between the years. I tell my students: it's the dash that counts. We get to write our own epitaphs. When you die, do you want people to mourn the loss of a great person, or to secretly go "good riddance"?"

For Grade 8 students and from time to time, Mr. Sinclair offers the course "Finding Your Voice", a youth leadership course based on "The Lion

King", the Disney musical, where students assume different characters and look at their strengths and weaknesses.

"I spend a lot of time with boys who think they are lazy," Mr. Sinclair says. "They are not. They just need to find out what makes them burn, and my desire is to help them find that out. They will do the rest - they'll help themselves exceed expectations after that."

What about the girls?

I ask Mr. Sinclair if there are any special programs for girls at FIS to

prevent their self-confidence from taking the customary nose-dive in their early to mid teens, and he replies:

"We know there is a gender bias: girls that go through single sex education tend to perform better, while boys perform better in coed education. But education shouldn't be about gender. FIS doesn't have gender specific leadership programs. Our responsibility is to provide a school environment free from gender bias so that everyone can flourish."

But isn't that an artificial disconnect from the reality they will confront beyond the school walls?

"It's only artificial until it becomes reality. You need to have an ideal to be able to change things. If we provide the environment free from gender bias, that's the experience they will carry into the world outside the school. An idealist is not a person who talks ideas: it's a person who walks the talk."

When you are not a leader – what are you?

But surely, not everyone can be a leader. And if you're not a leader, are you a loser? I tease Pete Sinclair, remembering the age-old negative motivational pitch of many a politician or sales manager. His vision of leadership strikes me as a unique crossroads between pop icon Andy Warhol, who once prophesized that in the future everyone would be famous for 15 minutes, and ancient Aristotelian wisdom, as implied in answer A1 to the introductory light bulb question: "Everyone can be a leader – in fact, at some point in our lives, everybody is a leader. And when you're not a leader, you're a follower. From a personal leadership perspective, we're all followers at some point, leaders at some point."

Maria Monteiro,
FIS Parent

Grade 6 at FISW

Introducing a New Level of Learning on the Wiesbaden Campus



"Giddy-up"! Grade 6 at FISW is off and running! But horseback riding will be just one of the many wonderful adventures Grade 6 students will experience this year.

A relaxed and pleasant discussion with new teacher, Mr. Scott Hardgrove, about the new Grade 6 at



FISW left me with two overwhelming feelings:

1. What amazingly good hands the Grade 6 students are in.
2. Hmmm, how can I go back to Grade 6?!

Mr. Hardgrove was born in Australia, had previously worked in Frankfurt, lived in the United Kingdom but is now back "home" in Germany. It's quite obvious that he feels right at home at FISW, an opportunity he believes just came together the right way. The chance to build on the solid FIS foundation, and at the same time being part of the evolution and shaping of the upper Grades 6, 7 and 8 is a perfect scenario, being both challenging and rewarding.

FISW Principal Andrea Rosinger sees the value of having an experienced but new teacher in the Grade 6 teacher role. It's helping students "make a break from elementary" and experience a true transition into the middle school years. Mr. Hardgrove says because of the small class size, the direct relationship with students is better than with larger classes; it's more intense as well. Students can't hide in this environment and the sky really is the limit for these kids.

FISW is "taking advantage of being small" says Principal Andrea Rosinger. She feels it's an exciting time with a "where can we take them?," "where will they go?" mentality. The beauty of the Grade 6 experience is that the students are learning about themselves, reflecting and asking why. Mr. Hardgrove recognizes the need to be a good role model for them and the importance of his personal quest to keep learning.

The chance for students to find themselves in Grade 6 reflecting on their own lives and experiences gives them a framework to better understand who they are and who they want to become as people. Mr. Hardgrove's background in counseling has been helpful. His understanding of how students relate – that you can connect with them but

have to learn "to meet them where they are," not where you want or expect them to be is a good reminder for all of us with children.

Principal Rosinger shared that adding these grade levels over three years is tremendously important to the growth and success of FISW overall. It strengthens the entire school because now many families on short-term contracts that may have had to consider moving their children to another school won't have to worry about that.

So what is Grade 6? It's a demanding academic curriculum; it's reflection; it's principled and it's tolerance. It's horseback riding and golf and wall

It's about finding out who they are and what they're capable of.

climbing and having a pingpong table. It's robotics, research-based projects and an overnight residential trip. It's about finding out who they are and what they're capable of. It's about being a good role model and being a constant learner... and it's about making a difference.

If my son gets to experience Grade 6 at FISW, he'll not only have a wonderfully positive learning adventure but I know he'll be in the best of hands as well.

*David Plaue,
FISW Parent*



Well Worth the Journey

The Extended Essay is a Hallmark of the IB Diploma.

If you thought excelling in six International Baccalaureate (IB) subjects is adequate, you would be wrong. After all, the IB's aim is to create a well-rounded scholar and

person. So in addition to the three high level subjects and three standard level subjects, students need to complete both an *Extended Essay* and give a Presentation for the

Theory of Knowledge course (ToK). The essay is a roughly 4000 word paper that is independently researched in an academic field of interest to the student.



“In terms of the other pieces of work in the IB, it is really the largest, the longest, the most intensive and also the nearest the student will come to a university-style paper”, says Daniel Toyne, IBDP coordinator at the Frankfurt International School.

The ideal subject is a process that lends itself to extensive research. By April of Grade 11, the IB student should have a clear idea of what they might want to focus their topic on. The student, with the help of an academic advisor, will help plan the essay and should dedicate time each

week to accumulate the needed research leading up to the summer holidays.

Ms. Sue Damerell, former English and TOK teacher at FIS for more than 30 years suggests “regular small bursts of writing, sleeping on it, re-reading and re-assessing what you have written is the best method. This way you develop it further and get inspired.”

By November of Grade 12 the Extended Essay is to be completed. So an average of 35-50 hours over

eight months will hopefully result in an essay on a subject close to the student’s heart, and which can also be referred to when applying to university.

A recent FIS graduate, Nicolas Frech, Class of 2014, was not only passionate about his schooling as a whole but Physics in particular. A well-rounded scholar and person, his enthusiasm in the Sciences proved to be the perfect subject for his extended essay in Physics, “How does the Shear Stress affect the Viscosity of Both Newtonian and Non-Newtonian Fluids?” Having loved sciences in Grade 9, he made “a connection” with his teacher Ms. Myers in Grade 10, who was to become not only a teacher and mentor, but his *Extended Essay* supervisor.

“Ms. Myers proved to be so valuable and dedicated” throughout his extended essay project and the three years Physics education at FIS. He also echoed Ms. Damerell’s sentiment that the *Extended Essay* is a process and not simply an end product. His initial idea for the *Extended Essay* was scrapped because the Technische Universität Darmstadt did not let him use their wind tunnel for experiments, so he needed to alter his topic. He said, “As long as you are open-minded, focused and plan your time, the essay develops naturally. You need to incorporate it in your weekly studies and not fall into the trap of procrastinating.”

In Nicolas’ case his subject choice paid off. Not only did he score above 40 points on his IB, but he will study his dream course at Karlsruhe Institute of Technology.

Although it may be academically challenging, if the subject chosen reflects the student’s passion and growth, the last summer spent before Grade 12 is well worth the journey taken for the *Extended Essay*.

*Nicole Smith,
FIS Alumni Relations*

Nick Christy – Class of 1989

Inventor, Entrepreneur and FIS Alumnus



As the FIS alumni program is expanding, we intend to spotlight alumni, who have taken their FIS learning experience to another level.

Our first alumni in the spotlight is Nick Christy. He attended Frankfurt International School for two years from 1987-1989. Nick says: "Frankfurt International School blessed me with incredible friends: kind, intelligent, thoughtful people who never did anything but encourage each other.

FIS also made joy an integral part of learning and the staff clearly loved teaching and genuinely liked the students.

These experiences translated to confidence, joy in learning and mutual respect. It was the most influential experience of my youth."

So what became of the boy with the cheeky grin and sparkling eyes who attended Hampton School in London and the British School of Brussels before being thrown in with the wild bunch during the 1980s at Frankfurt International School?

After receiving an impressive IB score, Nick took a gap year after which he studied Industrial Economics at the University of Nottingham.

Nick trained with KPMG as an accountant and although successful, his entrepreneurial spirit was never quite satisfied. His desire for change and sense of adventure took him to Brisbane, Australia and what he did next is not just inspirational, but truly a testament to the confidence and inquisitiveness acquired in his youth.

"When I moved to Brisbane, there was a significant drought and the government was mandating the use of low flow showerheads (not popular) and four minute shower timers (really unpopular).

People were complaining that they missed their old shower experience and I started thinking about how you could have a great shower experience and still use much less water!?"

"FIS also made joy an integral part of learning and the staff clearly loved teaching and genuinely liked the students. These experiences translated to confidence, joy in learning and mutual respect. It was the most influential experience of my youth."

I then thought about recycling and researched existing designs and found one by a British inventor called Peter Brewin that had genuine potential. We founded CINTEP together in 2009."

One could say that "the rest is history", but in this case we should say "the rest is the future."

CINTEP's mission is to make it possible for an average shower user, without compromising on their enjoyment of showering, to consume 20 litres or less of water per day, with a payback on additional cost of less than three years, for 50% of the population. Their showers use 70% less water and energy than conventional showers without reducing flow rate at the shower head, water temperature, pressure or time spent in the shower.

The system starts every shower with three litres of fresh drinking water and then captures, filters and heat pasteurises this water whilst in use.

His vision and perseverance paid off. Nick and his partner won the Green Challenge 2011, beating 716 other companies from 81 countries to win the € 500,000 first prize for the best business plan to reduce global CO2 emissions. (See Nick's interview on the Green Challenge website.)

Other awards they have claimed for themselves include the James Dyson Award, which is an international design award that celebrates, encourages and inspires the next generation of design engineers. It's run by the James Dyson Foundation, James Dyson's charitable trust, as part of its mission to inspire young people about design engineering.

Nick's recycling shower was also selected as one of the most important inventions of the year by Popular Science Magazine in 2012.

For further information about this amazing alumni success story, visit www.recyclingshower.com.au

*Nicole Smith,
FIS Alumni Relations*

Breaking Another Ceiling

Men Make History on the PTG Executive Committee



Oktoberfest was spearheaded by PTG-males Emmett Kelly (r) and Ranko Tripkovic (l).

FIS, a world of opportunities! When my family joined FIS in January of 2013, I was unaware of how true the school's motto would be for me personally.

I was one of those rare stay-at-home fathers pushing the stroller to campus. To be perfectly honest, I was a bit uncomfortable. The expat community at FIS is predominantly a woman's world. I was breaking this unwritten law: Men at work and women caring for the children! Eventually I made peace with my ego. I was ready to challenge women on their own turf!

This year I have broken the glass ceiling! For the first time in the school's history, there is not one man but two men sitting on the PTG Executive Board. First of all, I want to thank the parent community for their vote and support of my candidacy (even though I ran unopposed). They allowed a man from Mars to work alongside those from the planet Venus.

Has this been a real challenge? Of course not, the PTG is about serving and volunteering for our community. Even though our esteemed PTG president has referred to us as her 'boys,' and joked that we serve her like knights to a queen, we enjoy the banter as we join a group of very talented women who can multi-task far better than many men, I have worked with in my professional life.

Between my mono-tasking and their multitasking, I have no doubt we will accomplish great projects together. The mixing of genders has lasted since the dawn of the humankind and I assume I will survive this year as well. (But I may not accept any apples from the FIS apple tree !)

By the way, I've been emboldened to register for Pilates. Maybe in my next article I'll tell you how it feels to be the only man in a women's gym.

*Ranko Tripkovic,
FIS Parent*

PTG Oktoberfest



Wine Not?

In Vino Veritas!



In vino veritas! There may be truth in wine, but as many FIS families have discovered, in wine there is also fun! From wine festivals and celebrations, to hiking through vineyards along the Rhine, there are many activities in the Frankfurt area related to wine production. And, one does not have to partake in the local beverages to enjoy these festivities - exploring the wine culture in Germany is a great way to mingle with locals, try delicious foods, listen to music, shop, explore beautiful cities, towns, and villages, and learn about history.

Wine has been a part of German culture for centuries, with some vineyards dating back to ancient Roman times. Today, Germany is internationally recognized mainly for its Riesling, but as residents here soon learn, Germany also produces lovely red, rosé, and sparkling wines called *Sekt*. Wine is produced mainly along the Rhine River and its tributaries - making wine-related activities an easy choice for a day-trip or weekend away. Additionally, Frankfurt is famous for its apple wine, a fermented apple drink similar to British cider.

An easy way to learn about local wine, sample different varietals, and have a fun day out for the whole family, is by attending some of the countless wine festivals in the Rhine region. Wine festivals take place in late spring and summer, and finish up by the end of September. Germany has over 1,000 festivals related to wine and beer in a calendar year, so it's a safe bet that on any spring or summer weekend there are many to choose from. The larger wine festivals can feature up to 150 winemakers, such as in Bad Dürkheim and

Wiesbaden, and are particularly child-friendly, with carnival rides and games, music, and children's play areas. Many even end the evenings with spectacular fireworks displays!

Wine has been a part of German culture for centuries, with some vineyards dating back to ancient Roman times.

Some smaller wine festivals are a gourmet treat for the foodies in our community, such as the small and lavish Kernen festival. Kernen, a small town near Stuttgart, hosts an annual culinary wine walk where patrons can stroll through the vineyards, stopping at a variety of gourmet chef food stations. Moreover, festivals such as the Rheingau Musik Festival combine talented musicians with local varietals for an entertaining day, and night, out.

During the colder months, it's fun to explore one of the local museums

related to wine history, such as the Rheingauer Wine Museum in Rudesheim. Children love this museum because it is in a very old and dusty castle, complete with armor and a garden to play in. It's fascinating to trace the history of wine in an ancient castle on the banks of the Rhine, and a great place for some family photos. Families can also take a wine-themed boat ride down the Rhine, and hike in the vineyards. Visitors to Rudesheim can even ride a gondola over the vineyards!

Mainz, being Germany's wine capital, also contains two wine museums, with a third in nearby Oppenheim. Mainz is a great spot to explore local cuisine, with many upscale restaurants and wine bars, and even small "garage" wineries that offer home-cooked meals a few months of the year to complement their wines. Mainz even boasts the M. Sterk Winery, which has a meadow designated as a children's play area and a petting zoo!

Many vineyards also offer tours, and tours can usually be arranged in English if requested in advance. There are wagon rides through vineyards, and abbeys which still produce local wines, as well as many package deals for weekends away that include lodging, meals, river cruises, and tours.

Wine is a huge, and historic, part of German culture. FIS families are fortunate to live in an area that provides so many entertaining ways to explore this aspect of Germany

*Amy MacDougall,
FIS Parent*

Events Calendar

For up-to-date information on school events please visit our website at www.fis.edu

When	What	Where
26 October	FIS Applefest	Oberursel Campus
30, 31 Oct.	FISW/ES/PS Parent/Teacher Conferences	No School for FISW/ES/PS students
31 October	FIS US Parent/Teacher Conferences	No School for US students
2 November	FIS PTG Trunk or Treat	FIS Parking Lot
10-14 Nov.	FIS PTG Book Fair	FIS PS and ES
10-14 Nov.	US Winter Sport Tryouts	Oberursel Campus
13 November	FISW PTG Meeting	Wiesbaden Campus
13, 14 Nov.	FIS Gr 9-12 Drama Production	FIS Auditorium
17 November	Board of Trustees Meeting	Parkhotel Waldlust
18 November	US Fall Sports Awards Evening	FIS Auditorium
20-23 Nov.	Fall Break II	No School
25 November	FIS Gr 6-12 Holiday Choir Concert	FIS Auditorium
1 December	FIS REAL Term 2 Registration Begins	
4 December	FIS ES Choir and Strings Concert	FIS Auditorium
9 December	FIS Gr 6-12 Orchestra & Choir Concert	Christuskirche Bad Homburg
9 December	Athletic Booster Club Meeting	
11 December	FISW PTG Meeting	Wiesbaden Campus
12 December	FISW Lower School Winter Performance	Wiesbaden Campus
13 December	Breakfast with Santa	FIS Primary School
16 December	FIS Gr 2 "Forces" Open House	FIS ES Classrooms
16 December	FISW Winter Concert	Wiesbaden Campus
19 December 2014 - 11 January 2015 Winter Break - No School		

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Juyeun Kim, Gr 12

