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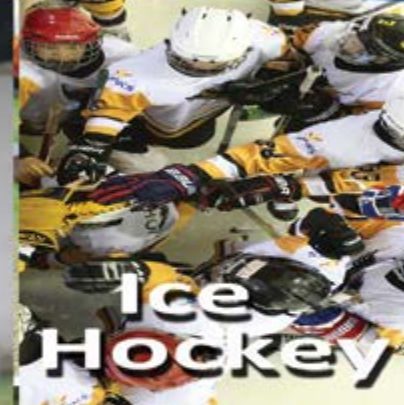
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Dear SCIS Community,

It is my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our SCIS Community for this 2018-2019 school year at Shanghai Community International School.

This was my 17th 'first day of school' at SCIS, and despite having so many years within our community, I continue to feel the same rush of exuberance and, of course, sense of trepidation that I had in year one. It is a healthy balance and a perfect reminder that all of us, students, teachers, parents, and staff are at the start of something new. This, in and of itself, is one of the many wonderful aspects of choosing a career in education, we have an opportunity for a fresh start, each and every year. We, as educators, can set the stage and establish the foundation for the incredible learning experiences to come. It is through this annual experience that we are able to create new opportunities for our students, opportunities that build the foundation of our community and students' experience within the school, and it is the combination of these shared experiences that then defines our SCIS community.

In response to the need for a space to share our varied experiences within SCIS, "Communitas" was created. Entering its ninth year of publication, it continues to be the venue for reflection, discovery, and celebration throughout our school community. The name Communitas roughly translates from Latin as 'the very spirit of community.' That same spirit is what we intend for you to find throughout the pages of this and future editions.

It is this spirit that has continuously fed our passion to deliver on our SCIS Mission to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring learners who contribute positively to our community. A keyword, not to be overlooked in our mission statement, is that we use the phrase 'learners,' not 'students.' This is because of our belief that every

member of our school community is a learner and we take on the noble effort of developing all of our students, parents, faculty alike as we move forward in our individual learning journeys.

We have undertaken some major initiatives in our community-wide journey over our 23 years of operation. We are now deeper into our journey as a three-program IB Continuum World School at both Hongqiao and Pudong. We are already seeing the rewards of all the effort as we witnessed our first graduating student to achieve a perfect score on the IB Diploma Programme examination. With an incredible 45 out of 45, her score placed her in the top .1% of all students that sat for the exam worldwide. Our learning journey is far from over, however, as we continue to refine and define how we learn such as our system-wide adoption of Teacher's College Reading and Writing Workshop as a framework for literacy learning in our lower schools.

We are proud, we should be, and this is just the beginning of a new year of opportunities, experiences, and growth. Let us continue to challenge ourselves as a community to inspire each other to become inquisitive, globally-minded learners. For now, please read on and find inspiration within these pages and I challenge you to share your learning journey with the editors of Communitas. It is going to be a great year, full of learning, 'a-ha moments,' and smiles so, please enjoy, and I look forward to learning with you this school year.

Sincerely,

**Daniel D. Eschtruth**  
Director of Schools  
Shanghai Community International School

# communitas

SEP. 2018

Editor: Mikael Masson  
Art Director: Mun Yee Choo  
Designer: Alles Zheng

Do you have a story to tell, a project to share, or art to be displayed? Let Communitas be a platform for your voice.

Communitas is about community and we rely on contributions from the SCIS community.

Should you have any commentary, observations, wish to submit articles, or inquire as to ways to collaborate, feel free to send all inquiries or correspondence to the Communitas editor via email at [mmasson@scis-china.org](mailto:mmasson@scis-china.org).

Communitas is published six times per year for the SCIS community, our friends, and the larger Shanghai community.

We are social! Feel free to visit us on the web at [www.scis-china.org](http://www.scis-china.org) and follow us!



## Starting the School Year off Strong!

All students from Nursery to Grade 5 at ECE and Lower School Hongqiao Campuses started this school year off with the same two-week unit of inquiry. This school-wide unit's central idea or deep understanding for students was: "Our choices define who we are as individuals and as a community." All classes inquired into the following three areas:

- Our diverse community
- The design and use of our learning environment
- Using the Learner Profile to guide our choices for ourselves, with others and in our communities

The classrooms, halls, and playground hummed with excitement as students and teachers built strong relationships by inquiring into their diverse communities. Playing name games, creating and conducting interest surveys, interviewing classmates to learn more about them and working cooperatively in small and large groups helped classes learn about each other and appreciate each other's diversity while building the foundation for strong classroom communities.

If you walked through our halls on the first day of school, you would not have seen beautiful, organized classrooms completely set up and fully decorated by the teacher. In most cases, it was actually the opposite of that— blank walls, empty bookshelves, and disorganized seating areas were evident. A big focus of the first two weeks of school was giving students agency in the design and set-up of the classroom environment. Students with agency:

- Have a voice, choice and ownership; and a propensity to take action

- Influence and direct learning
- Contribute to and participate in the learning community

Organizing class libraries and resources, making name tags and labels, drawing maps and proposing their ideas for designing the learning spaces gave students a feeling of pride and ownership in establishing their learning environments. Collaboratively creating routines, shared agreements and expectations to determine how to use the learning environments in the school was another big part of our unit. These agreements are constantly referred to throughout the school year and contribute to our positive school culture.

The PYP Learner Profile Attributes give our school a frame for how we treat one another and our environment. Setting a solid foundation and understanding of the following learner profile attributes during our first few weeks was another goal of our School-wide Unit.



Various opportunities for students to inquire into these attributes and develop a deeper understanding of them included creating posters, writing descriptions, role-playing, and whole group discussions where students made

personal connections to their own lives. Our intention is to use these attributes seamlessly in our daily interactions as it is the basis for positive school culture. Some examples include, "We are principled when we walk in the hall. We are caring when we ask a classmate to join our soccer game. We are inquirers when asking questions, and are knowledgeable when we find our own answers to those questions".

Each grade has now moved on to their next exciting, engaging unit of inquiry, but this school-wide unit will be one that will continue throughout the year as students are always reflecting on their choices and how those choices impact their learning communities. Building strong relationships, involving students in creating their learning environments and striving to demonstrate and reflect on the attributes of the Learner Profile was a successful way to start the school year.



By **JANETTE HAGGITH**,  
Primary Years  
Programme Coordinator  
at SCIS Hongqiao

Janette is the PYP Coordinator at SCIS Hongqiao and works at both the ECE and Lower School Campuses. She has been in education for over 25 years, many of those in Canada. Janette has worked internationally in Hong Kong and Kuwait and has PYP experience as a classroom teacher, literacy coach, and PYP Coordinator. She is a strong advocate of student-led inquiry and transdisciplinary learning.





## The Importance of Approaches to Learning Skills in the IB

I give a lot of school tours as part of my role in administration and I'm always happy to meet new families and to proudly show off SCIS. Our facilities are amazing, we have great teachers, a wonderfully diverse student body, a great tradition of performing arts, athletics and service as action, and we have excellent academic programs and successful students.

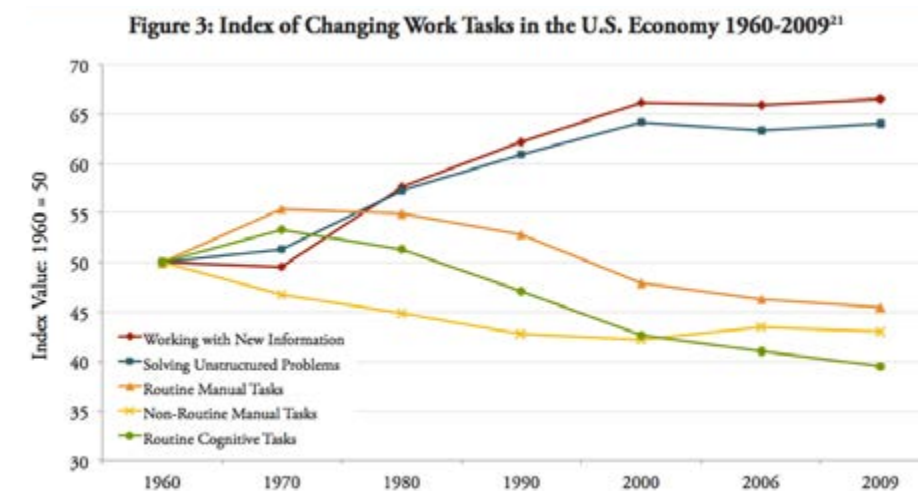
But as I'm showing off the school, I am under no illusion that if these same parents were touring another school in Shanghai, they would be getting a similar message, and shown similarly impressive facilities, and trophy cases and happily engaged students. So when they ask me the inevitable question - "Why should I send my child to your school?" - I know they are looking for a differentiator, something that sets SCIS apart. And while it's tempting to focus on community, because that is something we do exceptionally well here, my answer is in the title of this article, and it's the very reason I've worked so long in IB schools and why I couldn't imagine my own children in a different school - The Approaches to Learning.

ATLs are featured prominently in all three IB programmes at SCIS and are a large set of learning skills grouped into 10 clusters including Communication, Collaboration, Organisation, Affective Skills, Reflection, Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Transfer

**“The world doesn't care what you know. What the world cares about is what you can do with what you know” – Tony Wagner**

Focussing on skills is nothing new, but the IB has really made a point of prioritizing learning how to learn and knowing how to know. And while content is important, even the most cursory look at global trends in labour markets, university admissions criteria, and predictors of academic achievement show that skills, and not retention of knowledge are the new indicators of success.

In the graph below you can see that the nature of work has changed dramatically over the last 50 years with routine manual tasks – following instructions – and routine cognitive tasks – possessing knowledge - being carried out by computers and workers in lower-wage countries. There is a growing importance on the skills required to apply knowledge, handling new information and being able to think critically and creatively to solve unstructured problems, all of which are formalized in the IB approaches to learning.



Source: Levy, Frank and Richard J. Murnane (2013). "Dancing with robots: Human skills for computerized work." *Third Way NEXT*.

Just recently a study was published by the Davos economic forum predicting that more than half of the world's labour will be automated and carried out by machines by the year 2025<sup>‡</sup>. This means the workforce of the future will need to continue to evolve and people with the skills to take knowledge and apply it in novel ways will be the most valuable players in the marketplace.

So how exactly does SCIS teach learning? Our approach is two-pronged. First, we look at every unit of work in every subject we teach and ask ourselves – "what are the learning skills that students will need to engage with the material in this unit and be successful in showing their learning as it is assessed?". This may seem obvious but this intention is actually very powerful and forces us to think not only about the learning activities we've designed but to consider whether or not students actually have that skill or skills and whether or not it needs to be explicitly taught.

It's one thing to put students in a group and ask them to collaborate. It's another to ask whether they actually know HOW to collaborate and then set about teaching them. Having students solve problems in unfamiliar situations is a very valid way to assess them but unless they've been taught some of the skills around HOW to transfer the knowledge they might not be as successful. So we have made a concerted effort to focus on first identifying and then explicitly teaching these learning skills.

The second prong of the approach is to involve students in thinking about their learning explicitly. We do this by having them self-assess against a set of core skills – things that every student, in every subject, in every grade need to have to be successful at SCIS.



Things like being able to plan for meeting long- and short-term deadlines, and being able to give and receive meaningful feedback to name just two. If you've ever been to a Student-Led Conference, you'll be familiar with these skills as students consider their learning and their achievement and growth in their subjects around how successfully they've mastered these skills.

To be clear, students at SCIS are still acquiring knowledge and understanding, and knowing facts and figures will always be important. And we recognize that at many stages between now and their eventual entry into the workplace, students will have to take various forms of knowledge-based standardized tests. But if we only focused on these, we would be doing them a disservice. As Tony Wagner alludes to in the opening quote – knowledge is important but it's what you can do with that knowledge that will lead to future success.

‡ Sept. 17, 2018. World Economic Forum. The Future of Jobs Report 2018. 134pp.

<https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2018>



By **BARCLAY LELIEVRE**,  
Upper School Principal at  
SCIS Hongqiao



# MAP

## Testing at SCIS

### Introduction

There are many ways that parents, teachers, students, and administrators measure the academic growth of students at SCIS. One way this is accomplished is by conducting Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments at different times throughout the year. SCIS utilizes a company called Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) to conduct MAP assessments in the areas of English language and Mathematics for students in grades 2-9. Students take these assessments twice a year (three times in Math for Grades 6-9 at Hongqiao). While the scores on these assessments indicate a student's achievement level at the time of testing, the main purpose of the assessments is to measure student growth over time and provide teachers with data to inform instruction.

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### Considerations

It should be noted that while these assessments are administered at schools all over the world, they are designed for students in North America. What does that mean for our students? It means that many students may be at a disadvantage when it comes to language and certain cultural aspects of the assessments. An example of this is when a question asks a student to use or convert between

Customary units like converting inches to feet. With that in mind, some students may not reach an achievement level they otherwise would be capable of reaching. Again, the focus is growth over time; not individual scores at a given time. The content of these tests are taken from the Common Core standards, which is utilized in most grades throughout SCIS. The scores have no bearing on students' evaluations or marks at SCIS.

### How to Read the Report

Students and Parents receive reports of MAP results in conjunction with progress reports during the period of testing. These reports show scores for each test taken, as well as a breakdown of each content area of the test. Along with the student's score, the report shows the Normative average, which can be regarded as the world average for all students in the same grade level taking that particular test and the District average, which is the average of all students in the student's grade level at SCIS Hongqiao, SCIS Pudong, and our sister school, HIS, for that particular test and time.

### What is RIT?

Scores on the MAP assessments are reported in a unit called RIT, which stands for Rasch Unit. This equal-interval unit was created by NWEA to show achievement levels regardless of the grade/age of the student taking the test. Therefore, the scores can be compared across grade levels and time. The

assessments are adaptive, which means questions become more difficult when a previous question is answered correctly and become easier when an incorrect answer is given.

### What Parents Can Do

To begin with, parents should not place too much emphasis on individual scores and see the reports as a reflective tool and conversation starter. There is very little students can do to prepare for the assessments ahead of time except getting plenty of rest the night before. Parents can help with this by ensuring students get at least 8 hours of sleep the night before any MAP assessment.



By **ROBERT LA LONDE**,  
*MYP Mathematics*  
*Teacher at SCIS*  
*Hongqiao*



QR Code for MAP at SCIS



## Supporting English Language Learning at Home

Hello! I'm Jared Lorence, a new EAL teacher in the lower school. This is my seventh year of international teaching and I am thrilled to be a part of the SCIS family.

Many parents ask me how they can support their child's English language growth at home outside of the classroom. Learning an additional language is a difficult challenge and parental support is a big help. Below are a few tips parents can utilize in the home to support their child's English language growth.

1. Don't be afraid to use your child's first language. A strong command of one's first language is valuable for the development of second or additional language proficiency. Engage your child in rich, meaningful conversation in their primary language. If your child is having difficulty understanding schoolwork in English, explain concepts in your home language first and then assist them in completing the assignment in English.

2. Read, read, read! Reading is an invaluable skill that only improves with practice. Read with your child regularly and provide access to reading materials, both in your home language and English. Children are often encouraged to read when they see their parents or siblings reading. Set aside time to read together as a family to foster an appreciation for literature, folk tales, biographies, etc.

3. Use creative and artistic outlets to practice and learn the language. A fun way to practice and learn a language is to engage in creative activities. For example, make a scrapbook with your child featuring things or events from home, holidays, family visits, summer break, etc. and label and caption items both in your first language and English. Or, have your child draw a picture and then write or tell a story about it.



By **JARED LORENCE**, *English*  
*Language Acquisition teacher*  
*at SCIS Hongqiao*.



# All Learning is Language Learning at SCIS

At SCIS, we state that all of our teachers are language teachers in our Language Policy and English as an Additional Language Program Manuals. We say this because all of our teachers play active roles in the language acquisition process for our students, in addition to the English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher's support. Since our students are all learning an additional language, it is essential that our teachers are prepared and supported to integrate language learning within all instructional practices. The entire SCIS EAL team is now in the process of developing a teacher course called Key Interdisciplinary Language Practices. They are also the course facilitators. It is designed to empower all SCIS teachers as language teachers in the context of inquiry learning through the PYP, MYP & DP programs.

SCIS's vision for the course is that all SCIS students consistently experience interdisciplinary learning opportunities which are differentiated from academic and linguistic needs to enhance learning. The goals of the course project are that the entire SCIS faculty has the skills and knowledge to implement key interdisciplinary language practices in their planning, instruction, and assessments. Another goal is for SCIS to sustain a rich language development culture within our IB school. There are 8 Course Modules



*EAL teacher Jared Lorence co-teaches with Grade one homeroom teacher Kate Ross. Their goal is to co-plan, co-teach and co-assess for integrated language, literacy and content learning in ways differentiated for students' language proficiency levels. The EAL best practices course contains modules of differentiation strategies particular to language development.*

comprised of 1-3 forty-minute sessions for a total of ten instructional hours. Additionally, each module contains essential job-embedded learning and collaborations time, making the total course time of fifteen hours.

The five-course outcomes are listed as follows. For student learning success, SCIS Teachers will:

- Understand basic principles of additional language acquisition

- Understand the Features of Academic Language
- Apply WIDA's Language Performance Definitions & supporting tools
- Implement key interdisciplinary language practices
- Collaborate and co-teach for English Language Development in the context of our IB programs.

SCIS Hongqiao has been the first pioneer of the course's delivery, and SCIS Pudong will soon follow. The Lower school division of our Hongqiao campus plans to roll out the course beginning in January 2019. If you would like to know more about the course or more information on how SCIS services our English learners, please contact me or an EAL teacher in your child's division.



*By KRISTIE O'BRIEN, Lower School Vice Principal & System EAL Coordinator*



*EAL teacher Johnny Marotto co-teaches with Grade three homeroom teacher Ricky Whitfield to contextualize language development within the homeroom learning. The EAL Best practices courses includes professional learning designed to improve EAL & homeroom collaborations and co-teaching strategies. Through co-teaching, both teachers build each other's capacities to teach language and content.*







# Back to School Night: Getting Involved in Children's Education

It was wonderful seeing so many of our parents at Back to School Nights across all of our campuses. The evening is a great first step towards developing the home-school relationship with educators to help ensure a successful year.

Administrators and teachers were on hand in their classrooms to meet the parents of our community and discuss their expectations for the coming school year. Back to School Night is a great opportunity to learn about what's happening in the classroom and the great work and curriculum that are being implemented at SCIS.

This event was the first of many opportunities our community will have to come together and discuss how our partnership can assure that all students have the support and resources they need to succeed in school and in life. We strongly believe that becoming more involved with children's education at school and with our community is the key to student success and motivation as learners.

"Whether it is through attending one of the many learning celebrations that will occur during the school year or simply discussing learning experiences at the dinner table; the

research on the positive and long-term impact of parent involvement on schooling cannot go unnoticed," comments Liz Gale, Lower School Principal at SCIS Pudong.

On children whose parents are involved, Mrs. Gale mentions that benefits include: "achievement of grade-level academic expectations, higher standardized test scores and consistent school attendance". Additionally, "children whose parents are involved in their education tend to have higher levels of self-esteem, more self-discipline and greater levels of motivation."

Throughout the school year, there are many other ways that parents can get involved, and we encourage our families to stay connected and excited about their child's learning journey. As the 2018-2019 school year unfolds ahead, SCIS aims to continue to bridge learning that is happening in the classroom to learning that is happening at home.



By **MIKAEL MASSON PEREZ**,  
Marketing & Communication Officer  
at SCIS (Pudong Class of '08)







# SCIS Swimming – New beginnings

The SCIS Aquatics Centre at our Hongqiao campus underwent a large renovation project that started in the fall, into the summer and was completed for the first-day school. The primary aim for our renovation was to use the space more intelligently, bring light into our pool area and overhaul the changing area and office spaces.

Our entire pool was drained and re-tiled, including our pool deck. The diving blocks were replaced with professional Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA) regulation platform and competitive racing blocks from ANTI, a leading swimming equipment company. Our DAKTRONICS scoreboard was moved to a more appropriate location whereby our competitive swimmers can see the board from all angles in the water.

The walls, pool hall lights, and windows were all adjusted to suit our renovation and brighten up the area. Previously, we had two offices in different locations, which have now been merged together, freeing up space to make our changing areas spacious. Additionally, we were able to add in adult changing areas and toilets and create a new lobby at the back of the changing rooms for hair drying and storage for school bags and shoes.

As our swimming department prepares to host the Shanghai Swimming League's first swimming competition of the year on

October 13th - 14th, final touches are being made on our new and improved facility.

The students, the SCIS swimming team members, and our faculty community are delighted with this renovation and our pool area is now reflective of our dynamic swimming program here at SCIS.

### Health and Physical Education (HPE) Swimming

To begin our academic year our swimming department welcomed in Mr. Barrs' Grade 1 - 5 HPE classes to our Aquatics Centre with our Learn to Swim Program in PE class. Following the curriculum of the American Red Cross, our first block of swimming is based on safety and the fundamentals of swimming covering: safe behavior around water (indoor and outdoor), how to be rescued and the different kinds of objects you can use to rescue a person without ever going in the water, correct buoyancy, treading the water and kicking techniques.

### SCIS Swim Team

The coaching team is thoroughly looking forward to another exciting year with our competitive swimming program. On the first day of school, our 2017-2018 Varsity swimming team was invited to begin training right away. During late August the coaching team held four days of try-outs to gain a position on



our competitive team. With our team of 2018-2019 selected and our competitive calendar organized it is time for our swimmers and coaches to dig deep into our training and achieve our team and personal goals for this competitive season.

As the head coach of the program, it is important to me that the athletes are focusing on process rather than result.

Swim – Review – Plan – Practice – Repeat.

Come and support our competitive team at on October 13th – 14th at our newly renovated SCIS Aquatics Centre. Swimmers from the International community within Shanghai, Nanjing, and Suzhou will join to compete in the first competition of the year.

Congratulations to the team of 2018-2019, we are looking forward to a strong and dynamic season ahead.



By **CHERYL PHILP**, Aquatics Coordinator at SCIS Hongqiao



# HIKING THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA



The Great Wall, with a history spanning 2,700 years, is one of the greatest wonders of the world. In China, we have a famous saying that “You are not a hero unless you climb on the Great Wall(不到长城非好汉).” Our grade 11 students who spent two days hiking (16 kilometers) on this Great Wall are now fully eligible for hero status. This experience was compelling and impressive, here’s what our students had to say about it:

“Hiking the great wall was an amazing experience! We went through many physical challenges together and got to learn the history behind the Great Wall. My favorite part of the journey was when our tour guide told us a story of a well-known Chinese folklore that surrounds the great wall. As we explored the wall further we learned more about the history of previous Chinese dynasties, different ways soldiers fought off enemies, and the countless lives lost building the Great Wall. Overall, I gained a lot of knowledge from this experience of pushing myself physically, learning more about Chinese culture, and the amazing Great Wall of China.” – **By Mira ONG**

“Chinese culture is so different from anything I’ve ever encountered. It is so beautiful the way these people live their lives and it is unlike other cultures in many ways. Hiking the great wall was one of the coolest things I have ever accomplished and it was an experience I will remember for my whole life. Although the hike was tiring at times, the scenery we were able to view was unbelievable. It is crazy to think that people built the wall 600 years ago and it still stands tall today. Most people don’t have the opportunity in their lifetime to hike up a mountain to the great wall and then hike across it, more or less with their classmates at the age of 16. Seeing how other people go through their day to day life here makes us realize how fortunate we are to live the way we do. One little girl in the village told us how she has to run 1-2 hours to school every day and the fact that we have access to so many resources, such as school, and necessities such as constant running water, make you think twice when complaining about the little things in life.” – **By Leah Davis**

“I visited the Great Wall (长城) and learned much about its history. The

defensive barrier was built during the Qing dynasty to protect China from the invasion of foreign enemies. Some parts were rebuilt, but most of them have remained untouched so I was able to witness ancient Chinese technology in detail. Also, I learned about the sinister side of the Great Wall by learning about how many Chinese suffered during the construction of the structure. At the beginning of the construction, only soldiers and prisoners had to build the wall, but later, local citizens were also forced to contribute to the construction. It was a fantastic learning opportunity that I will cherish for a long time.”

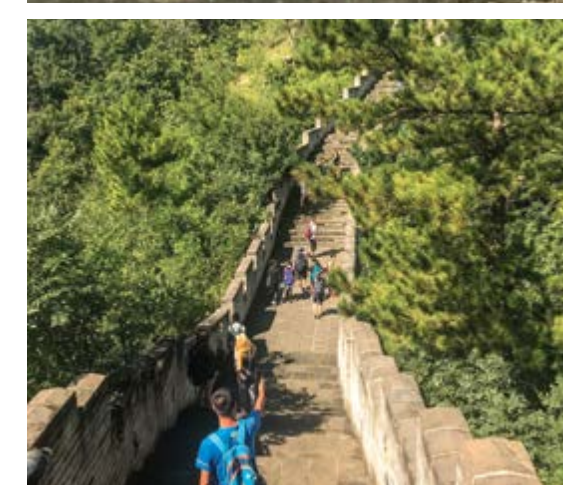
– **By Bill GO**

“Our China trip involved hiking through the Great Wall, camping and as well as learning the interesting history and stories related to the wall. The people were forced to work and labor to build the Great Wall. They had no choice but to protect their family and children. So despite the heat and long working days, they were able to finish the construction. They created a human chain where they passed the bricks up and when they needed more people they took Chinese prisoners as punishment. The people who built it were soldiers, prisoners, and forced laborers. It was rumored that the people who died from building the wall are buried beneath. The locals called the Great Wall “long city” but that was changed when more tourists started to come. It was good to experience the wall in person and see and hear the two different parts of the Great Wall.”

– **By Gion Vielle Guerzon**



**By KELLY HUANG,**  
Upper School IB MYP &  
DP Mandarin Teacher at  
SCIS Hongqiao







# Welcoming our New Grade One Classes

Growth in a school provides some challenges and always, new opportunities. This year we have grown by 150 students on our Hongqiao Main Campus Lower School. 100 of those students came from moving the Grade 1 classes from the ECE Camus to the Main Campus.

Safety in a school is always the primary concern. Several of the staff in the school immediately started examining the facilities and the supports that we needed to have in place for younger and smaller students. We redesigned a garden area to provide low-level play options that would be safe yet challenging for our students. Classrooms were expanded and brightened with more visibility to allow for inspiring workspaces and sharing. Bathrooms were renovated with appropriate size fixtures and privacy while still being able to be supervised.

For parents, the move to a new campus can be challenging with bigger students and a much larger population. Once the decision was made last November, we began meeting with parents and students to reassure them of continued quality programming and

that supports were in place for their children to be successful. We visited the ECE campus to make connections with children and the staff that would be accompanying them the following year. Parents and staff responded wonderfully and got behind the move with great enthusiasm.

We are a couple of months into the move and thoroughly enjoying the presence of the Grade 1s on the Main Campus. The move has been smooth and the new students and staff have added a lot of energy to the school. We continue to build on the strong skills given to them at the ECE and marvel at how well they have adapted to their new home. Good planning with properly funded preparations has laid a smooth path for our new families.



By **KEVIN HAGGITH**, Lower School Principal at SCIS Hongqiao







# International Literacy Day: Reading for the Future

Every year, our Hongqiao ECE campus joins in on International Literacy Day, a global celebration of literacy and its importance to individuals, communities, and societies. First started in 1967, the International Literacy Day is a UNESCO declared worldwide celebration of reading aimed at highlighting the importance of literacy, the ability to read and write.

This year the theme was "Reading for the Future" and students were allowed to leave their school uniform at home and come in dressed as their future jobs! Our youngest readers were also encouraged to bring in their favorite books to schools, which they then shared with classmates.

The day is a good reminder to stop and ask ourselves: is there any skill we take more for granted than the ability to read? Road signs would be confusing, you couldn't order from a menu unless it had pictures, or even send a text message on your phone. Not being able to read goes well beyond not being able to enjoy a good book, it has much bigger implications that impact all aspects of daily life. That's what I want our school community to think about when thinking about Literacy Day.

So what can we do to celebrate this day? First of all, I think it's a good chance for us to be thankful that we have the ability to

read and all of the advantages the skill has brought us. From there, here are a few things you can do to celebrate this day:

- Volunteer to help a child in Shanghai. [www.projects-abroad](http://www.projects-abroad) has a lot of options for volunteering with kids.
- Start a book club. Why only keep a great book to yourself? Book clubs are great ways to share your ideas and learn from other people. This website has all kinds of book club options. <https://www.meetup.com/topics/bookclub/cn/shanghai/>
- Start making books and literature a regular part of your dinner conversations. If you have a very young child it can be as simple as "what did you read today?" If your child is older, more detail can be discussed. Talk about how life would be different without books or the ability to read.
- Most importantly, READ to your child. If you are already doing it, great. If not, today is a great day to start. Try and make reading a regular part of you and your child's day.



By JOSHUA BALLI, ECE Librarian  
at SCIS Hongqiao



Age 2-5 Art Explanation  
2-5岁艺术启蒙



Age 4-12 Art History  
4-12岁艺术史



Age 3+ Art Skills  
3岁以上艺术技法



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# Making Learning Visible

## Documentation of Learning

A principal component of the PYP model is flexibility in planning and documentation of student learning, evolved through continuous evaluation of student work. The PYP Approaches to Learning framework highlights the organization and synthesis of ideas that form a unit and provides a platform from which to document a learning journey.

Documentation display panels provide a 'window,' an example of a learning story that enhances and contributes to individual and collective depth of learning. Collaborative work is made visible and helps prompt students to organize and synthesize their ideas, and documentation of student questions and ideas promotes further inquiry. Key unit concepts are embedded in each image, and quotes from students highlight their differing learning stages in the inquiry cycle. The graphics, images, and text are designed to be in empathy with and unique to each individual class.

As a result, students, teachers, and parents are able to reflect on the visible documentation of different stages of an inquiry cycle and see illustrated the current depth of student learning.



By BRITON COOMBS, Grade Four Teacher at SCIS Pudong

Grade 4 Ms. Briton

## Fractions of a Whole

an inquiry into the interdependency of ecosystems

Using the Agency by Design Thinking routine, **Parts, People (organisms), Interactions**, Grade 4C collaborated on an informative research project highlighting the ways living things in an ecosystem share and impact the environment.

*What makes a desert beautiful is that somewhere it hides a well.*  
- Antoine de Saint Exupery

**collaborating on our research**

The second and third lines of inquiry talk about how humans impact the ecosystem. This started me thinking about how I could fix and improve problems in our world. In the Desert biome I learned that it is not just how animals and plants interact but how humans interact with them too as top consumers. - Max

**collecting data**

In our research we found out that polar bears do not need to hibernate. They are meant to live in cold weather. They have adapted to the cold. We searched an internet website to find out about the living organisms that live in the Arctic Tundra. This helps us understand the balance in ecosystems. - Julian, Quin

**synthesizing our ideas**

All that I did not know what a Temperate Forest Biome was. Ashton and I had to research to find out about the living things that live there. We learned about the unique parts of the ecosystem. We learned that the word interdependence means to be connected. That sort of the words is - parts - and that means to 'hang' from something. All living things 'hang' from each other and are connected. - Jordan

**parts, organisms, interactions**  
informative essays

**Grasslands Biome**  
The grasslands biome is a large, open area of land with few trees. It is home to many different animals, including grasshoppers, mice, and snakes. The grasslands biome is important because it provides a home for many different species of animals. It is also important because it provides a source of food for many different species of animals.

**The Driest Biome**  
The driest biome is the desert. It is a very dry area with very little water. It is home to many different animals, including cacti, snakes, and lizards. The desert biome is important because it provides a home for many different species of animals. It is also important because it provides a source of food for many different species of animals.

**Arctic Tundra**  
The Arctic tundra is a flat, open area of land with very little trees. It is home to many different animals, including reindeer, moose, and caribou. The Arctic tundra is important because it provides a home for many different species of animals. It is also important because it provides a source of food for many different species of animals.

**THE TEMPERATE FOREST**  
The temperate forest is a large, open area of land with many trees. It is home to many different animals, including squirrels, birds, and deer. The temperate forest is important because it provides a home for many different species of animals. It is also important because it provides a source of food for many different species of animals.

**interconnection between the parts and the organisms in wetlands**

**form, responsibility, connection**

Pre-K Ms. Emily and Ms. Alaska

## STRUCTURES

CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN DIALOGUE WITH MATERIALS

Throughout the Structures unit of inquiry, Pre-K explored the causal interaction between materials found in the natural world and the different structures they could build. To help deepen their understanding of how structures are built, the children went on a journey with their parents to **B&T Design** to discover and learn about different building materials. This excursion helped the children formulate a deeper understanding of all the different materials that are used to build, shape and design our world.

*When I start my first idea for a building is the material. I believe architecture is about that. It is not about paper, it is not about forms. It is about the space and material.* - Leo Zentao

*I had this idea. It is pink.* - Jerry  
*These pipes go in the bathroom.* - Lucas  
*Look this metal brick wall!* - Isabella

**finding and sorting out**

**taking action**

*I have found up all the bottle caps.* - Frank

*Look at what is on the table card!* - Andrea

*We have to build it strong so the earthquake does not knock it down!* - Justin

*Have you seen the pipes to make it stand up? What are we going to do with the rest when we are finished?* - Ms. Emily

*What's that spinning in the wheel?* - Alessa

**causation, function, form**

**BUILD IT! CREATE IT!**

Grade 1 Ms. Myers and Mr. Schultz

## Cycles

interactions with the world around us  
the story of a worm

Everyday the natural cycles of the classroom creates new opportunities for learning. A student's genuine curiosity sparked a new cycle of inquiry and the journey of discovery for all of Grade 1 began.

Knowing that worms can eat our "food trash," we researched and planned to take sustainable action to connect our daily cycles of food waste, with the natural rhythms of the Earth's essential decomposers, worms. As a result of taking action to building a Vermi composting system, we experienced how we can positively impact the natural cycles of the Earth. The symbiotic relationship between our waste and our wonderful, wiggly worms inspired a community of children who will continue the cycle of inquiry in exciting and unpredictable ways.

*If you study the rhythm of life on this planet, you will find that everything moves in perfect synchrony with everything else.*  
- Lucy Korman, Run, Hide and Hide the Sun, The Writings of Lucy Korman

**tuning in**  
parts, purposes, complexities

*We waste so much food! This is just one day!* - Isabella

*I know worms can eat our food trash. We can save our food trash for the worms.* - Max

*All these leaves are for our compost bin. Look how much green waste we collected for the compost bin.* - Ms. Myers

*The Grade 1 children decided to use this bin that was already there for our compost bin.* - Ms. Myers

*We work together to break dirt for the worms.* - Isabella

*Worms don't like the sun. Worms have no eyes, no bones, no legs, yet they have a mouth. You can eat the good dirt and make money.* - Isabella

**sorting out**

*We need to be careful. Worms have blood. We can hurt them.* - Isabella

*The worm compost bin has brown waste, green waste, and worms!* - Isabella

*Every Wednesday we check on our worms to see if they are healthy and alive.* - Isabella

**making conclusions**

*SCIS uses too much food! We should all feel bad!* - Isabella

*After, it's so fun!*

*What are the cycles of food waste? I eat, I throw food, food on truck, worms get food, the worms eat food, more food grows.* - Isabella

*We have to be very careful with worms because it is easy for us to hurt them, even by mistake.* - Isabella

*What if I ask people about it then they have to think about it!* - Isabella

**connection, causation, function**



From left to right: Lauren, Keith, Eric, Melissa, and Bryce



## Meet the Kirwins

Convinced by a friend and former SCIS teacher to make the move, the Kirwins experienced their first ever international living experience by moving to Shanghai and coming to SCIS three years ago. They haven't looked back since.

### Where do the Kirwins hail from?

**Eric:** We lived in Michigan in the United States before coming to Shanghai. I don't think I left the US too many times before I came here. It was all Michigan. We lived 8 or 9 years in Hastings then we moved to Battle Creek so we were close to where we worked. Our commute went from 45 minutes in a car one way to 3. Our daughter still lives in Houghton, in the upper peninsula of Michigan. She graduated from Michigan Tech University in 2016 and works for the university as a College Access Coordinator. She just recently got engaged, so we're getting ready to help pay for a wedding! Our extended families still live in the Midwest

area, and we do lots of driving in the summers to visit them.

### SCIS was your first international teaching experience?

**Eric:** Yes. A former teacher at SCIS recruited us. He is a really good friend of mine and I don't think we would ever do anything but teach in an international school now. The first time he went we thought it was crazy. Who does that? Who leaves a tenured teaching job in Michigan? When he and his family came back to Shanghai for the second time, we actually rented his house from him when he was gone, and we really started thinking about it a lot more. He helped us get started with our paperwork, we went to a job fair in January 2015 and met Mr. Balli and Mr. Stubbs. It wasn't until later that I found that Jeremy, my friend, had already talked to Mr. Balli and pretty much secured our job for us.

### How was the transition going from a public education system to an international one?

**Eric:** We worked in a fairly urban school and eventually, Melissa worked in a more suburban type school. At our old school, Math was the worst subject, nobody liked it. The students struggled, test scores were low, it wasn't important to a large population of the students. Then, I came here and I already gained popularity because I teach math! Students come up to me and say, "Ooh, you teach math, that's exciting!" That's been a total change for me and do not have to worry about a lot of the behavioral issues makes it so much easier to connect with kids. When I'm not the one telling the kids "Hey, stop doing that", all the time, then it's easier for us to say, "Oh, what is something you are interested in?"

**Melissa:** I think the ability to be a bit freer with what we teach and how we teach is a big difference I notice. Even though we have to stay within the parameters of IB, it's not so stringent that every student needs to know every vocabulary word, every test question, we're not teaching to a standardized test. It's flexible in the sense that if students are really interested in a particular area of the curriculum then we can easily steer in that direction, making learning more personal. Whereas with schools in the United States, in general, it was really tough to make sure that we give the kids options to learn what they want because they had to learn what was going to be on the standardized tests.

### What is the difference with 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade here compared to Michigan?

**Bryce:** The kids here are nicer and more welcoming. I remember in my old school, if there was a new kid, they'd be quickly cast away because everyone else was already in the school since the beginning of the school year or longer. But here, there are new kids every year so you can make friends with them. It is also easier to make friends here.

### How do you like teaching internationally? Why did you decide to give it a go?

**Eric:** The main thing is that we don't have to worry about the behavioral part,

I feel like I have been able to become a better teacher working here because that's the thing I focus on. I focus on how to get kids to learn because I don't have to worry about how to get them to behave. So, trying different strategies, different ways to get kids to interact with learning, and to interact with each other I developed and strengthened my skills and strategies as a teacher.

**Melissa:** I think the collaboration among teachers is really strong. A part of it we have to, but also we do it naturally, "Hey I'm doing this or I'm doing that or try this thing". Whether its lower school or upper school, everyone is very open to share and help each other because we do have so many new people that come in and out that we have to work together to be consistent across the board.

### How long do you see yourselves teaching internationally?

**Eric:** Until retirement! Until they make me stop. We won't go back to the US. We've already decided. We keep thinking maybe one or two years here at SCIS and us kind of look at where Bryce is at and how often we should move him. Whether he will finish middle school or high school or will he finish this year, it's a tough decision as we look at other places. Living in Shanghai is easy. The transportation, the food, and the people are great here, and it's safe. We don't have to worry about him going out or if we go out for a run, for a bike, or whatever, we don't have to worry about anything scary happening. In America, we had to watch who is around, what they are doing, we had to be careful. We were practicing lockdown drills, covering windows, blocking doors and preparing for the worst in our school. Here our doors are open and transparent, free to prepare for success in learning not success in a terrifying situation.

### How is it for you being a student at SCIS?

**Bryce:** I really like how independent the learning is but how we also still communicate with other students. Plus, the whole laptop and technology in SCIS are really convenient. I remember my teacher telling me that in his old school you just take out your big notebook and

copy whatever the book had. The learning here is a lot more diverse.

### Favorite thing about living in China/Shanghai?

**Eric:** I am a small town boy. I grew up in a town where there are people that never left that town. Not even leave the country or the state. They lived in that town their entire lives and maybe even their parents lived there. There are family names that go back generations. Coming here, there are more people living in this city than in my state and it's a big state. You can drive for 12 hours and not be all the way across the state. Shanghai is a megacity and the variety of things that you can do, to the food that you can eat, the people that you can meet is amazing. I love the international flair that is in Shanghai that is only getting bigger and stronger.

**Melissa:** I think it's a challenge to get used to the cultural differences between China and America and especially mid-western Michigan where everybody talks to everybody and everybody stands two feet away from each other. There is personal space there, but there is none of that here. But, the food and learning about different people, why they behave that way and how that came about is really interesting. I think we also get that from our students a lot when we listen to their stories, experiences, and how they interact with each other even though they are from different cultures.

### Favorite thing about SCIS?

**Melissa:** The people, SCIS is very community-based. Everybody wants to hang out on the weekends and get together. When we lived across the street, we didn't mind coming to school and we still come here a lot on the weekends. There are lots of fun school events, like BBQs and the International Food Fair, making our school lives interconnected with the community in a great way. We enjoy each other and choose to hang out together. We work to build fun activities to keep us connected. There's a lot of people who want to stick together and our kids hang out.

**Bryce:** The people are just really nice and I've never heard any stories about bullying

or anything. It's just good to not have to worry.

### Where can we find you when you are not in the classroom?

**Bryce:** I play baseball most of the time and mostly at my house or at my friend's house playing video games. My friend Moses and I, we just play after school and online, and I go to his house.

**Melissa:** I'm either coaching, shopping, planning our next vacation or relaxing.

**Eric:** I could say that you will find me on the soccer field or taking a nap.



Interview by MIKAEL MASSON PEREZ, Marketing & Communication Officer at SCIS (Pudong Class of '08)







# Overcoming the Unknown

Moving from Sweden to Shanghai just under three years ago was a tough transition at first for the Mladan family. But, with the help and support of the SCIS community, they were able to quickly adapt to life in the big city and the family has since never looked back and are enjoying life in China to the fullest.



Interview by LAURIE LUEBBE,  
Community Relations Officer & Lower  
School Counselor at SCIS Pudong.

## Tell us about your family. Where is your home country or countries?

**All:** Our home is in Sweden, Gothenburg. That is where Lea, Alex, and Marko were born. But we also have roots in Serbia, Croatia, and the Czech Republic.

**Nina:** I was born and raised in Prague, the Czech Republic by a Serbian father and Czech mother. I met Goran in Prague in 1996 and moved to Sweden in 1998.

**Goran:** I was born and raised in Landskrona, Sweden by Serbian parents from former Yugoslavia, now Croatia.

## What brought you to China and how long have you been here?

**Goran:** It was my job at Volvo Cars that brought us here. We got the opportunity to relocate to China. It was one of the best decisions we have taken as a family. We have been here for almost 3 years now and if we would move the clock back we would for sure make the same decision again.

## After a month of being in Shanghai, what were your thoughts?

**Nina & Goran:** How will we survive this? What will we eat? How will we be able to adjust to the life here? And how will the kids manage at school? Wow, this is really an adventure, but are we prepared? We thought we lived in a big city before – not compared to Shanghai.

**Marko:** I don't really remember, I was only 4 years old then.

**Lea:** I had a really hard time adjusting to school and learning English. Everything was so new and different. I just wanted to go back home.

**Alex:** I felt the same as Lea when it comes to school and English. It was also hard to find friends to hang out with because most of them lived 30 mins to 1 hour away from me.

## At the end of two years, had your feelings about Shanghai changed? If so, how?

**Nina & Goran:** Yes, of course. We love it here. Shanghai is an amazing city that has everything to offer. The kids love the city, our compound, and SCIS. We should have moved back to Sweden last December, but nobody wanted to leave Shanghai and we got the opportunity to stay - it was a simple decision. We still have so much more to experience and see in Shanghai and China.

**Lea:** Yes, definitely. Now I love the school and the people in it. I have realized that the community we have here cannot be found anywhere else. I also realized that my school in Sweden wasn't challenging enough for me. SCIS helped me grow as a learner and as a person.

**Marko:** I love living in Shanghai and going to SCIS. I have lots of friends from many different countries. Even if some of my friends left, new ones came and I became friends with them also.

**Alex:** Yes, my feelings have changed - now I know English and I have found lots of people to hang out with. I also realized that I could do much more than I thought I could, and SCIS helped me to achieve this.

## What are some of your favourite memories of your time in China?

**Nina & Goran:** It is interesting to experience the culture and life other than Europe. Most countries in Europe are quite similar but living in China is completely different. We have some funny moments due to our inability to speak Mandarin. But probably the most memorable time is when we went to Beijing and the Great Wall of China. That was amazing to see, and we would like to go back one more time.

**Lea:** Definitely China Trips. The opportunity to spend a week in a new city and do fun activities with my classmates is incredible. I would never get this opportunity in Sweden. I also enjoyed when my grandpa and other relatives came to visit us. When they were here we were able to show them Shanghai and how amazing our lives here are.

**Marko:** That dad bought me an ATV that I get to ride around our compound.

**Alex:** I think my favourite moments are all the floorball and ice hockey events I get to go to, from practices and tournaments

to meeting NHL stars. I also loved our trip to the Great Wall of China and our relatives coming to visit us here.

## Do you have a list of things to do or experience before you move on to your next destination?

**Nina and Goran:** We would like to travel more in China. Especially to see the rivers and nature. And improve our Mandarin.

**Lea:** Graduate from SCIS.

**Marko:** I would like to get better at rollerblading.

**Alex:** I look forward to going on my first China trip. Also, I would like to see more nature and have not just a great, but awesome year at SCIS!

## If you were to give advice to a new family, what would it be?

**Nina & Goran:** Enjoy the time you have here and the opportunity you have been given. It can sometimes be tough and difficult, especially in the beginning, but most of the time life in Shanghai is amazing. Have a positive attitude and you will overcome all the challenges!

**Marko:** Don't worry, be happy!

**Lea:** As a new family it's always hard, I personally know because I came with very limited English skills which made school work very difficult. You need to trust that the community we have at SCIS will help you if you ever need it.

**Alex:** Don't be nervous, it will make things worse. Instead, be excited because you just walked into a great adventure - and trust me you will love it!



From left to right: Lea, Nina, Marko, Goran, and Alex



# STRIVING FOR GREATNESS: SAMUEL ZHANG CLASS OF 2019



Senior Samuel Zhang has been at SCIS since 2012 and has had an incredible journey with us. From attaining the honor roll every semester for the past five years, to being involved in Jazz band and theatrical productions after school, Samuel is heavily involved in all aspects of life at SCIS and is a role model for many. After graduation, the Singapore-born senior has aspirations of studying medicine and becoming a doctor.

### When did you realize that you loved science?

"Well, my dad was a scientist and studied to become a geophysicist, and his dad was a chemist. Both of my mom's parents are doctors. I would say the love of science runs in the family. Although, now my father works in the field of education.

### When did you join the SCIS community?

"I arrived here in 6th grade. After being

turned away by SAS for being a terrible English speaker, I arrived at SCIS Pudong. The Middle School principal at the time was Mr. Smeins. He greeted me and my parents with an unforgettable firm handshake and a big smile and took us on a tour. I instantly knew that I had found my perfect school."

### You're known around SCIS as a guy who loves and aspires to devote your career to medicine. How does that passion influence your daily life?

"Well, I practice medical procedures on synthetic materials at home, every medicine kid does it, trust me. For example, I practice my suturing skills on fake skin and other experiments within the confines of my bedroom (where I keep a 4KG fire extinguisher just in case)."

### Samuel, you were awarded the EARCOS Global Citizenship Award last June at SCIS. Talk to us about

### other times when you were awarded a recognition for your successes.

"Well, every year except for grade six, I have been on the Honor Roll. At that time, my English was still a bit limited, so I wasn't able to show my ability and didn't make the list that year. But, every other term, I've made the Honor Rolls and some principal honor roll here and there.

### Think back to your days in elementary school. Which teacher inspired you the most and how?

"I would say it definitely, Du Lao Shi. She was my Mandarin teacher. Coming from Singapore, my Mandarin was not outstanding. Mrs. Du gave me confidence and inspired me to learn, as well as opportunities to perform on stage with Chinese celebrities where I recited poetry. This was a turning point in my Mandarin acquisition and sparked a love for the theater, which I am very thankful for."

### What are some of your highlights you'll always remember about SCIS?

"Well, MAC 5 has been a lot of fun. I play the tuba. I also love being a part of the SCIS Jazz band. I'll never forget swimming and water polo for SCIS and of course, Cross Country, the odd person's sport. Winning in sports never mattered to me as I compete with my old self, not others (to feel better). Recently, I played Jimmy in the Broadway Jr. production of "Thoroughly Modern Millie." It was an immense amount of work, and a very challenging activity to do during my first year of IB, but the invaluable experience and the memories are certainly priceless."

### Samuel, there's not ignoring the brace that you have recently begun to wear. Can you tell us about that?

"Yes, I have to wear it twenty-two hours a day. In the past, I suffered from back pain which led to doctor visits and a diagnosis of Kyphosis, an abnormal curvature of the spine. The good news is that this brace will fix the problem. The bad news is that I can't play sports anymore."

### You've told us a little about your father. Tell us about your mom and how she has inspired you.

"My mother was a music teacher and

an opera singer. She inspired my love of music and opened the realm of music and arts for me. She gave me the passion for art that my "science" dad lacks in. You could say that I have the best of both."

### What is your favorite class here at SCIS?

"That's a very hard question, but if I had to choose, I would say biology. But, I really love all my classes, although going into Econ (my weakest subject), I had very little prior knowledge. I do enjoy the content, and the excitement of thinking above and beyond the superficial part of economy, and I appreciate its uniqueness."

### It is rumored that you sit in on classes that you are not required to attend. Is this true?

"Yes, it is. I sometimes go to Physics during my study hall. I enjoy learning by listening in on Mr. Bilz's class to satisfy my craving for science. I am very thankful for Mr. Bilz and my physics classmates for letting me do so."

### Sam, tell us about your participation at the Oxford University pre-med summer program.

"I learned about the essential values to become a doctor such as TENACITY, RESPECT, and EMPATHY. I also learned about the importance of being a good communicator. I was taught patients will appreciate knowing what's going on in our minds, so being open with them is important. Being empathetic and respectful will build trust between a doctor and his or her patient. I also learned that I should maintain respect regardless of how I may be treated as a professional. So, basically, emotional maturity is key to becoming a doctor."

### After attending SCIS for what's leading into 6 years, what are some lessons that have changed you as a person?

"This global community has taught me respect as I broaden my political opinions and sharpen my skills of ethical decision making."

### So, after SCIS where you plan yourself for university?

"Med school, med school, and more med school! My first choice is the National University of Singapore and study

medicine or Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, the second choice is either Oxford University or Cambridge University"

### When you graduate in May of 2019, will you go right into university?

"No. I will fulfill my obligatory military service of 2 years in the Singapore army. And even after that, I have to return once a year for a two-week stint until I am about forty years of age."

### What would you say to others considering SCIS as a place to enter the MYP or DP IB programs?

"The Faculty and student relationship are unbeatable. DP teachers really care about me and my education here at SCIS. The small classes offer me so many chances to get one-on-one support. For instance, my High Level chemistry classes currently have just a handful of students. The support I get from all my teachers here is so helpful. It really is like a family."

### Your parents must be happy about your attitude towards learning. Did they pressure you into being such a great student?

"It's quite the opposite regarding the pressuring." In my opinion, my parents are not typical Singaporean parents. As educators, they inspire me to find my own path and to actively love learning. They have never had any intentions to put a lot of pressure on me. They just want me to be happy, healthy and aspire to learn. I am so grateful for them."

### Do you have Advice for students at SCIS?

"I have noticed that most people experience a sharp decline in confidence and or grades in the first semester in grade 11 as they don't get the outcomes that they had hoped for. My advice is to have faith in themselves, push on, and to continue to learn. Never lock yourself in a room to cram for an exam, but rather to keep your life balanced, drop the procrastination, crave for the passion for knowledge, always stimulate yourself with exciting concepts and discoveries of IB subjects that are not in the format of lectures. Really, if you don't have any interest in a class, find more ways to inspire yourself."



Interview by LAURIE LUEBBE, Community Relations Officer & Lower School Counsellor at SCIS Pudong.





From left to right: Charlotta, Jacob, Rebecca, and Rikard

## A Walk Down Memory Lane with the Hesslevik Family

Hailing from Helsingborg, Sweden, the Hesslevik family attended SCIS for two years, starting back in 2010. Their stay, although brief, had such a tremendous impact on Jacob and Rebecca's lives growing up that they had to come back a visit their old school on a recent trip to Shanghai. I had the pleasure to walk around school grounds with them and then sit down to discuss why it meant so much for them coming back to SCIS after all these years.

### What made you decide to move to China?

**Rikard:** It was a decision in my company to start up a manufacturing site in Suzhou. They asked me whether I would like to be involved in setting that up and I accepted. The whole family supported the decision and were surprisingly positive right from the beginning. We saw it as a big challenge but a great opportunity for the family to see the world and experience a new culture.

### And was there a bit of internal discussion prior to the decision being made?

**Rikard:** Yes, a little bit. The kids were a little too young at the time so it really was up to me and my wife to decide, but like I mentioned we saw it as a positive experience and everyone was excited over the opportunity.

### Oh great, and was this your first experience living abroad?

**Rikard:** My wife and I previously lived

in the US for a year but we had never visited China before I accepted the position! So we did not know what to expect, but it turned out to be four wonderful years.

### What was your first impression of Shanghai?

**Charlotta:** It was big!

**Everyone:** Haha!

**Charlotta:** Shanghai really is a huge city, we come from Helsingborg in the south a Sweden (close to Copenhagen) where the population is barely 150,000 people, and so that was quite a drastic change in that sense.

**Rikard:** Yes, when we moved to China 2008 we started off living in Suzhou for two years and that city wasn't as developed as Shanghai at the time, so that was also a challenge. Not many people spoke English so language was a major barrier. The school our children attended, SSIS, was predominantly Asian, which was a bit of a culture shock as well.

**Charlotta:** Absolutely, there weren't many other Swedish families living in Suzhou, which meant that Jacob and Rebecca had to learn English fairly fast since they couldn't rely on any Swedish friends or teachers.

### Your first impression of SCIS?

**Jacob:** I remember that I felt welcomed from the first day and that everyone

I talked to was genuinely friendly. Additionally, SCIS was more international than at my previous school and students represented countries from all over the world. Furthermore, I remember how positively we, my sister and I, were greeted by the swim team despite that we earlier had been their competitors.

**Rebecca:** My first impression of SCIS was how polite and respectful everyone was. When I was on a pre-visit to SCIS I remember how students of all ages approached us as a family and offered their help and guidance. Another memory is how the lower school principal, Mr. Powell, stood on the football field every morning when the school buses arrived, saying good morning and welcoming all students.

### Dad and Mum, why did you choose SCIS?

**Charlotta:** There were two main reasons. The first was due to the great swimming program here at SCIS, both our kids have been passionate swimmers since they were very young and finding a strong aquatics program was very important for us. The second was the fact that the school community at SCIS felt closer and more like a family when we first visited. We felt a connection and it felt like the right choice from the beginning. When you live abroad, you no longer have easy access to your family or relatives and so finding an environment where we felt more at ease and where we knew we could rely on people was important. SCIS made us feel comfortable and safe and we knew that the school would be there for us, should we need help.

### Jacob and Rebecca, although short, how was your time as students at SCIS?

**Jacob:** Some of my best memories from my time at a school are from SCIS! I really enjoyed my time here and could have easily have stayed for longer than two years. The small classes and the tremendous teachers who really knew their subjects was a good combination that allowed me to learn a lot. Also being able to interact with a lot of different classmates in varying classes enabled me to get to know everyone in my grade and in the school. The friendships that I made

during my time at SCIS have persisted and I still have frequent contact with numerous friends.

**Rebecca:** I liked the diversity of the school because there were many opportunities for students to experience new traditions and cultures. For example, some days that were special were the UN Day and the International Food Day. The swim team also played a huge part during my years at SCIS. Since the team was relatively small back then, the team spirit was very strong. For example, I had teammates in grade 11 and 12 who were 5-6 years older than me at the time and these older students were very helpful; they assisted me both with improving my swim technique and other times with my homework.

### That's fantastic to hear, and what would you say was your favorite part about attending SCIS?

**Jacob:** I really enjoyed the awards!

**Everyone:** Hahaha

**Jacob:** What I mean is that, compared to Sweden, academic awards such as being on the principal's honor roll was celebrated at SCIS and something to be proud of even between students. From my experience schools and students in Sweden usually find sports awards more prestigious. SCIS made me want to excel both within academics, as well as within sports. I felt very proud of being a part of SCIS and I always tried to represent the school as best as I could.

**Rebecca:** The best memory I have of SCIS

is from my first day of school as I was starting grade 5. I remember walking into the classroom for the first time, nervous about not knowing anyone, and two girls approached me and asked me my name, where I was from, and offered me to sit next to them. That's when I realized how much of a family the international community at SCIS was.

### What a lovely memory! Why was it so important for you then to come back here and visit?

**Charlotta:** Even though it has been many years since we lived in China, as a parent I can see how much of a positive impact these years abroad had on my children and SCIS played a major part in shaping them into whom they are today. To this day, they still talk about their time in China. Therefore, we felt it was important to re-visit SCIS and appreciate those early memories so that they may never forget them!

### Last question, what about SCIS did you appreciate the most? Was it the environment, the community, the teachers?

**Charlotta:** Everything combined!

**Rikard:** The teachers were very motivating, they constantly challenged the children and wanted them to succeed. Educators were very knowledgeable about their teaching subject. They gave Jacob and Rebecca a very good theoretical foundation to continue on with their future studies.

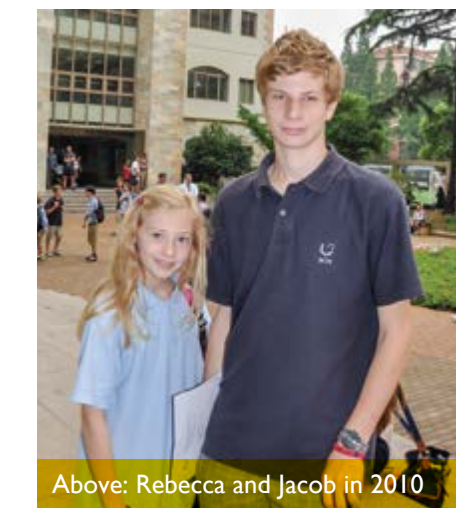
**Charlotta:** Absolutely, we could see how

strong they were academically once we repatriated back to Sweden. Teachers at SCIS set the expectations very high for students, but they help them reach those expectations. The teachers at SCIS are amazing and so are the admins that support it all.

**Jacob:** Rebecca and I agree, the teachers at SCIS made us feel like nothing was impossible as long as you had the right determination and dedication. High goals were set for us and were provided with the right amount of support from day one, to ensure we would meet those goals. The skills and lessons we learned at SCIS have helped us to this day and we are forever grateful for it.



Interview by MIKAEL MASSON PEREZ, Marketing & Communication Officer at SCIS (Pudong Class of '08)



Above: Rebecca and Jacob in 2010

# THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### Alumni Mission:

The SCIS Alumni Association has been established in order to foster the continued cordial relations of the SCIS community. Its goal was, and continues to be, to link alumni with the School and with each other, and to support and maintain such forged relationships. It strives to provide ample avenues and opportunities to encourage alumni to participate actively in the SCIS community.

### Alumni Contact:

Mikael Masson  
[mmasson@scis-china.org](mailto:mmasson@scis-china.org)


### Alumni Requirements:


1. Graduated from a SCIS Campus

OR

2. Went to school here for at least one year AND be over 18

### Social Media

 Facebook site:  
<https://www.facebook.com/alumniSCIS/>

 LinkedIn site:  
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4757677>



# Book Recommendations for All Ages

**Joshua Balli, ECE Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao**

## Unstoppable Me!

By Dr. Wayne W. Dyer

Ages 3-8

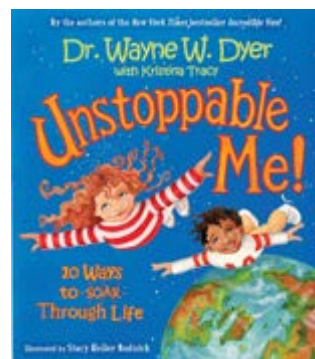
What is your potential and are you reaching it? If you asked a student that you may get a blank, confused look. Yet, as teachers and parents, one thing we both have in common is nurturing children to reach this potential. Since SCIS has developed the PYP (Primary Years Program), that has been one of the focal points of our educational

foundation and is taught in all our aspects of learning.

One of the books that helps teach children about reaching this potential is *Unstoppable Me!* By Dr. Wayne W. Dyer. Normally books will have a common theme and message such as anti-bullying, persistence or fairness. The great thing about this book is it has ten themes that each teach an important message and they are taught in a fun, upbeat rhyming tone. It has a verse that is told by a narrator about

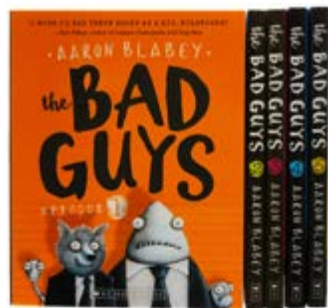
the challenges we all face, and then it has another verse that is told from the point of view of a child that is taking what the narrator says and applying it to their own life.

Finally, after the story is over the book has questions that can be used as a teaching tool in the classroom and at home. For example, in the topic of change, the book asks the reader what are some things that have changed for you in your life and how have you coped with them. I encourage



you to come and check this book out. It is available in both the Hongqiao Main and ECE libraries.

**Daniel Zimmerman, Lower School Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao**



## The Bad Guys

By Aaron Blabey

Ages 5+

This first book in the expanding series of *Bad Guys* books has Mr. Wolf pulling

together a club of other animals consisting of Mr. Shark, Mr. Piranha, and Mr. Snake and attempting to change their evil reputations by doing good works in the community. In the first book, they attempt to rescue a kitten stuck in a tree

and free a hundred puppies from the dog pound with humorous results. This is highly recommended for budding readers transitioning into longer chapter books. It also contains a flatulent fish.

## Dog Man. Lord of the Fleas

By Dav Pilkey

Ages 6+

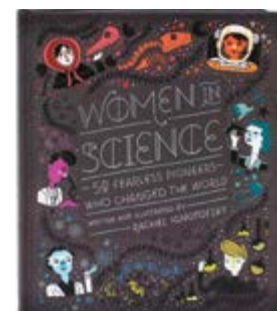
There are certain titles that never spend much time sitting on Library shelves because of their enormous popularity across all student age groups, Dave Pilkey's *Dog Man* series is a current exemplar of that

phenomenon. Usually, a *Dog Man* book is returned by two children, the one who borrowed it most recently and the friend whom it will immediately go into possession of. The librarian will then over the course of the day field at least 8 queries from other students as to when the next time a *Dog Man* book will likely be available. The latest offering in

this series has *Dog Man* and his adopted cat, *Lil Petey* try to convince *Lil Petey's* clone father, "The World's Most Evil Cat," *Petey*, to change his evil ways and help them defeat three new villains, *Piggy*, *Crunky*, and *Bub*. It also includes a brief retelling of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* as well as an outstanding series of knock-knock jokes from *Lil Petey*.



of women who have made significant contributions in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). This is a highly engaging nonfiction read nicely broken up into bite-sized chunks for quick read opportunities.



## Women in Science: 50 Fearless Pioneers Who Changed the World

By Rachel Ignotofsky  
Ages 8+

"Nothing says trouble like a woman in pants." So goes the first line of this beautifully illustrated book that contains 50 one page biographies

**Ashley Simmons, Upper School Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao**

## The Librarian of Auschwitz

By Antoni Iturbe

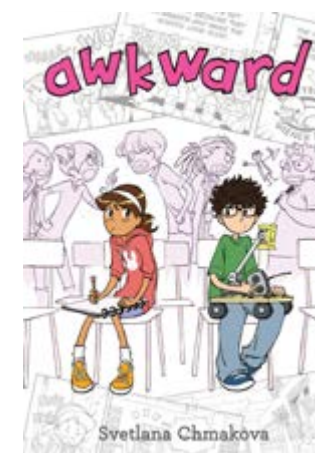
Translated by Lilit Zekulin Thwaites

Ages 13+

*The Librarian of Auschwitz* tells the story of Dita, a Jewish girl uprooted from her home in

Prague to the city's ghetto, transported to Terezin, and ultimately imprisoned in the Auschwitz-Birkenau family camp. Dita struggles daily to survive, coping with the horror that surrounds her, mourning the childhood she has lost. One day, she is asked by an admired Jewish leader to care for a small, secret collection of books. Based on

the true story of Dita Kraus, this work of historical fiction shows that true power and strength lie in unexpected places. It also reminds readers that our stories and small acts of resistance hold the most power when all seems lost, and those who are brave are "not the ones who aren't afraid" but instead, those "whose legs shake, but carry on."



## Awkward

By Svetlana Chmakova

All Ages

The graphic novel, *Awkward*, is the first title in the wonderfully illustrated and extremely popular "Berrybrook Middle School" series by Svetlana Chmakova. On her first day at a new school, Peppi trips in the hallway and receives the help of Jaime, the school "nerd." When surrounding

students begin taunting her, Peppi panics, pushes the boy, and runs away. Then Peppi's science teacher sets her up with a tutor, Peppi comes face-to-face with Jaime – and her guilt. The story is full of dramatic moments, and Peppi is forced to decide when to break with the unspoken rules of surviving school. Her favorite place is in Art Club, where she can be with friends and do what she loves most.

However, she soon discovers that middle school is more than just hiding away in her club. Peppi learns lessons on forming friendships, understanding the perspectives of others, standing up to bullies, and finding your own voice. The next book in the series, *Brave*, is available now in the Upper School Library. The third book, *Crush*, will be released with great anticipation in October.

**Emily Williams, Librarian at SCIS Pudong**

## Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin

By Chieri Uegaki and Qin Leng

Age 5 - 10

*Hana Hashimoto, Sixth Violin* is the story of a spunky little girl determined to play the

violin in the school talent show, despite the fact that she has only had three violin lessons. Hana's inspiration and determination are the results of a recent visit with her grandfather in Japan. Hana's grandfather, an accomplished violinist, charms her with classical music, folk songs

about nature, and creative animal sounds. Hana returns home determined to be a great violinist. Despite teasing from her brothers, Hana practices day and night to be prepared for her first performance. On the night of the talent show, all her efforts result in a surprise for everyone.



## Out of Mind

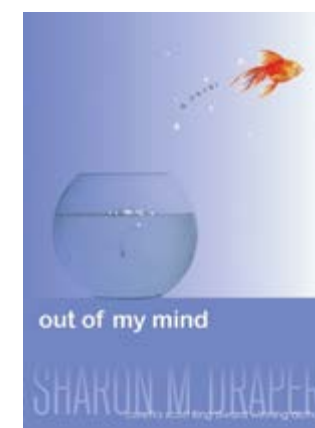
By Sharon M. Draper

Age 10+

*Out of My Mind*, is a heart-breaking and inspiring story about determination and the power of words. Author Sharon M. Draper presents the story of Melody, an extremely intelligent eleven-

year-old girl with cerebral palsy. Melody's disability makes it impossible for her to walk or talk or write. Although she is exploding with thoughtful questions, ideas, and comments, people assume she is unintelligent because she cannot communicate. When Melody discovers new technology for talking, she must learn not only how

to use it, but how to make people actually listen to her despite her appearance. Melody's resilience and her powerful voice make this story hard to put down and even harder to forget.





# Meet Our New PAFA Leadership



## Lisa Chu, PAFA President at SCIS Hongqiao

Hello SCIS! It's a pleasure for me to be serving our community as Parents and Friends Association (PAFA) President this year. Prior to this, I was an Upper School Representative for two years on the board of committee.

I hail from Taiwan and grew up in South Korea, Southern Africa, and the UK, and understand well the "third culture" experience whilst growing up. I have two daughters: Annette (Grade 11) and Danielle (Grade 6); this is our family's 17th year in Shanghai. I worked previously as an international finance lawyer in private practice, then as an in-house corporate lawyer. In the past few years, I have been involved with a social enterprise which seeks to rescue and restore exploited women and children in the Asia-Pacific region.

This year, I am privileged to lead a 14-person PAFA team, all of us from different backgrounds, with different skill-sets and talents, a microcosm of our broader SCIS community. At the inaugural Board meeting of the 2018-19 school year, I shared with the team my heart and vision for PAFA this year: to enjoy working alongside each other as we serve the school community together, and as an overflow of our friendships on the PAFA Board, impact and build on the SCIS legacy of inclusivity, diversity and the appreciation of different cultures.

Since August, our PAFA team has facilitated the formation of the new country and regional groups for our parents, encouraging many more people to invest themselves and participate in community-building. And with that as a foundation, we hope to foster more cross-cultural activities and initiatives. Working closely in collaboration with the SCIS administration, we have a full calendar of events this year for both the main and ECE campuses, ranging from social and cultural events for parents and students, topical coffee mornings, volunteering efforts which impact the greater Shanghai community, to our main fundraiser - the International Food Festival. We hope these efforts will engender a sense of closeness and belonging for our families and students. And I hope to meet many of you in person throughout this coming year!



## Vanessa Thomas, PAFA President at SCIS Pudong

Hello SCIS! My name is Vanessa Thomas. I was born in New Zealand and spent my childhood growing up there and Australia with some time spent in Asia, so this is a very familiar region for me. Prior to arriving in China we as a family had spent a number of years in India which was an incredible experience. Each of these adventures has been a wonderful learning experience, and together as a family, we have been very fortunate to live in numerous countries all over the world.

When asked where home is now I have to honestly say it's where ever we as a family currently reside but ultimately it will be at our family home in Europe.

We have been at SCIS since 2016 and I joined the Executive board last school year. It has been a wonderful way to give back to a school that has created a very warm and welcoming environment for our daughter and our family. Our daughter is now in Grade 9 and even as a teenager I love the fact that each day she loves going to school, and is always full of enthusiasm.

SCIS is a community where everyone does know your name which is really important, especially as an expat family, where it's often a very transient environment full of change. This school has created a wonderfully diverse and international environment with great open channels of communication which has made it easy to become very much part of the SCIS family.

We have a great team of parents who give back tirelessly to the school, and I feel extremely fortunate to be part of PAFA this year. We hope to keep creating even more exciting family and parent events in the year ahead and also get input from the community on ways which we can build and improve on the way we do things. I can't wait to witness what this amazing community will be able to accomplish!

# PAFA NEWS

SCIS has parent organizations called the Parents and Friends Association (PAFA) on each campus. PAFA serves as a way that parents can communicate ideas for the betterment of the school to the administration and Board. SCIS is proud of the high level of parent participation in their schools and value their partnership with the parent community.

PAFA conducts various activities, from community events to charity fundraisers to volunteer support for teachers and students. Each campus has a PAFA board who works closely with each campus' administrations to plan events that help to make SCIS Campuses a unique experience for families, faculty, and students alike. We are always welcoming new members!

For more information about PAFA, please contact us at:

## HONGQIAO MAIN & ECE CAMPUSES

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# Reenergize at Heavenly Cloud

By **HELLEN ZIMMERMAN**,  
Upper School Chinese  
Language Acquisition Teacher  
at SCIS Hongqiao



Many people expressed dismay last summer when they discovered that longtime sanctuary for the stressed, Dragonfly Massage on Hongmei Road 3911 Villa 5 in the Soho development, had closed. But there is good news! Now under new management and rebranded as Heavenly Cloud, they are back. The same staff, the same location, the same services. The service menu has facials, a wide range of massage options, detoxification treatments, a nail spa, hand and foot care, eyelashes, and waxing. Everything that you need to be able to face the world refreshed, relaxed and reenergized.

Under joint management with longtime community favorite Little Huia, I love to be able to drop off my child and husband next door at the restaurant where they can have a leisurely lunch, the kids are sure to find classmates on the playground, and I can have some rare and luxurious time getting my nails done or have a message without having to worry about taking some time for myself. Teachers are bound to love the Tuesday promotion where with a staff ID they can receive 30% off all services.

So stop by and do something nice for yourself, the people in your life will appreciate being around you when you are happy and feel good about yourself.



## FIND YOUR FOOD COMFORT ZONE

As summer starts to wind down, it's time to settle down again to prepare for the new realities of fall – including school, sports and welcome events like our Welcome Back BBQ at SCIS providing wonderful opportunities to grow, learn and make new friends. If you just moved to China it might be tough to settle down like finding trusted groceries, but equally exciting times to set new routines. We caught up with Francois Guissani of Swiss Butchery, who considers food safety and hygiene first priority.



### MEET FRANCOIS GUISSANI

With years of international experience as a chef, **Francois**, a Swiss native, is leading the teams of the **Swiss Butchery** shops in Shanghai. He is full of the enthusiasm found only in those who genuinely love their job.

"I have been a foodie throughout my life. As a Chef, I am passionate about sharing my knowledge in our shops on cooking techniques that best bring the meat flavor and tenderness. Food and eating are considered very important rituals in China. You may often be asked "chi fan le ma" ("have you eaten") as a common greeting and talking about food is a great way to break the ice.

**But, what about safe food?** If you want to live comfortably in China, you need to find your food comfort zone. "At **Swiss Butchery**, we treat **food safety and hygiene** as our number one priority," says Francois. "We source our meat from the best sustainable farms under the most stringent hygiene standards,

overlooking the whole supply chain. This means we can sell to our customers with great confidence.

"You might want to cook this recipe for your new friends and neighbors, or just to make yourself feel at home. As that is what a quality dish can do!"

Meet Francois and the other Chefs and Butchers in their stores in **Hongmei lu** in **Hongqiao**, in **Baihua lu** in **Jinqiao**, and downtown **Wulumuqi lu** near **Anfu lu** (open beginning of October). They will happily assist you with the right meat selection and cooking advice. Or simply order online.



*Swiss Butchery brings world-class quality meat in a wide variety, from freshly never frozen Australian beef to home-made specialties like sausages, hams, pâtés, and imported delicacies like Italian hams, European cheeses, and imported fine seafood. Swiss Butchery is awarded 2 years in a row as 'Butchery of the Year' by Time Out Magazine.*

### BBQ STEAK SALAD WITH BEETROOT & LENTILS

#### Ingredients (serves 4-6):

500 gr. grain fed oyster-blade mini steaks  
200 gr. beetroot cooked and peeled  
150 gr. arugula salad  
150 gr. brown lentils cooked and chilled  
115 gr. feta cheese, crumbled Balsamic glaze (Megazzoli)  
Balsamic vinaigrette  
1/2 teaspoon oregano flakes  
Salt and pepper

#### Instructions:

Season the steaks with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Grill on medium-high heat for 2-3 minutes each side for medium or until cooked to your liking. Let mini steaks rest for 3 min. Meanwhile, nicely lay down a bed of arugula salad on a serving platter. Sprinkle with the cooked and drained lentils. Thinly slice the steak and arrange on top of the salad. Cut the beetroot into 1 cm cubes and top the salad. Sprinkle crumbled feta and the oregano flakes on top of it. Season the salad with balsamic vinaigrette. Drizzle with the balsamic glaze and serve!





# SHOULD ALL KIDS GET A FLU VACCINE?

## What Is the Flu?

Influenza — what most of us call "the flu" — is a highly contagious viral infection of the respiratory tract.

## Why Is the Flu Vaccine Recommended?

While the flu vaccine isn't 100% effective, it still greatly reduces a person's chances of catching the flu. It also can make symptoms less severe if someone does still get the flu after immunization.

Even if you or your kids got the flu vaccine last year, that won't protect you this year, because flu viruses constantly change. That's why the vaccine is updated each year to include the most current strains of the virus.

Sometimes the same strains are included in the vaccine one year after the next. In this case, it's still important to get a seasonal flu shot because the body's immunity against the influenza virus declines over time.

## When Should I Get the Flu Shot?

Flu season runs from October to May. It's best to get a flu vaccine as early in the season as possible, as it gives the body a chance to build up protection from the flu. But getting a flu vaccine later in the season is still better than not getting the vaccine at all.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) now recommends a flu vaccine for everyone 6 months of age and

older (instead of just certain groups, as was recommended before).

But it's especially important that those in higher-risk groups get vaccinated to avoid health problems as a result of the flu. They include:

- All kids 6 months through 4-years-old
- Anyone 65 years and older
- All women who are pregnant, are considering pregnancy, have recently given birth, or are breastfeeding during flu season
- Anyone whose immune system is weakened from medications or illnesses (like HIV infection)
- Residents of long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes
- Any adult or child with chronic medical conditions, such as asthma
- Kids or teens who take aspirin regularly and are at risk for developing Reye syndrome if they get the flu
- Caregivers or household contacts of anyone in a high-risk group (like children younger than 5 years old, especially those younger than 6 months, and those with high-risk conditions)
- Babies younger than 6 months can't get the vaccine, but if their parents, other caregivers, and older kids in the household get it, that will help protect the baby. This is important because

infants are more at risk for serious complications from the flu.

It is important for pregnant women to let their doctor know about her pregnancy before the flu shot because certain flu vaccine brand has not yet been tested for pregnancy while some other have.

## When to Delay or Avoid Flu Immunization?

Talk to your doctor to see if the vaccine is still recommended for your child:

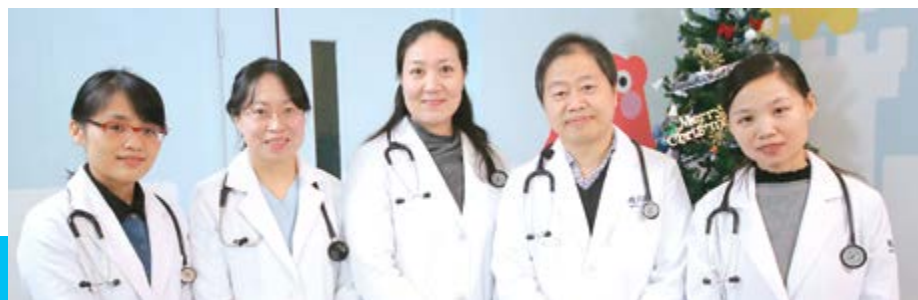
- If your child is sick and has a fever
- If your child has ever had a severe reaction to a flu vaccination
- If your child has Guillain-Barré syndrome (a rare condition that affects the immune system and nerves)

In the past, it was recommended that anyone with an egg allergy talk to a doctor about whether receiving the flu vaccine was safe because it is grown inside eggs. But health experts now say that the amount of egg allergen in the vaccine is so tiny that it is safe even for kids with a severe egg allergy. This is especially important during a severe flu season.

Still, a child with an egg allergy should get the flu shot in a doctor's office, not at a supermarket, drugstore, or other venues.

## Possible Side Effects of the Flu Vaccine

The flu shot contains killed flu viruses that will not cause someone to get the flu but can cause mild side effects like soreness, redness, or swelling at the injection site. A low-grade fever and aches are also possible. Very rarely, the flu vaccine can cause a severe allergic reaction.



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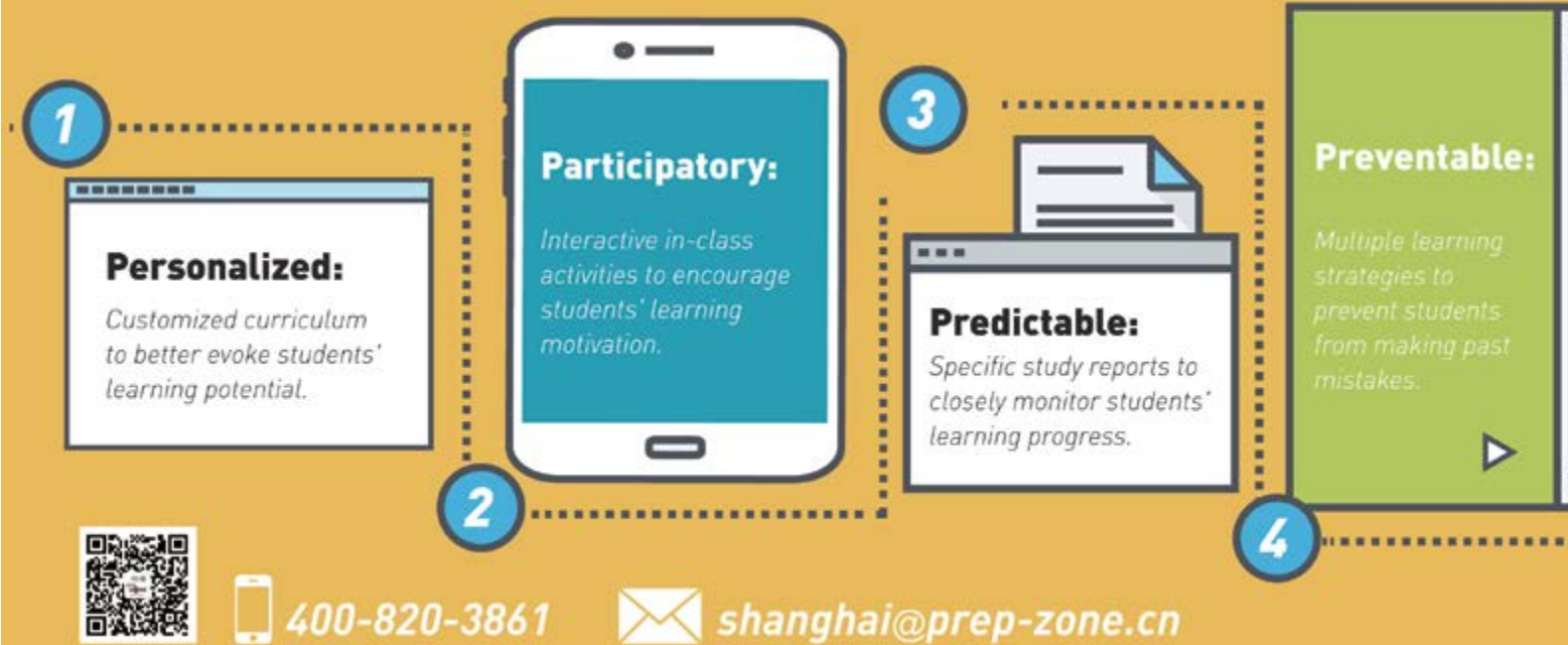
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