

# Educator



17 January 2015



## HIGH SCHOOL HOLIDAY CONCERT @MAPLE HALL, 9 December 2014



## **from the desk of the head, Bill Kralovec**

As the Head of School, I get to see the school from a vantage point that gives me the “big picture” of contributions from the many individuals who make up our community. All of us in our own way are using unique skills and experiences to make a difference in the learning of our students. We are blessed at OIS to have many people who go above and beyond what is expected to make this a special school.

The current OIS Parent Teacher Association (PTA) co-president, Kuni Wakida is one of those people that makes a significant contribution to the life of the school. He has been part of our school community for the past 8 years, ever since his daughter, Karina, joined OIS in third grade. Kuni and his wife Keiko, came to Osaka from Hawaii and they value the many different cultures found here at the school. Mr. Wakida volunteered to stay on as co-president this year, beyond the mandatory term of office. His volunteer spirit is exemplary and under his leadership, the OIS PTA has made contributions to student learning. At first he said he was skeptical about joining the PTA, but once he became involved and saw that he could make a difference in how PTA resources could be used to help the students, it gave him great satisfaction. Kuni also leads by example and is always the first person to lend a hand when something is needed. He is shown below working at the refreshment desk at the Maple Hall concert in December.



**Mr Kuni Wakida**

Two faculty members also went beyond the job description to earn positions of leadership in the IB Asia Pacific region. Physics teacher Briag Dupont was named to the higher level physics team that writes the exam papers for the new syllabus. He will be working to create exam questions for use in the Americas region. Grade 3 teacher Isaac Driver-Castro earned his PYP workshop leader and visiting member of verifications and evaluations of IB schools. It is quite a competitive process and after submitting a video demonstrating his presentation skills and applying for the training, Isaac completed the 5-day training in December. He was invited to be a workshop leader in the area of concept-based learning, one of core tenets of IB curriculum. Congratulations to both Mr. Dupont and Mr. Driver-Castro on their nominations. The skills and ideas they learn from the training and work at the Asia Pacific and international level is a great source of professional development. The students benefit when teachers are improved by these experiences.

We are in the midst of recruiting season for international teachers. December - March is the central time where positions for the following school year are filled. Teachers regularly enter and leave international schools and with this comes benefits and challenges. Benefits in the new ideas and techniques that come from incoming teachers, but balanced with the loss of continuity with the departure of veteran teachers. The average length of stay for OIS faculty is just over 7 years. This is quite good for international school standards.

We are sad to see leave in 2015-2016, Isaac and Megan Driver-Castro, who procured positions at the Canadian International School of Singapore. Chemistry teacher Richard Fitzpatrick found a position at the International School of Zurich, Switzerland. Also leaving for family reasons are elementary music teacher Sara Bonner and MYP math and science teacher Angela Hancock. Their contributions are appreciated by students and parents. I will announce replacements when the full faculty are contracted.

## **from the desk of the middle/high school principal, KURT MECKLEM**

Happy New Year!

I hope that 2015 has started well and will continue to be a great year for you and your family. At school, we always take some time to focus on the year ahead. Many of your children will have spent time in homeroom or other classes reflecting on what they have been doing and setting goals for the future.

Having just returned from the winter vacation, spring break probably feels like it is a long ways away. However, it will be here before we know it so it is not too soon to plan for spring camps. The spring camps are a long tradition at OIS. The camps were implemented to provide learning experiences outside of the classroom, to help students develop their personal and social skills, and provide a bonding experience with fellow students. This year they are scheduled in the calendar for March 11, 12 and 13. While those are the three days leading up to spring break they are considered school days. Depending on your child’s grade level, the camps take different forms. In the middle school, students travel as a class to a particular location. Grade 6 will be doing an overnight at a municipal camp in the hills above Minoh, grade 7 will once again travel to Northstar in Nagano for an outdoor adventure snow camp, and grade 8 will go to Hiroshima and Miyajima. The students in grades 9 and 10 have a choice of camps which includes snowboarding at Northstar, golf, photography, a writing camp, and working with the animals at ARK. Grade 11 students are already busy organizing their service trip to Cebu in the Philippines which will take place during the same week. Grade 12 will be busy on campus completing their “group 4” science project for their IB Diploma requirements.

Information on the camps will be coming home and sent to your SOIS mail account. If you haven't received anything, please talk to your child. Since they started, the camps have had almost 100% participation and we are looking forward to another good year this spring. Please feel free to email me or drop by if you have any questions.

While January marks the beginning of a calendar year, at the end of the month we will be about half way through the school year. That means our seniors are on the home stretch with their IB Diploma requirements and the exams are really just around the corner. Other students have a bit more time but the school year will close out quickly. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, please remember that all of our teachers are just an email away or can be seen by appointment. Email or call the office to set up a time.

**from the desk of the elementary principal,  
VIRGINIA SUTTON**

How do students learn mathematical concepts? How do we support their learning?

Traditionally mathematics has been taught in schools as a series of unrelated skills based activities. However, more recent studies about how children learn tell us that children assemble, or construct mathematical knowledge.

The IBPYP views mathematics 'as a way of thinking and a language for understanding meaning. To study mathematics in the IBPYP is to inquire into this language and to learn to think in this way'.

Children will progress through a variety of stages when constructing mathematical knowledge. Appropriate activities and experiences must be provided in order to meet the needs of each individual as they develop through these stages. Cognitive psychologists have described these stages and the IBPYP has outlined them below:

**• Constructing Meaning**

Teachers plan activities, through which students construct meaning from direct experience, by using manipulatives and conversation.

**• Transferring Meaning into Signs and Symbols**

Teachers connect the notation system with the concrete objects and associated mathematical processes. The teacher provides the symbols for the students. Students begin to describe their understanding using signs and symbols.

**• Understanding and Applying**

Teachers plan authentic activities in which students independently select and use appropriate symbolic notation to process and record their thinking.

Two very important factors support the development through these stages. The first factor is the use of questioning and the development of appropriate language and the second being the use of concrete materials and real-life experiences.

The importance of open questions can never be over-emphasised. When asked a closed question, students quickly learn that the accuracy of their answer is important. This may develop into an anxiety over getting the answers "wrong". Open questions help students to develop their understanding and allow them an opportunity to think about their work and to verbalize their learning. Such probing questions quickly reveal those who have understood and those who have guessed. From the earliest stages, correct and appropriate mathematical language should be used. Consistent use will enable students to remember and use relevant vocabulary with confidence.

The constant use of appropriate *manipulatives* is an essential aspect of IBPYP mathematics. A variety of different materials should be used, and should continue to be used all the way through the programme. A wide variety of materials should be available to all, ranging from student collections of keys, foreign money and to buttons, seashells, cubes and counters. Everyday tools, such as measuring jugs, calculators and even cereal boxes, are in use. It is important that students are given the opportunity to select from a range of materials to enable them to generalize their understanding both at home and at school.

Calendar Reminder

January 16th KA/KB assembly- all parents welcome

English Support

We welcome Mrs. Nadia Kralovec to the elementary who will be taking Mrs. Melville-Rea's leave cover.

**K-Gr. 2  
SET LUNCH MENU  
- CAFETERIA**



**MONDAY 19 January**  
beef stroganoff

**TUESDAY 20 January**  
cheese burger

**WEDNESDAY 21 January**  
hamburger meat

**THURSDAY 22 January**  
naan & curry

**FRIDAY 24 January**  
pork flavored ramen

**MONDAY 26 January**  
kitsune udon (Japanese wheat noodles with deep fried bean curd)

**TUESDAY 27 January**  
chicken cutlet

**WEDNESDAY 28 January**  
sandwich with pork cutlet

**THURSDAY 29 January**  
curry rice

**FRIDAY 30 January**  
spaghetti carbonara

**MONDAY 2 February**  
miso flavored ramen

**TUESDAY 3 February**  
pork cutlet

**WEDNESDAY 4 February**  
hamburger with chicken cutlet

**THURSDAY 5 February**  
Japanese wheat noodles with shrimp tempura

**FRIDAY 6 February**  
fried chicken

**MONDAY 9 February**  
spaghetti with corns and cream

**THURSDAY 12 February**  
chicken piaff

**FRIDAY 13 February**  
Omelet with deep fried noodle



## Stephen Frater's TECH CORNER

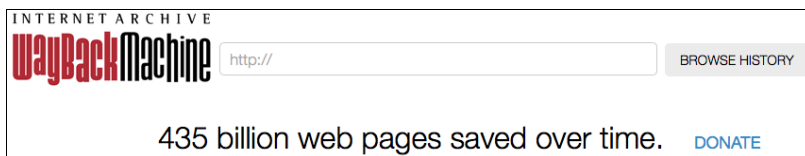
### Technology and Obsolescence

Technology firms are constantly developing new and exciting products. Every year, in January, the International Consumer Electronics Show in the US (<http://www.cesweb.org>) introduces many of the upcoming new technologies we can expect to see over the next 1-2 years. Previous shows have introduced the world to VCRs, CDs, DVDs, X-Box, Blu-Ray, 3-D TVs, and driverless cars. This year the focus seems to be on 'wearable devices' that will allow us to monitor our health and fitness, and the 'internet of things', particularly the hardware and software that will allow us to control and interact with appliances in our homes (such as lighting, thermostats, even fire alarms and refrigerators). Undoubtedly some of these will eventually make their way into schools, too, as personal devices used by students, or tools used by teachers in class.

Some of these new technologies will become worldwide hits, adopted by consumers or businesses around the globe, whilst others will disappear without a trace almost as quickly as they appeared. Many of these products are 'competing technologies', two or more formats that essentially do the same thing but in a different way, usually resulting in incompatible formats that consumers must choose between. Classic examples have been VHS vs. Betamax VCRs, HD-DVD vs. Blu-Ray DVD, Nintendo Wii vs. Sony PlayStation, and so on. Choosing one format over the other can often mean investing a lot of money in hardware and software that may be wasted if the competing format eventually becomes the industry standard.

Even industry standard formats that are widely used one day can be usurped by a superior technology with astonishing speed. Within a single decade we have gone from storing computer data on floppy disks to the Cloud, via CD-ROMs, MO disks, CD-RW disks, DVDs, and flash drives like USB sticks. Software formats change too, as anyone who has tried to open a file made with a newer version of a programme can attest to. This is perhaps an even greater risk, because so much information is now stored electronically (and compressed electronically), that there is a danger in years ahead that we may not be able to access the data because the software we need is no longer compatible or available.

This is where an interesting and important initiative comes in. The Internet Archive (<https://archive.org>) is a global effort to archive a huge range of software programmes, videos, audio files and old versions of websites, so that these electronic and technology resources are not lost. It is free to access, and most resources are free to download. If you are curious about the history of technology, or need to find an old programme, take a look. You can also scan back through cached copies of any website using the 'WayBackMachine' tool:



Here is a copy of OIS's main webpage from February 2001, for example, which was accessed through this site:



Additional information and resources on many of the technologies in use at OIS, can be found on the school's technology support website at <http://technology.senri.ed.jp> (please note the new address for this website) or parents are welcome to contact me at any time on [sfrater@senri.ed.jp](mailto:sfrater@senri.ed.jp).

## G4 CLASS MAKES CARDS AND CRANES FOR GOOD CAUSES

by Lora Vimont, G4 teacher



The Grade 4 class has been working hard to make a difference in the lives of others this winter by using their artistic talents as part of their learning and inquiry into WHO WE ARE: *Children worldwide encounter a range of challenges, risks and opportunities.* In art class, the students worked with their teacher, Mrs. Henbest, to create stuffed toys as a way to explore every child's "right to play." They then went on to extend this project even further by using digital technology to create beautiful, handmade note cards. These were sold as packages of 4 for 200 yen each. I'm proud to say that this class has already raised over 20,000 yen for the "Make-a-Wish Japan" organization! Another project that the students have been working on is making 1,000 paper cranes for their family's health and peace after reading the novel *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr. After this winter break, we were all saddened to hear that Ms. Linda Ragsdale, our beloved "Peace Dragon" speaker had fallen ill. So, the Grade 4s have agreed to donate their cranes (and are changing them to "peace dragons") to send to Ms. Ragsdale as a part of SOIS's wish for her to get well.

We wish everyone in the SOIS community a peaceful, healthy and Happy 2015!



### SOIS MATH CONTEST RESULTS HELD ON NOVEMBER 26 & 28, 2014

SOIS Math Department

**The Best Mathematician:** Ryotaro Kabai (SIS10)

**Excellent Mathematician:**

Yuichi Yoshioka\* (OIS11), Ryoko Izuta\* (SIS11), Sungwook Eun\* (OIS11), Sean Matsuura (SIS10), Sang Jin Oh (OIS9), Yutaru Tanaka (SIS8)

**Good Mathematician:**

Lucian Cabrini (SIS12), Re Ea Tay\* (OIS11), Hanami Nagasaka (OIS11), Kai Junge (OIS10), Hina Hamaguchi (SIS10), Maiho Takada (SIS9)

Note: \*AISA math members



## SABERS UPDATE

by Peter Heimer, activities director



Sabers website: [sabers.senri.ed.jp](http://sabers.senri.ed.jp)

Remember, you can find much information about Sabers athletics at [sabers.senri.ed.jp](http://sabers.senri.ed.jp). In particular, be sure to click on the “calendar” tab to find out game dates, times and locations. Schedules are subject to change; coaches will communicate final details to players.

### Sabers Athletics Facebook group

Also, to you Facebook fans, please join the Sabers Athletics Facebook group to receive updates on Sabers activities.

### Middle school winter sports season II begins

The start of the new year marks the start of the winter sports season II for Sabers middle school student-athletes. Both the MS girls basketball team, coached by Ms. Entwistle and Mr. Mecklem, and the MS boys soccer team, coached by Mr. McGill and Mr. Stone, have started practice, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:45–5:45. Each team has more than 40 players, showing the popularity of our middle school sports program. We have a no-cut policy at SOIS, meaning that all players who want to join a team are allowed and encouraged to do so; no players are cut from a team due to limited ability or experience – come one, come all! MS sports seasons last about six weeks with competitions on most Saturdays, culminating in a two-day WJAA championship tournament. Players and parents are required to submit a series of online permission and agreement forms, and everyone has done so – thank you.

### High school basketball season continues

The Sabers boys and girls basketball teams continue their successful seasons. The junior varsity teams are in Yokohama this weekend for their season-ending tournaments. The varsity teams are getting ready for their WJAA and AISA tournaments. For the girls, SOIS hosts both the WJAA tournament (January 23-24) and the AISA tournament (January 30-31). Please come to the Sabers gym to cheer on the girls basketball team.

### AISA math mania and leadership

On January 29, eight SOIS student leaders and math whizzes will travel to the British School of Beijing to participate in two AISA events: a math mania competition and a student leadership conference. Four Sabers “mathletes” – Re Ea Tay, Yuichi Yoshioka, Sangjin Oh, and Ryoko Izuta – will compete against math students from four other schools. The math mania competition unites mathematicians from the AISA schools to challenge and expand their understanding of mathematics, to engage in friendly competition, and to have fun.

At the same time, four SOIS student council members – Emily Yamanaka, Eugenie Shin, Sungwook Eun, and Kanako Tsutsumi – will take part in a collaborative, non-competitive leadership conference in which students develop team-building skills, share common student leadership experiences, and explore practical ideas for promoting school and community spirit.

These are great AISA events that provide new opportunities for our students. Special thanks to the teachers who have prepared the students for these events: Mr. Bertman, Mr. Dupont, Baba-sensei, and Munemasa-sensei. Mr. Bertman and Tosa-sensei will chaperone the students.

### Next high school sports season

Next up for Sabers high school student-athletes, after the basketball season: soccer, swimming, and badminton. First official practices will be held during the first week of February. Busy times ahead.

### Thank you

As always, thank you for your continued support of the Sabers activities program. Please contact me any time: in the AD office, room A-240, near the business office (072-727-2137), or at [pheimer@senri.ed.jp](mailto:pheimer@senri.ed.jp)



Photo (right):  
Sabers boys JV basketball team



### ONE LITRE MILK & JUICE PAPER CONTAINERS WANTED!

by Jennifer Henbest, art teacher

We need many one litre milk and juice paper containers for an art project! Please help us! Start collecting. We will put a box in the genkan. Please rinse and bring them all in, flattened or in the original shape. Thanks.



## KG UPDATE

### KG's American football team won the 4th consecutive national championship

The Kwansei Gakuin University American football team, "The Fighters" won their fourth consecutive Japan championship. They defeated Nihon University, "The Phoenix" from Tokyo, 55 -10 in the Koshien Bowl on December 14. The Koshien Bowl championship game is named after Koshien Stadium, home of the professional baseball team, the Hanshin Tigers. Annually, the best university football team in the western region (Kansai/Hiroshima) plays the champion of the eastern region (Tokyo/Nagoya) to determine the university champion. SOIS students from the triathlon club attended the game after running in a marathon in the morning near the stadium.

Kwansei Gakuin has the best university American football team in the country. They have won the championship 27 times, the most of any university in Japan. The Fighters went on to play in the Rice Bowl in Tokyo on January 3. The Rice Bowl pits the best collegiate football team against the best professional team of Japan's X League. This year the Fujitsu Frontiers won 33-24 in a very hard played game against KG. The advantage of older, more experienced players and foreign players for the Frontiers, made the difference.



The Fighters are back in action one more time on March 21 when they play Princeton University in the Legacy Bowl at Kincho Stadium in Osaka. The famous Ivy League New Jersey University Princeton, finished fourth out of eight teams this season in the Ivy League. The Legacy Bowl is being played in honor of the 125th anniversary of KG. The last time the two teams played was in 2011, when Princeton won 27-25 on a last second field goal.

Congratulations to the Kwansei Gakuin Fighters on another national championship!



## SCHOOL CALENDAR

23-24 January

\*SIS/OIS G8 science excursion to Nishi-Harima Astronomical Observatory (NHAO), Hyogo Prefecture

24 January

\*SAT I & II Tests @SOIS

27 January

\*IB Music Recital. 4:00pm @chorus room

28 January

\*G11 college workshop, 5:00pm @3F conference room

4 February

\*PTA meeting, 8:45-10:00am @3F conference room

5 February

\*IBDP explanatory meeting for G10 parents

Lost & found items to be displayed in the 2F showcase area, 19-30January

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Bill Kralovec, *head*

072-727-5080

[bkralovec@senri.ed.jp](mailto:bkralovec@senri.ed.jp)

Kurt Mecklem, *MS/HS principal / IBMYP coordinator*

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Virginia Sutton, *ES principal / IBPYP coordinator*

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Mike McGill, *admissions director*

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Steve Lewis, *business manager*

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Miyuki Endo, *IBDP coordinator*

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Peter Heimer, *activities director*

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[pheimer@senri.ed.jp](mailto:pheimer@senri.ed.jp)

Kei Takeda, *school nurse*

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[ktakeda@senri.ed.jp](mailto:ktakeda@senri.ed.jp)

student attendance

072-727-2305

The next **Educators** will be published on Friday, 13 February 2015.

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WINTER CONCERT Friday 12 December @Theatre





# 2015 ALL SCHOOL PRODUCTION



## Performances

- February 12 (Thu) 4:30pm
- February 13 (Fri) 6:00pm
- February 14 (Sat) 2:00pm
- February 14 (Sat) 6:00pm

## Location

School Theatre

## Website

<http://asp.webcrow.jp/index.html>

## Email

[asp2014@senri.ed.jp](mailto:asp2014@senri.ed.jp)

## Telephone

072-727-5050

The **2014-2015 SOIS All School Production**, featuring students from grades 3-12, will present *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at the school theatre from February 12-14, 2015. The musical is based on the biblical story of “the coat of many colors” of Joseph in the Book of Genesis. The musical will be performed in English along with Japanese subtitles. Performance will last approximately one hour.

**Tickets will be on sale to the public on Thursday January 22 and Friday January 23** from 3:30 to 4:30PM in the business office area on the second floor. After that time, tickets are available when the business office window is open.

With over 25 elementary students and over 50 MS/HS students participating in the performance, demand is high for tickets. Participants’ families will be able to select seats prior to the public offering on Thursday January 22, 2015.

Tickets for children under 12 and SOIS students cost ¥500, and general admission tickets are ¥1500. Specific seats are assigned at the time of ticket purchase. We will limit the number of tickets for the Saturday performances to 5 at a time for one person.

Please note that there will be no changes to seat selections or performance dates after

tickets have been purchased except under extenuating circumstances.

All the proceeds will be used to defray part of the expenses for this year’s production. Please consider this as a donation. When the reserved seating is booked up, you can still get tickets at the door on the day of the performance, but your entrance will be after all of the advance ticket holders. Unreserved tickets will be available 30 minutes prior to the performance in front of the theatre. The seats are limited, so please get these tickets early.

It is going to be a spectacular production, with singing, dancing, costumes, beautiful sets, live music, and more. Critics are comparing it to Broadway productions! I hope to see you there!

On behalf of Production Team,

Bill Kralovec